

Bede Academy



**Safeguarding
and
Child Protection Policy**

Key People

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Part One: Safeguarding Policy

The policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers and reflects the current statutory guidance provided by the Department for Education (DfE) and local guidance issued by NCASP (Northumberland Children and Adults Safeguarding Partnership). These duties are set out in the Education Act 2002 Section 175, [working together to safeguard children](#), and [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2023\)](#). All references relating to KCSIE relate to the updated guidance mentioned [here](#).

Definitions:

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (anyone under the age of 18) is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.

Neglect is a form of abuse and 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. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

This means that Bede Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our students. We believe that:

- Our students have the right to be protected from harm, abuse and neglect.
- Our students have the right to experience their optimum mental and physical health.
- Every child has the right to an education and our students need to be safe and to feel safe in school.

- Children and young people need support that matches their individual needs, including those who may have experienced abuse.
- Our students have the right to express their views, feelings and wishes and voice their own values and beliefs.
- Our students should be encouraged to respect each other's values and support each other.
- Our students have the right to be supported to meet their emotional, social and mental health needs as well as their educational needs. Bede Academy will ensure clear systems and processes are in place to enable identification of these needs, including consideration of when mental health needs may become a safeguarding need.
- Bede Academy will contribute to the prevention of abuse, risk/involvement in serious violent crime, victimisation, any form of child-on-child abuse or teenage relationship abuse including bullying (including homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and cyber bullying), exploitation, extreme behaviours, discriminatory views and risk-taking behaviours.

Aims:

This policy will contribute to the protection and safeguarding of our students and promote their welfare by:

- Adopting a whole-school approach to safeguarding and child protection.
- Clarifying conduct expectations for staff and students.
- Contributing to the establishment of a safe, resilient, and robust ethos in the school, built on mutual respect and the ESF virtues.
- Ensuring appropriate work within the curriculum.
- Encouraging students and parents to participate.
- Alerting staff and volunteers to the signs and indicators of abuse and neglect that all may not be aware of.
- Developing staff awareness of the risks of abuse and neglect
- Developing staff awareness of the contextual safeguarding challenges their students face.
- Addressing concerns at the earliest possible stage. The right support at the right time.
- Reducing the potential risks students face, of being exposed to multiple harms including violence, extremism, exploitation, discrimination, or victimisation.

At Bede Academy we will always:

- Identify and protect all pupils especially those identified as vulnerable students.
- Identify individual needs as early as possible; ensure their voice is heard and is a feature of any intervention undertaken.
- Work in partnership with students, parents/carers, and other agencies.

Our policy extends to any establishment our school commissions to deliver education to our students on our behalf including alternative provision settings. Our Local Governing Body (LGB) will require evidence that any commissioned agency will reflect the values, philosophy, and standards of the Trust and of the school. Further, the LGB will seek confirmation and evidence from Bede Academy that appropriate risk assessments are completed, and ongoing monitoring is undertaken.

Equality Statement:

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

Bede Academy gives special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or health conditions (see section 14).
- Are young carers.
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language.

- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence.
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation.
- Are asylum seekers.
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs.
- Are looked after or previously looked after (see section 17)
- Are missing from education.
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated.

Roles and Responsibilities:

All staff, volunteers and LGB members have responsibility for the following:

- to provide a safe environment in which all children can learn.
- identify children who may need extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.
- to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed.
- to keep themselves updated with the systems within the school which support safeguarding that were explained to them as part of their induction (including the staff Code of Conduct) which includes knowing the role, and working with, the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- to ensure they receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated.

In addition, staff members working with the DSL, should be aware that they may be asked to support social workers to take decisions about individual children.

All staff are responsible for:

- Knowing who the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is.
- Raising any concerns with the DSL. 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. Anyone can make this referral if the DSL is unavailable.
- Completing a formal written safeguarding concern form when making a referral. Staff should be clear that this must be done immediately and, always on the same day.
- Ensuring that their safeguarding and child protection training is up to date.
- Being alert to the signs of abuse.
- Maintaining an attitude of, 'it could happen here'.
- Maintaining an attitude that every child's rights must be protected, and any form of prejudice contributes to a hostile learning environment and therefore must be challenged.
- Maintaining an attitude that harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment/violence is never acceptable and will not be tolerated and being alert to inappropriate language and indicators of abuse and never rely on pupils to disclose abuse.
- When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members will always act in the interests of the child.
- Knowing the school's procedures for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, and reporting any such concerns to the DSL.
- Sharing information and working together to provide children and young people with the help they need when they need it.
- Referring to the Principal any low-level concerns about another member of staff and any allegations of abuse directly to the Principal. If the concerns held are about the Principal, these should be referred to the Head of HR for the Trust who will support with any referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Raising concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime through the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy
- Being aware of Local Authority and local authority Safeguarding Procedures and ensuring these procedures are followed.
- Seeking early help where a child and family would benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency via the local safeguarding partners Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). This is accessed online via the Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF) [Forms \(northumberland.gov.uk\)](https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Forms)

The Principal and Academy leadership are responsible for ensuring that:

- the school is compliant with all requirements of the most up to date KCSIE statutory guidance.
- there is an effective Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy in place together with a Staff Code of Conduct, which are provided to all staff, and ensuring all staff are given a mandatory induction, which includes familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has concerns about a child's safety or welfare.
- policies and procedures, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are followed by all staff.
- there is a designated lead for child protection, and that they have access to appropriate training, which is updated every two years.

The Designated safeguarding Lead is a member of the ESF DSL forum and meets regularly as part of a programme of supervision and sharing of best practice.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for:

- Managing referrals from staff or any others from outside the school.
- Working with external agencies and professionals on matters of safety and safeguarding.
- Undertaking relevant training and attending update sessions.
- Raising awareness of safeguarding and child protection amongst the staff and parents; and ensuring that child protection information is transferred to the pupil's new school.
- Ensuring that the school has a nominated local AAB member to liaise with the designated lead for the local area and any partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse made against the principal.
- Ensuring all staff receive the appropriate training, and keep it up to date, in line with advice from local safeguarding partners and the Trust.
- Notifying the Children's Social Care department if there are concerns over unexplained absences of a pupil following the Child Missing Education (CME) policy and local procedure.
- Informing the Local Authority when a private fostering arrangement is in place.
- Monitoring security within the school and reviewing it regularly.
- Ensuring that important safeguarding related policies are kept relevant and up to date.
- Have an overview of the numbers of safeguarding and child protection referrals made and sharing this with the Principal, LAC and governance.
- Having in place effective ways to identify emerging problems and potential unmet needs for individual children and families.
- Working with the relevant senior staff to ensure that the curriculum makes best use of Citizenship and PSHE, RSHE opportunities to cover safeguarding issues with children.
- Working with HR to ensure at least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training.
- Working with HR to ensure adherence to statutory responsibilities to check staff working with children, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for checks beyond what is required; and working with the Principal to ensure volunteers are appropriately supervised.
- Working with the Trust to ensure procedures that are in place to handle allegations against members of staff and volunteers are communicated and understood by all (the Principal is likely to lead on this process).
- Working with the Trust to ensure there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children (Child- on-child abuse).
- Ensuring that there is support available for staff involved in difficult child protection cases/incidents both at the school and externally through counselling and/or other services.
- Creating a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and in the school's development.
- Ensuring through the safeguarding curriculum that pupils know the process of raising a concern (about themselves or a friend/other), that they know the school's DSL (and deputy), and are aware of other support mechanisms such as ChildLine etc.

- Promote and retain oversight of the educational achievement and wellbeing of children who are in care or have a social worker working alongside the designated teacher for children in care and the local authority virtual head.
- Making this policy available to parents and carers as appropriate.
- Ensuring that colleagues are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role.
- Ensuring all staff have regular reviews of their own safeguarding practice to ensure they improve over time.
- Working with appropriate senior staff to ensure all records are kept up to date and secure and kept separately from the main pupil file in a secure location.
- Ensuring that appropriate online filtering and monitoring systems are in place and are effective and that there is appropriate communication regarding these with parents/carers.
- Establishing that parents/carers are regularly communicated with and receive appropriate signposts regarding how to best support the online safety of their child.

The Local Governing Body (LGB) is responsible for:

- Establishing that there is a whole-school approach to safeguarding which ensures that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of practice and policy at the school.
- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, establishing that it complies with current understanding of the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.
- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and aware of the school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- Appoint a senior board level (or equivalent) lead to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL.
- Establishing that the DSL has appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources, and support.
- Ensure that online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies.
- Establishing that the leadership team and relevant staff are aware of and understand the IT filters and monitoring systems that have been put in place by the Trust, effectively manage the localisation of these and know how to escalate concerns.
- Ensuring the school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors). This is currently covered by a local school process, in a further iteration there will be a Trust Protocol published (covering recording, steps taken and outcomes) which will take precedence and an accompanying school statement of procedures.
- Ensuring that this policy accommodates the additional needs of those children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, and recognises that there can be additional barriers to instances of abuse or neglect being recognised. Monitoring that school practice seeks to mitigate these risks.
- Where another body is providing services or activities at the school (regardless of whether the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school role):
 - Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place and scrutinise them appropriately.
 - Make sure there are arrangements in place for this third party to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate.
 - Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a prerequisite condition for using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises is liable to be terminated should the school fail to be satisfied with the safeguarding arrangements of any such third party.
- The chair of governors will act as the 'case manager' if an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate.

All governors must read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety.

Record Keeping

Keeping all child (safeguarding) records up to date and in line with the statutory requirements in KCSIE as a minimum:

- All safeguarding concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely.

Records will include:

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

Training:

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and is in line with the procedures of the safeguarding partners. All staff should ensure that they keep their own records of safeguarding training up to date in the ESF/National College Training Platform.

All staff will read and demonstrate their understanding of part 1 of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#) and the Staff Code of Conduct at least annually, with key points highlighted and updated throughout the academic year. Staff will be given access to this policy and be expected to engage with the salient points.

All staff will be trained in:

- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals.
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM and radicalisation.
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously, that they will be supported and kept safe.
- The Early Help process and their role in it.
- How to manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment [Behaviour and Discipline policy March 2024.docx](#)
- What filtering and monitoring systems are used at Bede Academy, what part they play in keeping children safe online, what the limits are of these systems and, what individual staff need to respond to that is output from these systems.

Staff will also receive regular contextual safeguarding and child protection updates. This will be via regular safeguarding briefings, specialist training delivered by external partners, online modules via the National College training platform and any other training deemed appropriate by the DSL, Principal and Trust. Training needs will be shaped by both national and local updates, data from referrals and concerns, and student voice.

Safer Recruitment

Bede Academy follows part 3 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2023 (KCSIE) and pays full regard to 'Safer Recruitment' requirements including but not limited to:

- Verifying candidates' identity and academic or vocational qualifications.
- Obtaining professional and character references.
- Checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job.
- UK Right to Work.
- Clear enhanced DBS check.

- Any further checks as appropriate to gain all the relevant information to enable checks on suitability to work with children.
- An online search will be carried out on shortlisted candidates to help identify any issues that are publicly available online.

Evidence of these checks are recorded on the Single Central Record (SCR). All recruitment materials will include reference to the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of pupils. During recruitment processes there is always at least one member of staff present on the recruitment panel who has undergone safer recruitment training. Both the Principal and Vice Principal are trained in safer recruitment in addition to Human Resources staff.

The staff induction process at Bede Academy will cover:

- The Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.
- The Behaviour Policy.
- The Staff Code of Conduct.
- The safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.
- The role of the DSL (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies).
- The filtering and monitoring arrangements for keeping children safe online
- Whistleblowing

Copies of policies and a copy of part one of KSCIE is provided to staff at induction and all staff are provided with an updated copy annually.

Confidentiality and sharing information:

Bede Academy staff should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care.

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect. As part of meeting a child's needs, it is important to also recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies. This should include ensuring arrangements are in place that set out clearly the processes and principles for sharing information within Bede Academy and with the three safeguarding partners, other organisations, agencies, and practitioners as required.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

Bede Academy has due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow Bede Academy to share (and withhold) personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR. This includes:

- Being confident of the processing conditions which allow them to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information, which is sensitive and personal, and should be treated as 'special category personal data'.
- Understanding that 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data. This includes allowing practitioners to lawfully share

information without consent where there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner, and it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner can gain consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

- Not providing pupils' personal data where the serious harm test under the legislation is met. For example, in a situation where a child is in a refuge or another form of emergency accommodation and, the serious harms test is met, they must withhold providing data in compliance with schools' obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR. Where in doubt schools should seek advice from the Trust who will approve seeking of independent legal advice.

The termly report to the LGB summarises and analyses anonymously all safeguarding incidents, follow up and training and any contact Bede Academy has had with external agencies.

Where children leave Bede Academy for another school, the DSL ensures that their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, ensuring secure transit and, confirmation of receipt. This is transferred separately from the main student file. In addition to the child protection file, the DSL also considers if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving to help support that student at their new school.

Schools and colleges have an obligation to preserve records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry (further information can be found on the IICSA website). All other records should be retained at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

KCSIE 2023 has more detail on Information Sharing. Any disclosure is added to the online record keeping system, detailed notes and any necessary attachments will also be included in the record, with access only given to the Safeguarding team (CP entry). Certain categories of incident are saved in such a way that only the DSL, Deputy DSL and Principal have access.

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.
- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests.
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children.
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.
- The government's information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information and provides support to staff who must make decisions about sharing information.

Bede Academy role in the prevention of abuse

This Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy cannot be separated from the general ethos of the school, which should ensure that students:

- Are treated with respect and dignity.
- Are taught to treat each other with respect.
- Feel safe.
- Have a voice and are listened to.

Safeguarding issues, including online safety, child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, and extra familial harm (multiple harms) will be addressed through the personal development curriculum in an age-appropriate way. Our personal development curriculum allows students to develop skills, concepts, attitudes, and knowledge that promote their safety and well-being including:

- Healthy and respectful relationships.
- Boundaries and consent.
- Stereotyping, prejudice and equality.
- Body confidence and self-esteem.
- How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour).
- The concepts of and laws relating to sexual consent, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called 'honour-based' violence such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) and
- How to access support.
- Child on Child abuse.
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they are always unacceptable.

All staff are made aware of Bede Academy's policy on unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures through the Attendance Policy. Tutors and pastoral staff follow up with students following every absence. We recognise the vulnerability of children who have a social worker and as such liaise closely with the Student Support Team, Designated Teacher for looked after children and their pastoral team/teachers.

Support for the DSL and DDSL

We recognise the importance of reflective practice and welcome multiple perspectives in safeguarding and child protection work. Bede Academy will support staff by providing opportunities for reflective practice including opportunity to talk through all aspects of safeguarding work within education with the DSL and to seek further support as appropriate.

Specifically, we will ensure that:

- Regular safeguarding supervision will be offered to the DSL and DDSL
- Supervision will be offered half termly, safeguarding supervision may need to be offered more frequently and extended to other members of staff as deemed appropriate by the school.
- The DSL/DDSL will be supported to access training as appropriate including training in behaviour and mental health.
- Where there are significant safeguarding incidents, counselling or other appropriate interventions will be offered to all staff that require support.

Online Safety

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online materials. The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

1. **Content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, and extremism.
2. **Contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
3. **Conduct:** online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g., consensual and non-consensual sharing of youth produced sexual imagery and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying).
4. **Commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

For more information on the procedures relating to online safety including student use of mobile phones, filters and monitoring and information security and access management please refer to the [E-Safety Policy Oct 2023 \(ESF.pdf\)](#)

Designated Teacher for Looked After Children

Children with a social worker may face barriers to education because of complex circumstances. Effective support for children with a social worker needs education settings and local authorities to work together. All agencies can play a crucial role in establishing a culture where every child is able to make progress. Education settings and local authorities will have different responsibilities but establishing shared priorities can help to drive change for children. Bede Academy works with partners, both statutory and non-statutory to effectively identify the needs of children with a social worker and ensure they can access interventions that make a difference to their education and ensure that they reach their full potential.

Our Designated Teacher will therefore:

- Work with the Virtual School to provide the most appropriate support utilising the pupil premium plus to ensure they meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan (PEP).
- Work with the Virtual School headteacher to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children.
- Ensure teaching staff and support staff have all appropriate information which helps them support students who have a social worker.

Safeguarding students who are vulnerable to radicalisation

From 1 July 2015, all schools are subject to the Prevent Duty and must have 'due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism' (section 26, Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015). The current threat from terrorism in the UK may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation.

Radicalisation and Extremism is defined as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calls for the death of members of the UK armed forces, whether in this country or overseas and white supremacist ideology.

The academy views protecting students from the risk of radicalisation as part of its core safeguarding duties, and will intervene when it suspects a student has been, or is in the process of being radicalised by making a referral to an appropriate agency depending on the level of risk (either to the local Channel programme or Children's Social Care).

The academy has due regard to the duty under which it is obliged to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (the "Prevent Duty").

The academy will teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

The academy will also take measures to promote community cohesion and will explicitly promote wider British values.

The academy will maintain academic freedom so that staff and students are able to discuss sensitive topics through structured conversations facilitated by staff, (including discussions about terrorism and the extremist ideas that form a part of terrorist ideology). The academy believes that students should be allowed to debate and challenge these ideas in order to develop and widen their understanding.

The academy does not allow political indoctrination within its curriculum and will secure a balanced presentation of political issues.

The academy will assess the risk of students being radicalised. This assessment will be informed by an understanding of our students and will use evidence based research to identify students who are vulnerable to radicalisation, and will be proportionate to the risk perceived in the local area.

The academy will vet external speakers in advance of their coming into the academy to ensure that they are appropriate to work with our students and will further promote our ethos. Any such visitors will be supervised whilst working with students.

The academy will provide training to all staff through its annual safeguarding training schedule to ensure staff have the knowledge and confidence to identify when a student is at risk of being radicalised and are then able to challenge extremist ideas.

The academy will monitor the use of ICT by our students, and will employ filters and monitoring systems to ensure children are unable to access extremist material whilst on site. The academy will also build online safety into its taught curriculum in both computing lessons and pastoral seminar sessions. More detail regarding the safety of children and young people online can be found in the academy's E-safety policy.

We value freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs and ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles, in which freedom of speech is valued will always be referred to the DSL as a potential safeguarding concern. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

We are clear that exploitation and radicalisation must be viewed as a safeguarding concern and that protecting children from the risk of radicalisation from any group (including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right/Neo-Nazi/White Supremacist, Domestic Terrorism, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements) is part of our school's safeguarding duty. The Principal and DSL will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include consideration of the school's RE curriculum, SEND policy, use of assemblies and the personal development curriculum, the use of school premises by external agencies, integration of students by gender and SEN, anti-bullying/racism policy and other issues specific to the school's profile, community, and philosophy. To this end when an external speaker is invited into school the level of risk associated with the content of the session and the speaker will be considered.

Bede Academy monitors online activity within the school to ensure that inappropriate sites are not accessed by students or staff, and will act in line with safeguarding procedures to address any searches online that could indicate radicalisation.

Bede Academy has a duty to co-operate with the Channel programme in the carrying out of its functions, and with the police in providing information about an individual who is referred to Channel (Section 38, Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015). We will make referrals to Channel if we are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation.

Channel is a multi-agency approach to provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorist related activity. It aims to:

- *Establish an effective multi-agency referral and intervention process to identify vulnerable individuals.*
- *Safeguard individuals who might be vulnerable to being radicalised, so that they are not at risk of being drawn into terrorist-related activity.*
- *Provide early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risks they face and reduce vulnerability.*

All staff undergo Prevent training as part of annual safeguarding updates. They also complete Home Office online Prevent training. The DSL, Paddy Smith AVP, is the Prevent lead in the school. A risk assessment has been completed assessing the Prevent risks to students in the school.

Pupils/students who are vulnerable to exploitation, trafficking, or so-called 'honour-based' abuse (including female genital mutilation and forced marriage)

With effect from October 2015, all schools are subject to a mandatory reporting requirement in respect of female genital mutilation (FGM). When a teacher suspects or discovers that an act of FGM is going to be or has been carried

out on a girl aged 18 or under, that teacher has a statutory duty to report it to the police. Failure to report such cases will result in disciplinary action.

At Bede Academy we will ensure that:

- Staff are supported to talk to families and local communities about sensitive concerns in relation to their children and to find ways to address them together wherever possible, with our Support Teams including Tutors, Pastoral Support Workers Pastoral Heads of House and Assistance Heads of House along with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Team are trained in relation to the Northumberland Early Help Assessment Process and have access to the Citizens' Advice Service referral platform.
- All staff are up to date on the latest advice and guidance provided to assist in addressing specific vulnerabilities and forms of exploitation around: forced marriage, FGM, honour-based abuse, trafficking, criminal exploitation, and gang affiliation.
- Staff will be supported to recognise warning signs and symptoms in relation to each specific issue.

Children Missing from Education

A child going missing and/or patterns of unauthorised absence, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding risks, including abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation; child criminal exploitation; mental health problems; substance abuse and other issues.

Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risks and to help prevent the risk of them going missing in future. Work around attendance and children missing from education will be coordinated with safeguarding interventions.

Bede Academy will ensure that:

- We hold two or more emergency contact numbers for each pupil.
- The Attendance Officer liaises closely with the DSL.
- Attendance monitoring is adapted on an individual basis to ensure the safety of each student.
- Demonstrate that we have made reasonable enquiries to ascertain the whereabouts of students that would be considered 'missing'.
- Work closely with the CME (Children Missing in Education) Team, School Admissions Service, Education Legal Intervention Team, and the Elective Home Education Team.

Please refer to the Attendance Policy for more information on the procedures relating to children missing from education. [Attendance Policy May 2024.docx](#)

Child-on-child abuse

At Bede Academy we have a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse. It is important that all staff recognise that children can abuse their peers, and that this abuse can include bullying, physical abuse, sharing youth produced sexual imagery, initiation/hazing, up skirting and sexual violence and harassment. This can also include abuse in intimate relationships between children which is known as 'teenage relationship abuse'. We recognise and understand that abuse is abuse and it should never be tolerated or diminished in significance. We also recognise that there is a gendered nature to child-on-child abuse, i.e., that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators. We fully understand that even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school it may be happening.

When referring to sexual violence this policy is referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

- Rape: a person (A) commits an offence of rape if: there is intentional penetration of the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, (B) does not consent to the penetration and (A) does not reasonably believe that (B) consents.
- Assault by penetration: a person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, (B) does not consent to the penetration and (A) does not reasonably believe that (B) consents.
- Sexual assault: a person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, (B) does not consent to the touching and (A) does not reasonably believe that (B) consents.

At Bede Academy we will ensure that:

- All staff will receive training on child-on-child abuse.
- We support students to treat each other fairly and equally.
- All our staff and students are supported to be alert to child-on-child abuse (including sexual harassment), understand how the school views, and responds to child-on-child abuse, and be confident that reports of such abuse will be taken seriously.
- We do not tolerate instances of child-on-child abuse and will not pass it off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.
- We recognise that 'child-on-child abuse' can occur between and across different age ranges.
- We follow both national and local guidance and policies to support any student who is subject to child-on-child abuse.
- We follow the guidance on managing reports of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment in schools.
- Allegations of child-on-child abuse are investigated, dealt with and students supported in line with any other type of bullying behaviour.

Any investigation of child-on-child abuse would usually be undertaken by a Pastoral Lead, unless there are clear safeguarding implications, where an investigation would be undertaken by the DSL or Deputy DSL. Any investigation, as with all other pastoral incidents, would be sensitive to the needs of the children involved and seek to support those victimised by child-on-child abuse, as well as those perpetrating the abuse and any other children affected. Bede Academy has a range of support mechanisms to help students, ranging from provision in the Student Welfare Department, with specialised staff, to external agencies, who regularly provide expertise, support and mentoring for students.

It should be emphasised that the most likely consequence for a student who engages in serious or sustained child-on-child abuse would be a suspension at the very least and a formal warning. Repeated or very serious incidents can lead to further warnings or permanent exclusion. The DSL would take a decision on whether an incident of child-on-child abuse would need to be referred further to other agencies, such as social care or the police.

The results of any child-on-child abuse investigation would be recorded using the safeguarding recording systems. Appropriate details would be recorded on Bromcom; any child-on-child abuse incident would be recorded on Bede Academy's child-on-child abuse log.

Keeping Children Safe in Education gives detailed guidance on how schools should deal with child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment. Bede Academy acknowledges and follows this statutory guidance in how it deals with any allegations of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Bede Academy's response to allegations will generally be in line with the child protection procedures laid out below.

Key specifics to this type of incident, however, include:

- The need for a risk assessment. When there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL (or deputy) should make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk and needs assessment should consider: the victim, especially their protection and support; the alleged perpetrator; and all the other children (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at the school or College, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them.
- Risk assessments should be recorded (written or electronic) and should be kept under review. At all times, the school or College should be actively considering the risks posed to all their pupils and students and putting adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe.
- Ensuring that an alleged perpetrator and victim are not sharing classrooms following a report of rape or assault by penetration and that for other reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, the proximity of the victim and alleged perpetrator and considerations regarding shared classes, sharing school or College premises and school or College transport, is considered immediately.
- Where a criminal investigation into a rape or assault by penetration leads to a conviction or caution, Bede Academy take suitable disciplinary action, if they have not already done so. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, the rape or assault is likely to constitute a serious breach of discipline and lead to the view that allowing the perpetrator to remain in the same school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the victim (and potentially other pupils or students).
- Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, Bede Academy will take suitable disciplinary action in line with the Behaviour and Discipline Policy, including a consideration of permanent exclusion. Where the perpetrator is going to remain at Bede Academy the principle would be to continue keeping the victim and perpetrator in separate classes and continue to consider the most appropriate way to manage potential contact on school premises and transport. The nature of the conviction or caution and wishes of the victim will be especially important in determining how to proceed in such cases.
- Recognition that reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment will, in some cases, not lead to a report to the police (for a variety of reasons). In some cases, rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault or sexual harassment are reported to the police and the case is not progressed or are reported to the police and ultimately result in a not guilty verdict. None of this means the offence did not happen or that the victim lied. The process will have affected both victim and alleged perpetrator. Appropriate support should be provided to both as required and consideration given to sharing classes and potential contact as required on a case-by-case basis.
- The need to sensitively support all the children and adults involved in such situations, including victims and perpetrators or alleged perpetrators, and that the wishes of the victim should be paramount when considering initial and ongoing support. Bede Academy will take all necessary precautions it can to protect victims from any bullying or harassment as a result of making an allegation. Whilst they should be given all the necessary support to remain at Bede Academy if the trauma results in the victim being unable to do this, alternative provision or a move to another school will be considered to enable them to continue to receive suitable education. This should only be at the request of the victim (and following discussion with their parents or carers).
- The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. 'Upskirting' is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and/or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Upskirting is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender can be a victim. Any allegation of upskirting will be taken extremely seriously and staff have been informed of its requisite seriousness.

KEY PROCEDURES

Responding to concerns about a child

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, as emphasised in *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, any staff member can refer their concerns directly to Children's Social Care and/or the police if:

- The situation is an emergency and the DSL, Deputy DSL, other members of the Safeguarding team, the Principal and/or the Chair of Governors are all unavailable.

- They believe that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety.
- For any other reason they make a judgement that a direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

All staff should feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role. Information about possible abuse may come to a member of staff in several ways – direct allegation from a child that has been abused, through a friend, relative or other child, through a child's behaviour or through observation of an injury to the child.

You may have a concern about a child's wellbeing based on:

- Something the child/parent has told you.
- Something you have noticed about the child's behaviour, health, or appearance.
- Something another adult/professional said or did.

Even if you think your concern is minor, the DSL may have more information that, together with what you know, represents a more serious worry about a child. It is never your decision alone how to respond to concerns – but it is **always** your responsibility to share concerns, no matter how small.

Children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected and they might not recognise their experience as harmful. They may feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers. None of this should stop staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL.

If you have a concern about a child, you should:

- Decide whether you need to find out more by asking the child, or their parent, to clarify your concerns, being careful to use open questions. It is important to remember that any questioning should be limited to the minimum necessary to seek clarification and strictly avoiding 'leading' by making suggestions or asking questions that suggest an answer. It is vital that subsequent enquiries should not be prejudiced by detailed questioning in school.
- Let the child/parent know what you plan to do next if you have heard a disclosure of abuse or you are talking with them about your concerns. Do not promise to keep what they tell you secret as you may need to inform the child or third party that they are obliged to pass on information to other members of staff such as the DSL and/or Principal, according to circumstances, as well as to other statutory agencies.
- The child or third party may need reassurance that their concerns will be handled sensitively and discreetly. For example, 'Thank you for sharing that with me. We will need to speak with a member of staff from the Safeguarding and Child Protection Team they can help us think about the next steps in making sure you are safe and have the support you need'.
- Inform the DSL or DDSL immediately by raising an incident in the safeguarding reporting section of Bromcom. The concern should be documented in as much detail as possible to allow a DSL to take appropriate action

Temporary staff, or staff without access to the safeguarding reporting system should report concerns **directly to the DSL or DDSL either in person or via the school's internal email address**. The email address that should always be used to report any concerns is welfare@bedeacademy.org.uk

- If neither the DSL nor DDSL are available, speak to the Principal. If there is no other member of staff available, you must make the referral yourself.
- When recording a Child Concern referral on CPOMs, complete a written record as soon as possible after the event, noting: name of child; date, time and place; who else was present; what was said/what happened/what you noticed – speech, behaviour, mood, drawings, games or appearance; if child or parent spoke, record their words rather than your interpretation; analysis of what you observed and why it is a cause for concern. This written record must be shared with the DSL via CPOMS which will create a secure record of the event.

Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will act and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. *Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners: Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers* supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children.

Involving parents/carers

In general, we will discuss any safeguarding or child protection concerns with parents/carers before approaching other schools or agencies and will seek their consent to making a referral to another agency. Appropriate staff will approach parents/carers after consultation with the DSL. However, there may be occasions when the school will contact another school or agency before informing parents/carers because it considers that contacting them may increase the risk of significant harm to the child.

Parents/carers will be informed about our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy through our website.

Multi-agency work

We work in partnership with other agencies to promote the best interests of our students and keep them as a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect them. Where the student already has a safeguarding social worker or family support worker, concerns around escalation of risks will be reported immediately to the social/ family support worker, or in their absence, to their team manager.

When invited, the DSL or DDSL will participate in a strategy meeting, usually by conference phone, adding school-held data and intelligence to the discussion so that the best interests of the student are met. We will co-operate with any child protection enquiries conducted and ensure representation at appropriate inter-agency meetings, TAF, CAF, Children in Need, Initial and Review Child Protection Conferences, and Core Group meetings. We will provide reports as required for these meetings. If the school is unable to attend, a written report will be sent and shared in advance of the meeting.

Where a student is subject to an inter-agency Child Protection Plan or a multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) meeting, the school will contribute to the preparation, implementation and review of the plan as appropriate.

