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Safeguarding Policy

Approved by:	Younes Henini	**Date:**	01/09/2026
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Next review due by:	01 September 2027		

The policy reflects current legislation, accepted best practice and complies with the government guidance: Working Together to Safeguard Children December 2023 and Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2026

Other policies that may need to be taken into account are:

- **Anti-bullying (contained within the Behaviour Policy)**
- **Child protection policy (including Safer recruitment)**
- **PSHE**
- **Behaviour and attendance**
- **SEND / LAC**
- **Health and safety**
- **Physical intervention (contained within the Behaviour policy)**
- **E-safety (social media/GDPR)**
- **Management of Allegations**
- **Whistleblowing policy**
- **Staff Conduct policy (Code of Conduct)**
- **Visitors policy**

Safeguarding Policy

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1 Introduction

At Stone Soup Academy, all staff, including the governing body fully recognise the contribution the school makes to safeguarding children.

We recognise that the safety and protection of all pupils is of paramount importance and that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in providing early help protecting pupils from harm.

We believe that the school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes all pupils' social, physical, emotional and moral development. In delivering this ambition we will adhere to the principles set out in the NCSCP Policy, Procedures and Practice Guidance.

Ultimately, effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by putting children at the centre of the system, and by every individual and agency playing their full part, working together to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children, in line with Working Together 2023 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

Aims of the Policy

The aims of this policy are to:

- confirm that the students' development is supported in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence
- raise the awareness of teachers, engagement team, non-teaching staff and volunteers of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse
- confirm the structured procedures to be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected harm or abuse
- emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff and those with designated responsibility for child safeguarding, health and safety and other safeguarding responsibilities
- emphasise the importance of maintaining and implementing appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and arrangements of those service providers who use the school's premises through extended schools or provide any other before and after school activities
- emphasise the links with the school's policy for safer recruitment of staff and volunteers, and for managing allegations
- confirm the working relationship with the NCSCP and other agencies and, where appropriate, with similar services in neighbouring authorities.

Definition of safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard children (2023) is defined as;

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and is defined for the purpose of this guidance as activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

Effective safeguarding means practitioners should understand and be sensitive to factors, including economic and social circumstances and ethnicity, which can impact children and families' lives.

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 The Governing body

Chair of Governors: Aftab Hussain
Nominated Governor for Child protection and safeguarding: Chris Manze

The responsibilities of the Governing body are:

- To ensure a member of the governing body is nominated to liaise with the local authority and/or partner agencies on issues of child protection in relation to safeguarding and in the event of allegations of abuse made against the Headteacher or member of governing body.
- To ensure that the school has a child safeguarding policy, single central record, staff behaviour policy and procedures in place, operates safe recruitment procedures, makes appropriate checks on staff and volunteers and has procedures for dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers that all comply in accordance with Nottingham City Safeguarding Children partnership.
- To ensure that the Academy creates a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, adopt recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might pose a risk to children (Part three: Safer Recruitment, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026).
- To ensure the Academy has an appointed member of staff from the Academy's Senior Leadership Team to to take on the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead
- To ensure there are also appointed Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads which cover both sites.
- To ensure that both sites always have a DSL onsite.
- To ensure the Academy keeps an up to date Single Central Record of pre-employment checks, specifying when the check was made and when it will be renewed.
- The monitoring of the adequacy of resources committed to child safeguarding, and the staff and governor training profile
- To recognise that neither it, nor individual governors, have a role in dealing with individual cases or a right to know details of cases (except when exercising their disciplinary functions in respect of allegations against staff)
- To make sure that the child safeguarding policy is available to parents and children on request
- To ensure this policy and practice complements other policies

2.2 The Headteacher

Headteacher of Stone Soup Academy: Younes Henini

The responsibilities of the Headteacher are:

- To ensure policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body are followed by all staff.
- Ensure the Safeguarding policy is updated annually, and be available publicly either via the Academy website or by other means.
- Nominate a staff member to review the policy in accordance with the NCSCP policies and procedures .
- To ensure sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Designated safeguarding Leads and other staff to discharge their responsibilities. This includes allowing staff time to attend and take part in multi-agency meetings, to contribute to the assessment and support of children and young people, and be appropriately trained.
- To ensure there is a single central database of all staff and volunteers, and their safeguarding training dates are maintained and that this list confirms that all staff and those volunteers who meet the specified criteria have had a DBS check, when this check was made and when it will be renewed.
- To ensure all staff and volunteers feel able to raise their concerns about poor and unsafe practice in regard to students, such concerns are addressed in a timely manner in accordance with agreed policies.
- To ensure all staff, including volunteers, lunch time staff, teachers and non teaching staff are aware of the signs that may indicate possible safeguarding concerns. This could include, for example, poor or irregular attendance, persistent lateness, children missing from education or signs of abuse.
- In turn, all visitors are asked to bring formal identification. Once onsite they must sign in at the main reception. No visitor is permitted to enter the school via any other entrance under any circumstances. All visitors will be required to wear the Academy identification lanyard / ID badge which outlines who they are visiting. This must remain visible throughout the visit.
- Visitors will be required to read a brief overview of the Academy's safeguarding policy.
- Visitors will then be escorted to their point of contact OR their point of contact will be asked to come to reception to receive the visitor. The contact will then be responsible for them while they are on site.
- The visitor must not be allowed to move about the site unaccompanied unless they are registered on the Approved Visitor List (to be on this list, the person must have a current clear DBS check and children's barred check with a copy of this registered on the school's central record. They must then follow the procedures above e.g. sign into the visitor's book and enter the premises via reception).

2.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Younes Henini

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads:

- **Susan Murphy**
- **Rebekka Ashmore**
- **Oliver Sillito**
- **Laura Hendren**
- **Rachel Burton**
- **Katy Smith**
- **Helen Lovell**

The responsibilities of the DSL's are:

- To ensure their roles are explicitly defined in their job descriptions
- To ensure they are given sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively
- To undergo DSL training every two years
- To liaise with relevant agencies in accordance with the NCSCP procedures when referring a pupil where there are concerns about possible abuse or harm
- Where there are concerns about a member of staff's suitability to work with children, contact the LADO.
- Be able to access the contents of the NCSCP procedures and Personnel procedures and make these accessible to all staff
- To ensure all staff, including supply staff, visiting professionals working with students in the school and volunteers are informed of the names and contact details of the designated leads and the school's procedures for safeguarding children
- To attend strategy meetings, looked after reviews and/or case conferences
- Provide support staff and volunteers who may find safeguarding issues upsetting or stressful by enabling them to talk through their anxieties and to seek further support from the school leadership group or others as appropriate
- To ensure involvement of other designated leads e.g. where there are concerns about a pupil who is 'looked after'.

Designated Safeguarding leads will ensure that:

- All child protection records are marked as such and kept securely locked
- All confidential information is stored and logged using CPOMS.
- All absence letters are dated and clearly signed by the Personal coach and Head of Engagement, and any concerns about attendance and a pupil's wellbeing and safety are reported to SLT and discussed with parents and if necessary, the NCSCP.
- Phone calls about absences are logged and dated
- The children missing education - statutory guidance for local authorities 2016 is adhered to
- Where a student is subject to a Child Protection Plan, and is absent without explanation for two days, their key worker in Children's Social Care is contacted.
- Where a student has a **child protection plan** or there are on-going child protection enquiries

and transfers to another school
    - The designated lead for Safeguarding is informed immediately
    - Their child protection file is copied for any new school or college as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main student file.

Designated Safeguarding Leads are required to:

- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and Academy leadership staff.

- Their role could include ensuring that the Academy and their staff, know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children.

2.4 Staff Responsibilities

All staff, teaching and non-teaching, volunteers and others working in school need to:

- Be aware that to safeguard children, they have a duty to share information with the designated leads, and through the designated lead, with other agencies
- Be aware that despite the requirement to share information with designated leads they can make their own referral to children's Social Care, e.g. in urgent situations.
- Be alert to signs of harm and abuse
- Know how to respond to their duty when they have concerns or when a student discloses to them and to act
- Know how to record concerns and what additional information may be required
- Undergo child safeguarding training every year via the Educare online training program
- Maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'
- Ensure they have read and understood KCSIE Part 1 each year
- Ensure they know how to report a concern through CPOMS
- Refresh their safeguarding knowledge by taking part in staff training at the beginning of each Academic year
- Ensure they are aware of who the DSL and Deputy DSL's are and have their contact details in order to report concerns asap verbally as well as give a written report
- Be aware of the staff code of conduct

All staff have a responsibility to act in order to protect young people from potential harm. This can include the following:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Bullying (including cyber bullying)
- Discrimination, racism, disability, homophobic or transphobic abuse

- Gender based violence
- Child on Child abuse
- Sexual harrassment / sexual violence
- Radicalisation / extremism
- Child Criminal Exploitation
- County Lines
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Online safety - risks linked to using technology and social media, including online bullying; the risks of being groomed online for exploitation or radicalisation; and risks of accessing and generating inappropriate content, for example 'sexting'
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Substance / alcohol misuse
- Domestic abuse / domestic violence
- Honour based violence - including breast ironing, female genital mutilation, forced marriage
- Modern slavery / trafficking
- Fabricated / induced illness
- Parenting issues
- Homelessness
- Gang culture / youth violence
- Self-harm / suicidal ideation
- Abduction
- Cyber crime

Safeguarding is not just about protecting young people from deliberate harm, neglect and failure to act. It relates to broader aspects of care and education, including:

- Young people's health, safety and wellbeing - including mental health
- Meeting the needs of young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- meeting the needs of young people with medical conditions
- Providing first aid
- Providing offsite educational visits
- Meeting the emotional needs of young people

3. Reporting concerns

In the first instance, all staff must discuss their concern with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in their absence, one of the Deputy DSL's immediately. All concerns will be reported and recorded via the Academy CPOMs system.

If at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, the Designated Safeguarding Lead must be made aware immediately.

3.1 Immediate response to the young person

It is vital that our actions do not harm the learner further or prejudice further enquiries, for example:

- LISTEN - Do not ask closed or leading questions, interrogate or give opinions. Some disclosures may be upsetting or shocking - try to avoid showing this
- Staff may observe bruises but must not ask a learner to remove their clothing to observe them
  Accept what the learner says and acknowledge how hard it may be for them to confide
- DO NOT promise confidentiality
- Inform the learner that you will have to speak to someone and pass on your concerns but assure them they have done the right thing

3.2 Recording information

- If possible, staff can make brief notes if necessary. Any notes made must be destroyed following the discussion with the student
- Log and record as soon as possible on CPOMS
- If it is an observation of bruising or an injury, staff must verbally report to the DSL immediately, followed by a report on CPOMS outlining the injury using the body map.

3.3: Early help

Professionals should be alert to the need for early help for a child who:

• is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
• has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit
• has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending.

4. Supporting learners

All staff recognise that a young person who is abused or has witnessed something concerning may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth. Staff also recognised that in these circumstances pupils may feel helpless and humiliated and they may feel self-blame.

We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a student in these circumstances might range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

4.1 Academy support

The Academy will support all learners by:

- Discussing Child Protection cases with due regard to safeguarding the student and his/her family
- Provide support for learners who are or thought to be in need or at risk (in line with the NCSCP procedures)
- Encourage self-esteem and self-assertiveness
- Allocate each learner with a personal coach
- Challenge aggressive behaviour, bullying or discriminatory behaviour
- Promote a caring, safe and positive environment

4.2 Safe touch guidance
At Stone Soup Academy, we hope young people feel valued and cared for at all times. Physical touch can be a way of communicating empathetically, and during the normal course of working with young people, physical contact is to be expected, but staff must be aware that: An example of appropriate physical contact may be a hand shake, fist bump, a hand on the shoulder or a brief arm around the shoulder side to side.

Children may respond to touch in different ways
We cannot assume that all young people will understand a touch that is intended as a friendly gesture.
Children in our care may have backgrounds where there has been inappropriate physical contact or even abuse. These children will be confused about adult-child contact and may experience it as intrusive. This can have consequences for the child and for any staff member where a touch, meant as a caring gesture, is reported as inappropriate.

Abusers can use caring touch to disguise their behaviour.
In line with our child protection policy at Stone Soup Academy, we maintain the attitude that child abuse is not only a problem for other institutions, but "it could happen here". Our policies on physical contact with children must take into account the need to protect young people from the possibility of abuse.
Staff should be role models as children learn to understand the appropriateness of physical contact in different situations.

It is often appropriate for children to be given some physical contact and comfort, but this must always be offered with the following caution:
• Ensure there are other adults around and staff should be prepared to be accountable to them
• Do not show favour to individual students.
• The area between a child's waist and mid-thigh or near the chest should not be touched in normal circumstances
• Where a child tries to become physically closer than appropriate, it is important they do not feel rejected, but are gently guided to a more appropriate behaviour by a positive suggestion.
• Support involving putting your arm around a student should be short and side by side.

5. Confidentiality

The personal information about all learners and their families is regarded by those who work in this school as confidential. All staff and volunteers need to be aware of the confidential nature of personal information and will aim to maintain this confidentiality.

Staff understand that they need to know only enough to prepare them to act with sensitivity to the learner and to refer concerns appropriately.

The designated safeguarding leads will disclose information about the learner to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

It is inappropriate to provide all staff with detailed information about the learner, incidents, the family and the consequent actions.

Staff must be aware that where there are concerns about the learner's welfare, relevant agencies need to be involved at an early stage. If a member of staff or a volunteer has concerns about the learner's welfare, or if they disclose that s/he is suffering abuse or reveals information that gives grounds for concern, the member of staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding lead with a view to passing on the information.

6. Working with Parents/Carers

Parents and carers play an important role in protecting their children from harm. In most cases, the Academy will discuss concerns about the learner with the family and, where appropriate, seek their agreement to make referrals to Children and Families Direct.

Where there are any doubts, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should clarify with Children and Families Direct whether, and if so when and by whom, the parents should be told about the referral.

The learner's views will be considered in deciding whether to inform the family, particularly where the learner is sufficiently mature to make informed judgments about the issues, and about consenting to that.

> "Nothing is more important than children's welfare. Every child deserves to grow up in a safe, stable, and loving home. Children who need help and protection deserve high quality and effective support. This requires individuals, agencies, and organisations to be clear about their own and each other's roles and responsibilities, and how they work together. Whilst it is parents and carers who have primary care for their children, local authorities, working with partner organisations and agencies, have specific duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area."
> Working Together 2023..

The Academy aims to help parents understand that we have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all learners. The Academy may need to share information and work in partnership with

other agencies when there are concerns about a learner's welfare.

7 Professional Development and Staff training

The governors recognise that all staff and volunteers who work with young people aged up to 18 years need to have appropriate child safeguarding training that equips them to recognise and respond to student welfare concerns.

The Academy will ensure staff are given mandatory induction, which includes familiarisation with child safeguarding policy, staff behaviour policy, the Designated leads in the school, their responsibilities and procedures to be followed.

Safeguarding training includes:

- Half termly online safeguarding training via Educare (all staff)
- Designated senior lead training (DSLs every 2 years)
- Safer recruitment training (every 3 years)

A report of the school's training needs assessment is presented to the governors annually so that they can ensure that training is appropriately provided for all staff.

A training register is kept to indicate when staff and governors have been trained and this in turn informs the annual report to governors.

Safer recruitment training has been attended by:

- Susan Murphy (Sept 2026)
- Younes Henini (Sept 2026)
- Oliver Sillito (Sept 2026)
- Katy Smith (Feb 2024)
- Becky Ashmore (Feb 2024)
- Laura Hendren (Nov 2025)
- Duncan Bennett (Feb 2024)
- Michelle Bramhall (Nov 2025)

8 Prevention in the Curriculum
The Academy recognises the importance of developing awareness of the learners' knowledge of safeguarding and behaviours which could cause themselves or others harm.

8.1 PSHE program
The PSHE programme in each key stage provides personal development opportunities for students to learn about keeping safe and who to ask for help if their safety is threatened. As part of developing a healthy, safer lifestyle, students are taught to, for example:

- Gang culture
- Knife crime
- Sexual harassment
- Child on Child abuse
- Drugs / alcohol misuse
- Online safety - covering sexting / social media misuse and the law regarding indecent images
- Mental health awareness - including self-harm and suicidal ideation
- Sex education and religious education
- Healthy relationships
- Domestic violence
- Extremism and radicalisation

Some young people may be particularly vulnerable to abuse and harm. The Designated Safeguarding lead should be aware of the range of guidance that is available and vigilant to concerns being raised by staff and learners which need to be reported in accordance with national (Government) and local (NCSCP) procedures without delay. The lead should also ensure staff working with young people are alert to signs which may indicate possible abuse or harm.

9. Learners with SEND

Young people with disabilities are more likely than others to be abused, neglected or exploited. Sometimes this is because of high care needs, increased vulnerability or the range of other factors that affect other young people.
Parenting children with disabilities comes with additional stresses or challenges, which can heighten the potential for abuse, neglect or exploited, especially in the context of a society where there remains much prejudice and barriers to disabled children and their families.
Similar factors affect young people experiencing mental health conditions. Professionals can sometimes miss signs of abuse due to the complexity of young people's needs, an acceptance of things being how they are, or allowing their recognition of the challenges facing parents to cloud their judgement leading to abuse, neglect and exploitation being under-reported.
The Academy must maintain a 'Professional curiosity' with those learners with SEND. For example

- not accepting that an injury is a result of the needs of the young person, but instead consider what other causes there may be and what the evidence suggests.
- considering a behaviour such as self-harm as possibly being indicative of abuse.
- recognising the potential for fabricated or induced illness
- As with all learners, concerns must be raised with the DSL and procedures followed. The SENCO will be responsible for providing details of learners with SEN to all staff.

10. Children missing in education / absent from education

The DfE's Working together to improve school attendance is now statutory guidance.

There are many circumstances where a young person may become missing from education so it is vital that all staff at the Academy are aware of the attendance procedures and monitor all learners, reporting any concerns of attendance asap. Those at risk of missing education can include:

- Children at risk of harm / neglect
- Children of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families
- Children of service personnel
- Missing children and runaways
- Children supervised by Youth Justice services
- Children who cease to attend school
- Children of new migrant families
- Children at risk of CCE
- Children at risk of CSE
- Children at risk of abduction
- Looked After Children / Children in Care (LAC / CIC)

Being absent, as well as missing, from education can be warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, including sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or child criminal exploitation. We have a dedicated attendance team within the Academy and a Parent engagement officer who conducts home visits when students are absent from education.

Attendance champion: Younes Henini

11. Child on Child abuse

Child on Child abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between children and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate).
Child-on-Child abuse can take various forms, including: serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), relationship abuse, domestic violence, child sexual exploitation, youth and serious youth violence, harmful sexual behaviour, and/or gender based violence
All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers.
The Governors, Senior Leadership Team, and all staff and volunteers at Stone Soup Academy are committed to the prevention, early identification and appropriate management of Child-on-Child abuse both within and beyond the School.
All staff should be alert to the well-being of learners and be able to identify the signs of abuse, and should engage with these signs, as appropriate, to determine whether they are caused by Child-on-Child abuse.

All staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all Child-on-Child abuse issues (including sexual harrassment, sexual violence and harmful sexual behaviours) are fed back to the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead so that they can spot and address any concerning trends and identify students who may be in need of additional support.
- This can be done by way of a weekly staff meeting at which all concerns about students are discussed.
- Challenging the attitudes that underlie such abuse (both inside and outside the classroom)
- Working with Governors, Senior Leadership Team, all staff and volunteers, students and parents to address equality issues, to promote positive values, and to encourage a culture of tolerance and respect amongst all members of the School community
- Creating conditions in which our learners can aspire to and realise safe and healthy relationships
- Creating a culture in which our learners feel able to share their concerns openly, in a non-judgmental environment, and have them listened to
- Responding to cases of Child-on-Child abuse promptly and appropriately.

11.1 Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of the Academy. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Some examples include:

- Making sexual comments, sexual remarks and/ or calling somebody a sexualised name
- Sexual jokes or ‘taunting’
- Physical behaviour such as deliberately brushing by someone, touching someone

inappropriately, interfering with another person's clothing, displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
- Online sexual harassment
- Sharing of indecent images - consensual or non consensual
- Upskirting
- Unwanted sexual comments
- Sexual coercion or threats of a sexual nature

It is important that the Academy and all staff consider sexual harassment in broad terms. Sexual harassment (as set out above) creates a culture that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

11.2 Sexual violence

It is important that the Academy and all staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their Childs in this way and that it can happen both inside and outside of school.

With guidance and advice from the Sexual offences act 2003, examples of sexual violence include:

- **Sexual assault** - A person commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person, the touching is sexual, does not consent to the touching and the perpetrator does not reasonably believe that the other person consents. **The Academy should be aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault**
- **Assault by penetration** - A person commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, the victim does not consent to the penetration and the perpetrator does not reasonably believe that the victim consents.
- **Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent -** A person commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, the victim does not consent to engaging in the activity, and the perpetrator does not reasonably believe that the victim consents. (This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.)
- **Rape -** A person commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person with his penis, the victim does not consent to the penetration and the perpetrator does not reasonably believe that the victim consents.

11.3 Consent

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g.to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom.

Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

- A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity
- The age of consent is 16

- Sexual intercourse without consent is rape

11.4. Harmful sexual behaviour

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. A useful umbrella term is "harmful sexual behaviour" (HSB). The term has been widely adopted in child protection and is used in this advice. HSB can occur online and/or face to face and can also occur simultaneously between the two. HSB should be considered in a child protection context.

When considering harmful sexual behaviour, ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature.

It is effective safeguarding practice for the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) to have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour. The Principal must ensure that staff are fully trained and in particular all DSL's have a high knowledge in this area. This will aid in planning preventative education, implementing preventative measures and incorporating the approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment into the whole academy's approach to safeguarding.

Harmful sexual behaviour can, in some cases, progress on a continuum. Addressing inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. Children displaying harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important that they are offered appropriate support.

All staff across the Academy have a duty of care to report any concern of a sexual nature to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

12. Child Criminal Exploitation

Child criminal exploitation is increasingly used to describe this type of exploitation where children are involved, and is defined as:

"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. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology."

Criminal exploitation of children is broader than just county lines, and includes for instance children forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft. (DFE, CCE Feb 2020)

CCE can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years. It can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual. CCE can involve and/ or enticement- based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence. It can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, male or females, young people or adults.

One of the key factors found in most cases of county lines exploitation is the presence of some form of exchange (for example, carrying drugs in return for something).

Research shows that 15-16 years is the most common age range for CCE. The use of social media plays a large role in the exploitation of children and young people. Gangs are known to target vulnerable children and adults. These include:

- Having prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse or exploitation
- Lack of a safe and stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic violence or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality for example.
- Social isolation or social difficulties
- Economic vulnerability
- Homeslessness or insure accommodation status
- Connections with other people involved in gangs
- Having a physical or learning disability
- Having mental health or substance misuse issues
- Being in care
- Being excluded from mainstream education

12.1 County Lines

County lines drug dealing is a national issue involving organised drug dealing networks exploiting children and vulnerable adults to move, hold and sell Class A drugs across the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines to take orders.

Although Class A drug supply underpins county lines offending, exploitation remains integral to the business model and county lines offenders recruit, transport and exploit children and vulnerable adults to carry out activity including preparing, moving, storing and dealing illegal drugs.

The victims are often children, commonly males aged 15 to 17 years, who are groomed with money, gifts or through sexual and violent relationships, and forced to move, store and deal Class A drugs.

Children as young as 11 years of age have been reported as being exploited. It is important to stress here that child victims can be both male and female. Methods of control include:

• Debt bondage, including staged robberies;

• Sexual abuse, particularly against females, including for blackmail and humiliation purposes;

• Violence (real and threatened) is used to coerce victims to become dealers, enforce debts, and use victim's accommodation as an operating base;

• Kidnap against victims and their families.

County lines and the associated violence, drug dealing and exploitation has a devastating impact on children, vulnerable adults, families and local communities. The UK Government defines county lines as: "County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons."

12.2 Serious youth violence

Serious Youth Violence is defined as *'any offence of most serious violence or weapon enabled crime, where the victim is aged 1-19' i.e. murder, manslaughter, rape, wounding with intent and causing grievous bodily harm*. 'Youth violence' is defined in the same way, but also includes assault with injury offences.

One factor which influences a child's propensity to imitate violence is parenting which is permissive and neglectful, resulting in a lack of guidance and creating ineffectiveness and poor self-control for a

child. The child is then not equipped to resist an environment or group which instigates violence.

13 Child Sexual Exploitation

The sexual exploitation of children and young people (CSE) under 18 is defined as that which:

> *Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual 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.* (DFE, CSE Feb 2017)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of abuse which involves children (male and female, of different ethnic origins and of different ages) receiving something in exchange for sexual activity. Schools are well placed to prevent, identify and respond to children at risk of sexual exploitation.

Child sexual exploitation can happen to any young person from any background. Although the research suggests that the females are more vulnerable to CSE, boys and young men are also victims of this type of abuse.

The characteristics common to all victims of CSE are not those of age, ethnicity or gender, rather their powerlessness and vulnerability. Victims often do not recognise that they are being exploited because they will have been groomed by their abuser(s). As a result, victims do not make informed choices to enter into, or remain involved in, sexually exploitative situations but do so from coercion, enticement, manipulation or fear. Sexual exploitation can happen face to face and it can happen online. It can also occur between young people.

In all its forms, CSE is child abuse and should be treated as a child safeguarding issue.

Forced marriage

Everybody has the right to choose who they marry, when they marry or if they marry at all.

'Forced marriage is when you face physical pressure to marry (for example, threats, physical violence or sexual violence) or emotional and psychological pressure (for example, if you're made to feel like you're bringing shame on your family).

If you're under 18 any marriage is considered a forced marriage, even if there is no physical or emotional pressure involved.'

Forced marriage is illegal in England and Wales. This includes:

- taking someone overseas to force them to marry (whether or not the forced marriage takes place)
- arranging a marriage for someone who lacks mental capacity (whether they're pressured to or not)
- arranging a marriage for someone before they turn 18

If there are any concerns around forced marriage within our school community - the Academy will act immediately and report to the police and necessary agencies

14 Preventing Radicalisation
Statutory guidance has been published and is available here:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance
Details of training and more detailed guidance will be shared as it becomes available.

Preventing violent extremism by countering the ideology of extremism and by identifying those who are being drawn into radicalism has for some time formed part of our approach to safeguarding. The Counter-terrorism and Security Act 2015 now imposes a duty on a wide range of bodies including all schools.

Compliance will be monitored through various inspection regimes such as Ofsted that will be looking to see that organisations have assessed the level of risk and that staff are appropriately trained to look out for signs of radicalization. Also schools will be monitored to ensure they are aware of the process for making referrals to Channel, the panel that reviews and refers individuals to programmes to challenge extremist ideology.

If you have any concerns about individuals who may be being drawn into support for extremist

ideology, please contact the Prevent Team prevent@nottinghamshire.pnn.police.uk who will then contact you to discuss whether a referral should be made. Although a police team, their role is to support early intervention so that vulnerable children or adults do not end up facing criminal sanctions.

Regular training and discussion within the school environment is important and should be led by the Designated Leads for safeguarding.

15. Filtering and monitoring - Smoothwall

The Principal has a responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at Stone Soup Academy. There is also an expectation for all staff and volunteers to undergo CPD training around filtering and monitoring.

KCSIE 2026 includes a link to the DfE guidance **Generative AI: product safety expectations**. This guidance on generative artificial intelligence (AI) explains how filtering and monitoring requirements apply to the use of generative AI in education and supports schools to use generative AI safely.

In accordance with KSCIE September 2026, the Academy has an online safety audit in place and also a nominated senior leader who oversees this. The named person is Oliver Sillito.
The filtering and monitoring system we use is SMOOTHWALL. This is also integrated within CPOMS.

Cyber security training is also provided as part of CPD.

Inappropriate content that filtering systems in place manages across the Academy:

- Discrimination
- Drugs / substance abuse
- Extremism
- Gambling
- Malware / hacking
- Pornography
- Piracy and copyright theft
- Self-harm
- violence

Online monitoring is about observing and tracking our Academy's community's digital activities, including web browsing, social media interactions and chat conversations.
It aims to identify potential risks and rule violations and raise alerts that can be acted on.
Some systems will also help in monitoring device usage by staff and students.

The DSL assumes primary responsibility for safeguarding and online safety, which includes overseeing and responding to:

- Filtering and monitoring reports
- Safeguarding concerns
- Checks on filtering and monitoring systems on different devices around the school and different users

The IT service provider holds technical responsibility for:

- Maintaining filtering and monitoring systems
- Providing filtering and monitoring reports
- Taking appropriate actions following concerns or system checks

Working with the SLT and DSL, the IT service provider should:

- Procure suitable systems
- Identify potential risks
- Conduct regular reviews and checks to ensure the effectiveness of the systems

Online safety:
Disinformation, **misinformation** and **conspiracy theories are risks to young people.**

Disinformation is the deliberate creation and spread of false or misleading content, such as fake news.

Misinformation is the unintentional spread of this false or misleading content

16. Data protection

To keep children safe and make sure they get the support they need, we can share information with other schools and children's social care teams. It's not usually necessary to ask for consent to share personal information for the purposes of safeguarding a student.

The DSL will decide if personal data needs to be shared. They should make sure they record:

- who they're sharing that information with
- why they're sharing the data
- whether they have consent from the pupil, parent or carer

Occasionally, we may need to share personal information about students with local authorities, other schools or children's services. For example:

- if a pupil shows signs of physical or mental abuse, you may need to pass this information on to children's services
- another school may need to know which pupils will be at their sports day or on a joint school trip
- Sharing information can help provide appropriate services that safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR provides a framework to make sure that personal information is shared appropriately.

Before you share any data, staff must:

- consider all the legal implications
- check if you need permission to share the data
- confirm who needs the data, what data is needed and what they'll use it for

- make sure that you have the ability to share the specified data securely
- check that the actions cannot be completed or verified without the data

We also have a statutory requirement to share personal data about your pupils with the DfE through the school census.

We may also need to share personal data about their staff with the local authority.

To securely share and transfer pupil records, you could:

- use CPOMS transfer system
- send them to a named person using an encrypted email
- ask your local authority to transfer them
- deliver any paper records in person or ask the new school to collect them

There may be some circumstances where it may not be appropriate to ask for consent, however. For example:

- if the individual cannot give consent
- it's not reasonable to ask for consent
- when there's a safeguarding concern

We will usually need to get the pupil's consent to share their data if they're aged 13 or over. If they're under 13, staff must get consent from whomever holds parental responsibility for the child.

Guidance on understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility is also available. The Information Commissioner's Office has guidance to help you understand a child's rights over their personal data.

How to get consent

Staff can get consent in different ways. It must be clear that the individual agrees to share their personal data and understands what they're agreeing to. Do not use pre-ticked boxes or add disclaimers that by not responding they are agreeing to share their data. Stone Soup Academy should keep a record of:

- the consent
- when you got the consent
- how you got the consent – for example, keeping the letter you sent to parents or carers

When getting consent, the following needs to be explained:

- what personal information you're sharing
- why you're sharing it

- who you're sharing it with and what they'll use it for
- how you'll share their information
- the process for withdrawing consent

Any letters that are sent to parents or carers that ask for a reply slip that includes personal data should have a data protection statement. This could mean linking to a privacy notice or including information within the letter.

17. Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or gender questioning

A child or young person being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, they can sometimes be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are.

New legislation outlined in KCSIE 2026:

Safeguarding Framework: Grounded in recommendations from The Cass Review, the framework treats social transition as an active intervention that requires careful, child-centred decision-making led by a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). [1, 2]

Parental Engagement: Schools must involve parents or carers in discussions and requests regarding social transition (such as changes to names, pronouns, or uniform) wherever possible, unless doing so places the child at a heightened risk of significant harm. [1, 2, 3]

Single-Sex Spaces: The guidance mandates absolute rules for single-sex facilities, stating that schools must not allow pupils into toilets, changing rooms, or residential accommodation designated for the opposite biological sex, with no exceptions. [1]

Sports and PE: Where sports require single-sex groupings for safety, no exceptions apply; otherwise, schools should balance inclusion with fairness and safety considerations. [1, 2]

Cautious Approach: Primary schools in particular must exercise extreme caution regarding social transition requests, ensuring decisions are not rushed or solely child-led. [1, 2]

Appendix A: Safeguarding Information for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Designated Senior Lead for Stone Soup Academy:
Younes Henini

Deputy DSL's:
Younes Henini
Oliver Sillito
Becky ashmore
Susan Murphy
Rachel Burton
Katy Smith
Helen Lovell

To contact any of our safeguarding leads, please call 0115 822 1834.
Alternatively please email :
lhendren@stonesoupacademy.org.uk
rburton@stonesoupacademy.org.uk

Nottingham City Council contacts: NCSCP
Children and Families direct:
CityMASH@nottinghamcity.gov.uk
Contact: 0115 8764800

For urgent safeguarding referrals, please contact Children and Families direct and submit the online MARF (Multi Agency referral form) within 48 hours of initial referral.
For more information please visit:
http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/article/26182/Children-and-Families-Direct

For all LADO enquiries for Nottingham City - there is now a direct online referral form:
https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/lado

LADO - Caroline Hose

DSL consultation line (City - general enquiries and advice)
07711189544

DSL consultation line (County - general enquiries and advice)
0115 9774247

For any non-safeguarding school queries, please contact:

The Safeguarding In Education Team email: safeguardingineducation@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Nottingham city safeguarding children Partnership is the forum for agreeing how services and partner agencies safeguard children and improve their wellbeing.
safeguarding.partnerships@nottinghamcity.gov.uk
0115 876 4762

Nottingham County Council contacts: Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

Children's social care:
Mash.safeguarding@nottscc.gcsx.gov.uk
Contact: 0300 500 80 90
Out of hours service: 0300 456 4546

For urgent safeguarding referrals, please contact Children's social care and submit the online MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub form) within 48 hours of initial referral.
For more information please visit:
http://site.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/caring/protecting-and-safeguarding/nscb/concerned-about-a-child/

LADO: Nottinghamshire County council
LADO@nottscc.gov.uk
Contact: 0115 8041272