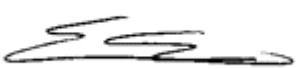




St. Helen's Catholic Primary School

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Policy Type	Required
Review Period	Annual
Date of last review	Autumn 2026
Next review	Autumn 2027
Approved by Local Governing Committee and signed by Elsa Corr, Chair of Governors	
Date	18 September 2026
Published on St Helen's Website	

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DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR:	Elsa Corr, Vice-Chair of Governors
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LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO): <i>Where there are concerns/allegations in respect of people working with children</i>	01702 534539 LADO@Southend.gov.uk safeguardingforchildren@southend.gov.uk (unsecure) safeguardingforchildren@southend.gcsx.gov.uk (secure) <i>Where the information being shared is sensitive, eg personal and confidential, it is recommended to use a secure email</i>
For out of hours referrals to the LADO, please email the online referral form and return to safeguardingforchildren@southend.gov.uk	01702 215007 option 2 C-SPOC@southend.gov.uk
Children's Social Care and Supporting Families, Southend City Council: Where schools have urgent concerns for the safety and welfare of a child or young person	Out of hours duty line 0345 606 1212
OUT OF OFFICE HOURS: To make URGENT referrals	0345 606 1212

POLICY FOR CHILD PROTECTION

Our Mission

Respect yourself.

Respect everyone in our school community.

Respect everyone in our local community.

Respect everyone in our global community.

But most of all, respect God our Father in Heaven.

Aims of the policy

This policy aims:

- To set out the processes and systems in place at our school to ensure that all our pupils feel safe and secure
- To ensure that the whole school community is aware of their safeguarding duties to each and every child
- To set out the language that the school community will use regarding safeguarding
- To ensure that our pupils feel that they can share any and all concerns they may have, both at home and school
- To develop a consistent and robust approach to recording and addressing safeguarding concerns
- To ensure that staff create a safe and secure learning environment, where pupils feel protected
- To work alongside home settings to ensure that relationships between school and home promote a culture of safety

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Learning About Me Policy, Rights & Responsibilities Policy, Critical Incident Policy, Use of Physical Intervention Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Attendance Policy, Use of Physical Intervention Policy, Digital Safety, Staff Code of Conduct, Dealing With Allegations Against the Workforce Policy and Whistleblowing Policy.

1. Introduction

"Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child."

(Keeping Children Safe in Education – DfE, 2026)

This Child Protection policy is for all staff, parents, governors, volunteers and the wider school community. It forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for our school and should be read in conjunction with the following:

- ☐ Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2026)
- ☐ the Rights & Responsibilities Policy
- ☐ the Staff Behaviour policy (Staff Code of Conduct)

- ☐ the safeguarding response to children missing from education
- ☐ the role of the designated safeguarding lead (Annex B of KCSIE)

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (*everyone under the age of 18*) is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education as:

- ☐ Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- ☐ protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- ☐ preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ☐ ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- ☐ taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Our school has a whole-school approach to safeguarding, which ensures that keeping children safe is at the heart of everything we do and that it underpins all systems, processes and policies. We will always listen to and advocate for children and ensure that our work reflects the voice of the child.

It is important that our values are understood and shared by all children, staff, parents/carers, governors and the wider school community. We believe that everyone who comes into contact with children has a role to play in safeguarding them and that, only by working in partnership, can we truly keep children safe.

2. Statutory framework

There is government guidance set out in [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(DfE 2026\)](#) on how agencies must work in partnership to keep children safe. This guidance places a shared and equal duty on three Safeguarding Partners (the Local Authority, Police and Health) to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area under multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. These arrangements sit under the Southend Safeguarding Children's Partnership <http://www.safeguardingsouthend.co.uk>. In Southend, the statutory partners are Southend on Sea City Council, Essex Police and the Integrated Care Board for mid and south Essex (MSE ICB).

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (*Section 157 for Independent schools*) places a statutory responsibility on the Local Governing Committee to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils of the school.

In addition to national statutory guidance, in Southend, all professionals must work in accordance with the [SET Procedures](#). Our school also works in accordance with the following legislation and guidance (*this is not an exhaustive list*):

Guidance

- [Keeping children safe in education](#) (DfE, 2026)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) (DfE, 2026)
- [Working together to improve school attendance](#) (DfE, 2026)
- [Generative AI: product safety expectations](#) (DfE, 2026)
- [School suspensions and permanent exclusions](#) (DfE, 2026)
- [Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges](#) (DfE, 2026)
- [Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force in schools](#) (DfE, 2026)
- [Mobile phones in schools](#) (DfE, 2026)
- [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education](#) (DfE, 2025)

- [Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools](#) (DfE, 2025)
- [Behaviour in schools](#) (DfE, 2024)
- [Information Sharing](#) (DfE, 2024)
- [Teaching online safety in schools](#) (DfE, 2023)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation in schools](#) (DfE, 2023)
- [Preventing and Tackling Bullying](#) (DfE, 2017)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) (HMG, 2015)
- [Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#) (DfE, 2024)
- [Early help and effective support](#) (Essex Safeguarding Children Board, 2026)
- [Education Access Team – Children Missing Education / Home Education policy and practice](#) (Essex County Council, 2023)
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
- Crime and Policing Act 2026
- Victims and Prisoners Act 2024
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006
- Children Act 2004
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (S. 74 – Serious Crime Act 2015)
- Education Act 2002
- Children Act 1989

3. Roles and responsibilities

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them and to provide a safe environment in which they can learn and achieve their full potential. However, there are key people within schools, the Local Authority and other agencies who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures. The names of those in our school with these specific responsibilities (the designated safeguarding lead and deputy designated safeguarding lead) are shown on the cover sheet of this document. However, we are clear that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that everyone who comes into contact with children has a role to play.

The Local Governing Committee

The Local Governing Committee has overall responsibility for safeguarding in our school. It ensures that that our safeguarding arrangements comply with all legal duties and that our policies, procedures and training in our school are effective and comply with the law at all times. It ensures that all required policies relating to safeguarding are in place, that the Child Protection Policy reflects statutory and local guidance and that it is reviewed at least annually.

The governor for safeguarding arrangements is named on the front cover of this document. This governor takes strategic responsibility at Local Governing Committee level for safeguarding arrangements in our school and a 'whole-school approach' to this. The Local Governing Committee ensures there is a named designated safeguarding lead and at least one deputy safeguarding lead in place

The Local Governing Committee ensures the school engages with statutory safeguarding partners and contributes to multi-agency working, in line with statutory and local guidance. It understands the importance of sharing information in keeping children safe and ensures that information is shared and stored appropriately and in accordance with statutory requirements.

The Local Governing Committee ensures that all adults in our school (including governors / trustees) who work with children receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction as appropriate and that it is regularly updated.

The Local Governing Committee ensures our pupils are taught about safeguarding (including online safety) through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. We teach our children how to keep themselves safe and we work in accordance with statutory guidance to help children recognise and respond to risk and to prevent them from coming to harm. We comply with government regulations which make the subjects of Relationships Education (for primary age pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for secondary age pupils) and Health Education (for all pupils in state-funded schools) mandatory.

The Local Governing Committee has specific duties around online safety and ensures we have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place to keep our children safe online. These arrangements are reviewed at least annually to ensure they are effective.

The Local Governing Committee is responsible for ensuring that adults in our school are suitable – this is done by:

- ensuring we have in place safer recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children
- ensuring we meet statutory responsibilities to check adults working with children and have recruitment and selection procedures in place (see the school's 'Safer Recruitment' policy for further information)
- ensuring volunteers are appropriately supervised in school
- online safety (including strategic oversight of filtering and monitoring systems to support this

It also ensures there is an appropriate Staff Code of Conduct Policy in place, so that adults when they start work with us are clear of the boundaries within which they operate. The Local Governing Committee ensures all staff are aware they must follow this policy and that appropriate action is taken where this does not happen.

The Headteacher

The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers (which includes headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties. Our Headteacher works in accordance with all statutory requirements for safeguarding and is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the Local Governing Committee are followed by all staff.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy / Deputies)

The designated safeguarding lead in school has ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. Their role includes managing child protection referrals, working with other agencies, ensuring all staff are appropriately trained, leading on online safety (including filtering and monitoring standards), managing and sharing safeguarding information and child protection files and raising awareness of all safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures. They ensure that everyone in school (including temporary staff, volunteers and contractors) is aware of these procedures and that they are followed at all times. They act as a source of advice and support for other staff (on child protection matters) and ensure that any referrals to Southend Children's Single Point of Contact (CSPOC) and / or the Police are made in a timely way and in accordance with current SET procedures. They work with the local authority and the Southend Safeguarding Partnership as required and ensure that information is shared appropriately.

The deputy designated safeguarding lead/leads is/are trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead. If for any reason the designated safeguarding lead is unavailable, the deputy designated safeguarding lead/leads is able to act in their absence so there is always cover for this role.

All school staff

Everyone in our school has a responsibility to provide a safe learning environment where our children can learn. We recognise the need to identify concerns as they emerge so we can stop them from escalating and all staff are therefore aware of how to identify children who may benefit from early help. They are particularly alert to children who may have additional need for support either in community-based early help or through access to other agencies.

All staff are aware of the types of abuse and safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Our staff are aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and modern slavery and they understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home or our setting and also online.

Our staff members are aware of and follow school safeguarding processes (as set out in this policy) and also know how to make a referral to Social Care, if there is a need to do so. Staff understand that, if they have any concerns about a child's welfare, they must act on them immediately and speak with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) – we do not assume that others have taken action.

Our staff understand that children may not always feel able or know how to tell someone that they are being abused. This may be because they are embarrassed, scared or do not recognise they are experiencing abuse. We understand that other children as well as adults can cause harm and that there are many factors which may impact on our children's welfare and safety. We also understand safeguarding in the wider context (contextual safeguarding) and recognise that abuse and neglect rarely occur in isolation and that in most cases multiple issues will overlap.

Our staff will always reassure children who report abuse that they are taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. We will never make a child feel ashamed for reporting abuse, nor make them feel they are causing a problem.

4. Types of abuse / specific safeguarding issues

Keeping Children Safe in Education describes abuse as 'a form of maltreatment of a child'. It sets out that:

"Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others... Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse."

The guidance refers to four main categories of abuse:

- ☐ **Physical:** a form of abuse causing physical harm to a child – this includes where an adult fabricates or deliberately induces illness in a child
- ☐ **Emotional:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development
- ☐ **Sexual:** forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities (through actual physical or online contact)

- ❑ **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 also occur during pregnancy)

In addition, Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education contains important information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. Some of these, and our approach to them, are explained in this policy.

We do not normalise abuse, and it is not tolerated in our setting. Our culture is very much one of kindness, compassion, hope, connection and belonging, underpinned by the school's core values – Resilience, Empathy, Service, Patience, Enjoyment, Courage and Trustworthiness – as well as the Catholic Social Teaching principle of the Dignity of the Human Person (*Dignitas Infinita*, April 2024).

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

Essex has adopted the following definition for CCE: *'Child Criminal Exploitation is common in county lines and occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 years. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.'* (Home Office, 2018)

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

CSE is a form of child abuse, which can happen to boys and girls from any background or community. It may occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and it can be committed by an individual or an organised network. In Essex, the definition of CSE from the Department of Education (DfE, 2017) has been adopted: *"Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when 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 activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology".*

We recognise that a significant number of children who are victims of CSE go missing from home, care and education at some point. Our school is alert to the signs and indicators of a child becoming at risk of, or subject to, CSE and will take appropriate action to respond to any concerns. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will lead on these issues and work with other agencies as appropriate.

Risk in the community (RIC)

Risk in the community is the Essex partnership approach to tackling criminal and sexual exploitation of children and young people.

We understand that safeguarding incidents and behaviours can be associated with factors in the community, outside a child's home or our school. All staff are aware of 'contextual safeguarding' and we are therefore mindful of things in a child's life which may be a threat to their safety and / or welfare. We always consider relevant information when assessing any risk to a child and will share it with other agencies when appropriate, to support better understanding of a child and their family. This is to ensure that our children and families receive the right help at the right time and to help keep our children safe.

Child-on-child abuse (including harassment, violence and sexualised behaviours)

Child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways and may occur in person and / or online. This may include bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse, physical / sexual assault, harmful sexual behaviours, 'up-skirting', 'sexting' or initiation / hazing type violence and rituals. We do not tolerate harmful behaviour of any kind in school and will take swift action to intervene where this occurs, challenging inappropriate behaviours when they occur to prevent them from escalating. We do not normalise harmful behaviour or abuse, and it is not tolerated in our setting. Our culture is very much one of kindness, compassion, hope, connection and belonging, in line with the school's core values.

Any incidents of child-on-child abuse will be managed in the same way as any other child protection concern and we will follow the same procedures. We will seek advice and support from other agencies as necessary and ensure that appropriate agencies are involved when required.

Our school recognises that some children may abuse other children and that this may happen in school, or outside of it. We understand there are many factors which may lead a child to display abusive behaviours towards other children, and that these matters are sensitive and often complex. We recognise our school may be the only stable, secure and safe element in the lives of some children, particularly those who have experienced harm and trauma. We have a duty to safeguard all children and, whilst inappropriate behaviours will be challenged and addressed, it is always considered in the context of providing appropriate support to all children where harmful behaviour has occurred. We will always take a balanced and proportionate approach to risky or harmful behaviour.

We understand the barriers which may prevent a child from reporting abuse and work actively to remove these. We use lessons and assemblies to teach children about healthy, positive relationships, how to report concerns, and to help them understand, in an age-appropriate way, what abuse is. We aim to provide children with the language to report abuse and to tell a trusted adult if someone is behaving in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. We will never make a child feel ashamed for reporting abuse, nor that they are creating a problem by doing so. We never assume, if abuse is not being reported, that it is not occurring in our school – we are vigilant to signs of abuse and promote a culture of safety and understanding.

Please refer to the school's Learning About Me Policy, Harmful Sexual Behaviour Policy Anti-Bullying Policy for details.

Children who are absent from education

All children, regardless of their age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs they may have, are entitled to a full-time education. We recognise that good attendance begins with our school being somewhere our children want to be, and also that some children find it harder to attend school for a range of reasons. We will always try to understand underlying reasons for absence and will work collaboratively with other partners to support children to attend school and to ensure that they receive the right help at the right time.

A child missing education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, and we follow the procedures for unauthorised absence and for children missing education. It is also recognised that, when not in school,

children may be vulnerable to or exposed to other risks. We believe that early intervention to address absence from school is vital, so we work with parents/carers and other partners to keep children in school and remove any barriers to them accessing their education.

Parents should always inform us of the reason for any absence. Where this does not happen, we will attempt contact with parents (parents are required to provide at least two emergency contact numbers to the school, to enable us to communicate with someone if we need to). Where contact is not made, a referral may be made to another appropriate agency (Education Access Team, Social Care or Police). Our school must inform the local authority of any pupil who has been absent without school permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

We work in accordance with the Southend Protocol for children who go missing during the school day to ensure that there is an appropriate response to children who go missing.

Further guidance can be found on the Southend Learning Network.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can involve a wide range of behaviours and may be a single or multiple/ongoing incident(s). It can include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child to parent abuse. We understand that anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, and that it can take place inside or outside of the home.

Our school recognises that exposure to domestic abuse (either by witnessing or experiencing it) can have a serious, long-term emotional and psychological impact on children. We work with other key partners and we receive / share relevant information where there are concerns that domestic abuse may be an issue for a child or family or be placing a child at risk of harm.

As part of our safeguarding arrangements and our work with safeguarding partners, our school has signed up to Operation Encompass. Operation Encompass is a national initiative which aims to provide support to children who have experienced domestic abuse. It means the Police inform us if they have attended an incident of domestic abuse which involves a child on our roll, so that appropriate support can be put in place. Any information in relation to this will be held on the child's child protection file, as with any other safeguarding information.

In Essex, the [Southend, Essex and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board \(SETDAB\)](#) is responsible for designing and implementing the Domestic Abuse Strategy and provides advice, guidance and resources to support work around domestic abuse.

Harmful sexual behaviour

We understand that children's sexual behaviours exist on a continuum, ranging from age-appropriate / developmental to inappropriate / problematic / abusive. We also understand that harmful sexual behaviour and child-on-child abuse can occur between children of any age and gender, either in person or online. We recognise that children who display harmful sexual behaviour may have experienced their own abuse and trauma, and we will support them accordingly.

Our school has a 'zero-tolerance' approach to harmful sexual behaviour of any kind, and any inappropriate behaviour is challenged and addressed. We do not accept misogynistic or misandrist behaviours and work in accordance with all statutory guidance in relation to such behaviours and with other agencies as appropriate.

We seek to teach our pupils about healthy and respectful relationships, boundaries and consent, equality, the law and how to keep themselves safe (on and offline).

It is important to remember that the school must safeguard the rights and needs of all pupils. Children will engage in all kinds of different behaviours while they are exploring their own boundaries and curiosity. To support with decision making, the school uses the Brooks Traffic Light Tool which outlines the kinds of behaviours that would fall within expected developmental curiosity and those which fall outside of that.

Please refer to our Learning About Me Policy for more information on Relationships and Sex Education and our Harmful Sexual Behaviours Policy for how we address issues when they arise.

Mental health

We recognise that good mental health for all our pupils and staff is very important, and we understand the part our school plays in this. We aim to develop the emotional wellbeing and resilience of all pupils and staff, as well as provide specific support for those with additional needs. We understand that there are risk factors which can increase someone's vulnerability and also protective factors that can promote or strengthen resilience. The more risk factors present in someone's life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are needed to counter-balance these to promote resilience and keep children safe.

We understand that mental health issues can, on occasions, develop into safeguarding concerns. Equally, our 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. We understand that, where children have suffered abuse or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Where we have concerns this may impact on mental health, we will seek advice and work with other agencies as appropriate to support a child and ensure they receive the help they need.

As part of the school's universal offer, we run the Thrive programme. This is delivered by three licensed Thrive practitioners. All staff evaluate their class emotional wellbeing profiles and the Thrive team identify pupils who may benefit from some therapeutic intervention through the programme. We also have a cranio-sacral therapist for a day a week, a play therapist for a day each week and a talk therapist for half a day. This provides the children with a safe space to work through some of their vulnerabilities and help them better access the curriculum.

It is vital that we work in partnership with parents/carers to support the wellbeing of our pupils. We expect parents/carers, if they have any concerns about the wellbeing of their child, to share this with us, so we can ensure that appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented.

Online safety

We recognise that our children are growing up in an increasingly complex world, living their lives on and offline. Whilst this presents many positive and exciting opportunities, we recognise it also presents challenges and risks, in the form of:

- ☐ **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, suicide, racist or radical and extremist views;
- ☐ **contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes;
- ☐ **conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying
- ☐ **commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and / or financial scams

All staff in our school are aware of the risks to children online. We understand any child can be vulnerable online, and that their vulnerability can vary according to age, developmental stage and personal circumstances. We aim to equip all our pupils with the knowledge they need to use the internet and technology safely, and we want to work with parents to support them to keep their children safe online.

Children must be safeguarded from inappropriate and potentially harmful content online. We have systems in school, provided by the Local Authority, to filter information and block internet access to harmful sites and inappropriate content. These systems are monitored and regularly reviewed to ensure they are effective, and all staff are trained in online safety and how to report concerns.

Please see our Digital Safety Policy for more details.

Prevention of radicalisation

As of July 2015, the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act \(HMG, 2015\)](#) placed a duty on schools and other education providers. Under section 26 of the Act, schools are required, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent Duty.

The Prevent Duty requires schools to:

- ☐ teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life and must promote community cohesion
- ☐ be safe spaces in which children / young people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas
- ☐ be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues

Channel is a national programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. If a child on roll at our school is referred to the Channel Panel, a representative from the school may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with an assessment and support plan.

Our school operates in accordance with local procedures for PREVENT and with other agencies, sharing information and concerns as appropriate. Where we have concerns about extremism or radicalisation, we will seek advice from appropriate agencies and, if necessary, refer to the Police, Social Care and/or the Channel Panel.

Serious violence

Serious violence may involve physical assault or carrying, threatening with or using a weapon. It can also be associated with Child Criminal Exploitation and our staff are aware of the risk factors and indicators which may signal that children are at risk from or involved with serious violent crime.

As with any other safeguarding issue, we will assess risk based on information received and our understanding of potential and actual violence. Any concerns will be addressed to help safeguard all children and we will work with other appropriate agencies to do so. We will always take a proportionate approach to such matters, whilst ensuring that all children and staff are appropriately safeguarded.

Honour or faith-based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage)

Honour or faith-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. We understand that this form of abuse often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse.

The Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015) introduced a duty on teachers (and other professionals) to notify the police of known cases of FGM where it appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. Our school operates in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to this issue, and in line with local safeguarding procedures.

A *forced marriage* is one entered into without the full consent of one or both parties. It is where violence, threats or other forms of coercion is used and is a crime. We will always report any concerns that a child may be or has been subjected to a forced marriage and will work with the appropriate agencies.

5. Procedures

Our school works with key local partners to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans which provide additional support. In Southend, there are prevention teams as part of the Families First Partnership, who aim to support families early on when struggles are identified and this avoiding statutory intervention through a Child in Need or a Child Protection plan.

All staff members have a duty to identify and respond to suspected / actual abuse or disclosures of abuse. Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure or allegation of abuse, or suspects that abuse may have occurred, **must** report it immediately to the designated safeguarding lead (or, in their absence, the deputy designated safeguarding lead).

All action is taken in accordance with the following guidance:

- ☐ Southend Children's Safeguarding Partnership guidelines – the SET (Southend, Essex and Thurrock) Child Protection Procedures (ESCB, 2026)
- ☐ Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2026)
- ☐ Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2026)
- ☐ PREVENT Duty – Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015)

Any staff member or visitor to the school must refer any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead or deputy designated safeguarding lead.

Where there is risk of immediate harm, concerns should be referred by telephone to the Children's Single Point of Contact team (C-SPOC) ON 01702-215007 OPTION 2 and / or the Police. All telephone referrals should be followed up by completing the C-SPOC request for Service form on line at safeguardingsouthend.co.uk. This form needs to be sent to the following email address: C-SPOC@southend.gov.uk. All C-SPOC request for service for social care will be reviewed with 24 hours.

Less urgent concerns or requests for support will be sent to the Southend Children's Safeguarding Partnership. We may also seek advice from Social Care or another appropriate agency about a concern if we are unsure how to respond to it. Wherever possible, we will share any safeguarding concerns, or an intention to refer a child to another agency, with parents or carers. However, we will not do so where it is felt that to do so could place a child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. If it is necessary for an external agency to meet with a child in school, we will always seek to inform parents or carers, unless we are advised not to by that agency. On occasions, it may be necessary to consult with the Southend Children's Safeguarding Partnership and / or Essex Police for advice on when to share information with parents / carers.

All staff understand that, if they continue to have concerns about a child, feel a concern is not being addressed or that a situation does not appear to be improving for a child, they should raise this with the designated safeguarding lead. All concerns are recorded on the school's electronic system CPOMS.

Where an immediate response is required and if, for any reason, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not immediately available, this will not delay any appropriate action being taken. Safeguarding contact details are displayed in the school to ensure that all staff members have access to urgent safeguarding support, should it be required. Any individual may refer to Social Care where there is suspected or actual risk of harm to a child.

When new staff, volunteers or regular visitors join our school they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place, the name of the designated safeguarding lead (and deputy/deputies) and how to share concerns with them. We also provide information on safeguarding to any visitor to our school, so they understand how to report a concern if they have one.

6. Children potentially at risk of greater harm

We recognise that some children may potentially be at risk of greater harm and require additional help and support. These may be:

- children with a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan, those in Care or previously in Care
- children with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues
- children requiring support with mental health
- young carers (any child who has a sibling or parent with additional needs is identified as a carer)
- children with medical needs
- children who are lesbian, gay or bisexual
- children who are questioning their gender

Our school understands that children with special educational needs (SEN) and / or disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- ☐ that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability
- ☐ that they may be more prone to peer group isolation than others
- ☐ that they may be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing signs
- ☐ potential communication difficulties in managing or reporting abuse or recognising that abuse is occurring
- ☐ potential additional risks due to higher dependency on adults and / or need for intimate care
- ☐ issues with understanding the risks online and how it may influence their behaviour

We work with Social Care and other relevant agencies to ensure there is a joined-up approach to planning for all children and that they receive the appropriate help and support.

7. Training

In line with statutory requirements, the designated safeguarding lead (and deputy/deputies) undertake Level 3 child protection training at least every two years, with relevant updates in between. The Headteacher, all staff members and governors receive appropriate child protection training which is regularly updated and in line with advice from the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB). In addition, all staff members and other adults working with children in our school receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Records of any safeguarding / child protection training undertaken are kept for all staff and governors.

The school ensures that the designated safeguarding lead (and deputy) also undertakes training in inter-agency working and other matters as appropriate.

8. Information sharing and confidentiality

Sharing information is a key part of safeguarding work and we understand that decisions about how much information to share, with whom and when, can have a profound impact on a child's life. All schools in Southend are signed up to a collective information sharing protocol which enables us to share and receive information with the Local Authority in a legal, safe, and secure way, to support our work in keeping children safe.

Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. Whilst the Data Protection Act 2018 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information, where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm. Similarly, human rights concerns, such as respecting the right to a private and family life, would not prevent sharing information where there are real safeguarding concerns. Fears about sharing information cannot (and will not) stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse or neglect. Generic data flows related to child protection are recorded in our Records of Processing Activity and are regularly reviewed; and our online school privacy notices accurately reflect our use of data for child protection purposes.

A member of staff will never guarantee confidentiality to anyone (including parents/carers or pupils) about a safeguarding concern, nor promise to keep a secret. In accordance with statutory requirements, where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the designated safeguarding lead and may require further referral to and subsequent investigation by appropriate authorities.

In some cases, it may be necessary for the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) to share information on individual child protection cases with other relevant staff members. This will be on a 'need to know' basis only and where it is in the child's best interests to do so.

Information sharing can help to ensure that a child receives the right help at the right time and can prevent a concern from becoming more serious and difficult to address.

All staff are contractually bound to the Staff Code of Conduct which prohibits sharing of information inappropriately and beyond the school. Any breaches of this expectation are dealt with under the school's Discipline and Dismissals Policy.

9. Child protection records

Accurate records are an essential aspect of effective child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school and when these records should be shared with other agencies.

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse will record it on CPOMS (a digital platform for raising concerns) as soon as possible, noting what was said or seen (if appropriate, using a body map to record), giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and signed and will include the action taken. The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), receives a notification that a concern has been raised and will decide on appropriate action and record this accordingly.

Prior to the introduction of CPOMS, any records relating to child protection were kept on an individual child protection file for that child (which is separate to the pupil file). All child protection records are stored securely

and confidentially in an archive cupboard and will be retained for 25 years after the pupil's date of birth, or until they transfer to another school / educational setting.

In line with statutory guidance, where a pupil transfers from our school to another school / educational setting (including colleges), their child protection records will be forwarded to the new setting. These will be marked 'Confidential' and for the attention of the receiving school's designated safeguarding lead, with a return address on the envelope so it can be returned to us if it goes astray. We will obtain evidence that the paperwork has been received by the new school and then destroy any copies held in our school. Where appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead may also make contact with the new setting in advance of the child's move there, to enable planning so appropriate support is in place when the child arrives.

Where a pupil joins our school, we will request child protection records from the previous educational establishment (if none are received).

10. Multi agency working

We understand the importance of working together to keep children safe, and there is a legal requirement to do so.

We work with other relevant agencies, such as social care, the virtual school, police and health/mental health services to support children and keep them safe. This includes where a child in our school (or who was previously known to us) has a Child in Need, Child Protection or Care Plan. Where this is the case, it is the responsibility of the designated safeguarding lead to ensure our school is represented at, and that a report is submitted to, any statutory meeting called. Where possible and appropriate, any report will be shared in advance with the parent(s) / carer(s). The member of staff attending the meeting will be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the school has and be prepared to contribute to the discussions.

If a child is subject to a Care, Child Protection or a Child in Need plan, the designated safeguarding lead will have oversight of their school attendance, emotional well-being, academic progress, welfare and presentation, linking with other agencies as appropriate. Where the school is part of the core group, the designated safeguarding lead will ensure we are represented, provide appropriate information and contribute to the plan at these meetings. We will report on the child's progress in school, and any concerns about them will be shared at the meeting, unless to do so would place them at risk of harm. In this case the designated safeguarding lead would speak with the child's key-worker outside of the meeting, and as soon as there is a concern.

11. Allegations about members of the children's workforce

We ensure all staff members (including agency staff) are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are outlined in our Staff Behaviour policy / Code of Conduct. All staff are regularly reminded of this through updates and training, and are also informed about our Whistleblowing Policy.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2026) and the SET procedures (ESCB 2026) set out the procedures in respect of allegations against an adult working with children (in a paid or voluntary capacity). These procedures should be followed where an adult has:

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

This is known as the harm test. Any concerns about an adult in our setting should be reported to the Headteacher or the designated safeguarding lead, who will then decide how to take this forward. In some cases, it might not be clear whether an incident constitutes an allegation. If this is the case, it will be necessary for us to explore the concerns to establish some facts – this initial fact-finding is not an investigation, it is to clarify information and to direct our response to the concern raised.

Where an allegation against a member of staff is received, and it is felt that any of the above criteria apply, the SET procedures (ESCB, 2026) require this to be reported to the Duty Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01702 534539 and LADO@Southend.gov.uk

. We may not carry out any investigation before a referral to the LADO has been made.

In the event of an allegation relating to the conduct and behaviour of an agency member of staff, the Headteacher (or Deputy) will liaise with the agency, while following due process, to facilitate a joint investigation or enable the agency to move this forward.

Any concern relating to the Headteacher should be reported directly to the Chair of Governors, who will refer the matter to the LADO as above.

Staffing matters are confidential and the school operates within a statutory framework around Data Protection. We do not share information about any individual staff member with anyone other than appropriate statutory agencies.

12. Behaviour, use of physical intervention and reasonable force

Our Rights & Responsibilities Policy sets out our approach to behaviour for all children and also for those with more detrimental or harmful behaviour. We recognise there are some children who have needs that require additional support and a more personalised approach and we always consider all behaviour, and our response to it, in the context of safeguarding.

We work in accordance with the DfE guidance: [Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance \(DfE 2026\)](#) and our approach to this is set out in our Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force Policy.

Please see our Use of Physical Intervention Policy for more details.

13. Mobile Phones

In line with the [Mobile phones in schools \(DfE 2026\)](#), our school is a phone-free environment. Our approach to this forms part of our wider safeguarding arrangements and is detailed in our Rights & Responsibilities Policy.

14. Whistleblowing

All members of staff and the wider school community should be able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and feel confident any concern will be taken seriously by the school leadership team. We have 'whistleblowing' procedures in place and these are available in the school Whistleblowing Policy. However, for any member of staff who feels unable to raise concerns internally, or where they feel their concerns have not been addressed, they may contact the [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](#) on: 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) or by email at: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Parents or others in the wider school community with concerns can contact the NSPCC general helpline on: 0808 800 5000 (24 hour helpline) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Please see our Whistleblowing Policy for more details.

14. General principles

All partners working with children, young people and their families will offer support as soon as we are aware of any additional needs. We will always seek to work together to provide support to children, young people and their families at the lowest level possible in accordance with their needs.

Children with **Additional** needs are best supported by those who already work with them, organising additional support with local partners as needed. When an agency is supporting these children, an Early Help Plan and a Lead Professional are helpful to share information and co-ordinate work alongside the child and family.

For children whose needs are **Intensive**, a coordinated multi-disciplinary approach is usually best, involving planning with a Lead Professional to work closely with the child and family to ensure they receive all the support they require. Examples of intensive services are children's mental health services.

Specialist services are where the needs of the child are so great that statutory and/or specialist intervention is required to keep them safe or to ensure their continued development. Examples of specialist services are Children's Social Care or Youth Offending Service. By working together effectively with children that have additional needs and by providing coordinated multi-disciplinary/agency support and services for those with intensive needs, we seek to prevent more children and young people requiring statutory interventions and reactive specialist services

Monitoring & Evaluation

This policy is monitored regularly by the Head Teacher who must report any safeguarding concerns to the Local Governing Committee. It is reviewed at least annually and always in light of changes to guidance, legislation and internal improvements to practice.

APPENDIX A – Child Missing Education Protocol for Southend

Children Missing Education (CME)

The DfE define a child missing from education as a child of compulsory school age who is not on a roll at a school or a child that has unauthorised leave for a long period of time from school and cannot be contacted. It is vital we identify and report children who may be missing education as these are children who are at risk and may be living a life of abuse.

Part 1 (Clause 4) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a statutory duty on Local Authorities to make arrangements to establish the identities of Children Missing Education (CME). The CME procedures introduced by the Council in September 2007 in response to the Act must be used by all schools and settings in the City. All schools and settings have a responsibility for ensuring that they are aware of the guidance and have procedures in place for identifying children and referring them to the local authority.

There is a fundamental principle that all officers of the Council and other partners have responsibility to report children missing education. If anybody is aware of any child or young person who does not appear to be accessing education they should make a referral. Where parents inform an officer or partner (such as GP, housing officer, community group leader), that a child or young person is not in school due to being home educated, it is advisable that the professional contact the local authority (LA) Elective Home Education (EHE) team, to ensure they are known to the LA. Enquiries can be made by emailing EHE@southend.gov.uk.

School Responsibilities

When a parent/carers notifies the school that a pupil will be leaving it is the duty of the school to obtain the full name of the pupil, the full name and address of any parent/s with whom the pupil normally resides, at least one telephone number of the parent/s, and the pupil's future address and destination school. (This includes those under or over compulsory school age where the pupil is on roll at a school or educational setting and must be shared with the local authority.)

Destination known

If a school is informed that a pupil is moving out of the City and the parent/carers has provided the school with the destination details the school should wait **10 working days** before making a CME referral to give time for the pupil to start the destination school and the common transfer file (CTF) to be requested. During this time school should stay in contact with the parent to obtain details about schools they have applied for.

Destination unknown

If the whereabouts of a pupil are not known, then the school must complete their own checks within the initial **10 working day** period. These checks include the below but are not exhaustive:

- Conducting home visits
- Contacting the parent via letter/phone/email
- Contact the emergency contacts that school hold for the pupil to try to ascertain the family whereabouts

- Contact local schools if they know a sibling attends.

Following the school making reasonable enquires you must complete the electronic CME referral form in full, with as much information that you hold regarding the family and their possible whereabouts and evidence of all the enquiries already undertaken.

Pupil does not attend school on the expected admission start date

Schools must enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. For standard transition points (entering nursery, reception, year 3, 7 and 12), the pupil should be registered on the schools roll on the expected start date (usually the first date of the school term in September). For in-year admissions, the pupil should be entered on the schools roll, on the expected start date as communicated to the parent.

If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts. Where the whereabouts are unknown and the school has not been notified that the child has started at an alternative setting, the school must raise a CME referral to the local authority at the earliest opportunity. Where the whereabouts are known and the parent is refusing to send the child to school, the school should follow up using their usual school attendance processes.

Under and over compulsory school age in a school based setting

For a child under compulsory school age (nursery and/or reception), where the whereabouts are unknown the statutory duties sit with the school to make reasonable enquiries to locate the child. Southend local authority extends their duties to include under compulsory school age children within the CME referral criteria only where the whereabouts are unknown or where children have not arrived at the expected destination.

For a post compulsory school age pupils you should make contact with the Connexions service regarding the young person's onward destination or likelihood of becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).

Moving abroad

Where a parent notifies a school that their family are going to move abroad, it is essential that the school takes effective safeguarding steps to ensure that the information that has been received is a true record of what the family intend to do. It is expected school would meet with the family and ask the following questions which then need to be recorded on the CME form:

- Do parents have a clear and settled plan?
- Can they provide a forwarding address in the new country?
- Can they provide details of the educational provision in the new country (such as name and address of new school)
- Does the child know where they are going and why?
- Does the child's understanding match what the parents have said?
- Is the child fearful of the move?
- What are friends of the child saying?
- Copies of tickets/bookings to confirm date of departure and destination
- Schools should also consider any safeguarding concerns of the destinations and identify any concerns related to trafficking, forced marriage and FGM.

For further information, please refer to 'Keeping children safe in education, statutory guidance for schools and colleges' (DfE)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

If, after 10 days from leaving the school and a notification has not been received from the onward destination school after making enquiries with the parents, a CME referral should be made to the local authority where checks will be completed.

Local Authority

Following receipt of the CME the Local Authority will then make extensive enquiries to ensure that children are located. We work together with our local partner agencies to ensure that we complete all checks within our powers to find children who have been deemed "missing". When these checks return negative, we ask school to place the pupils name on a national database called School 2 School, which has a repository sometimes incorrectly referred to as the Lost Children Database. Entry onto this database means that, when a child is enrolled at their new destination, their records are available to the new establishments as you would have been unable to send them ourselves.

In addition to the Schools investigations, the following checks are completed by the Local Authority following the receipt of a CME referral:

- Checks on internal systems including youth offending service, Supporting Families team, education systems and social care
- Phone calls to family
- Visits to home address
- Discussions with neighbours/known family members/letting agents
- Council tax enquiries
- Housing options team enquiries
- Benefit checks
- Health checks to see if family have accessed health services
- And police welfare/boarder checks
- Checks with other local authorities to see if the family are known in that area.

Removing pupils from the roll

Once the child is traced at a new school / address or it can be confirmed that the child has left the country, the Local Authorities Lead Officer will liaise with the school following the CME referral regarding the date the child may be removed from roll.

Children can only be removed from the admissions register in certain defined circumstances. These are set out in The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 section 8. Any other deletions are illegal and could result in court action against the person responsible.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7f5e4a40f0b6230268f135/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

When deletion is allowed

The main circumstances in which a child, of compulsory school age, can be deleted are:

- Parents have notified the school of their intention to home educate
- Child has moved to another school and school had confirmed this
- Child has died
- Child has been permanently excluded from the school
- Child has reached school leaving age and is not continuing in school for 6th form
- Child has a long-term illness and will not return to school before the end of compulsory education
- Child in custody for more than 4 months
- Child has 20 consecutive school days of unauthorised absence; school and LA have exhausted all options of locating the child
- Failure of child to return from extended family holiday; school and LA have exhausted all options of locating the child

Special Schools

Pupils can only be deleted from the roll of a special school with consent of the local authority. The only exceptions to this are if the child has died or been permanently excluded.

The Full guidance from the DfE can be found using the link below, this was issued in September 2016. This Statutory guidance sets out key principles to enable Local Authorities in England to implement their legal duty under Section 436a Education Action 1996 to make arrangements to identify as far as it is possible to do so, children missing education(CME)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

Finally it should be noted that this guidance does not apply to young people who run away from home or care placement. This group is subject to separate arrangements detailed in the LSCB protocol "Children and Young People who go missing from home and care"

CME Key contact details

Southend's Named Officer for CME is

Kirsty Chesterman –Senior Practitioner

Email for referrals and enquiries : cme@southend.gov.uk

Telephone: 01702-215783 **Writing to:** Children Missing Education, Department for People, Civic Centre, Victoria Avenue, Southend on Sea SS2 6ER