

Hartismere School



Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy No 19

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ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mrs C Jones (Assistant Headteacher)	01379 870315
Other contactable DSL(s) on school site and/or deputy DSL(s):	Mr G Luxton (Headteacher)	01379 870315
	Ms S Gray (Headteacher)	01379 870315
	Mrs D Buttle (Assistant Headteacher)	01379 870315
	Mrs J Hudson (Assistant Headteacher)	01379 870315
	Mrs L Frost (Key stage 3)	01379 870315
	Miss P Farenden (Key stage 4)	01379 870315
	Mrs J Leeper (Key stage 5)	01379 870315
	Mrs L Warner (SEND)	01379 870315
Contactable DSLs not on school site:	N/A	
Designated member of senior Leadership team if DSL (and deputy) cannot be on site	Ms S Gray	01379 870315
Headteachers	Mr G Luxton Ms S Gray	01379 870315
Local authority Designated officer (LADO)	Simon Hope	LADO@suffolk.gov.uk 0300 123 2044
Chair of Governors	Mr P McEwen	01379 870315
Safeguarding link Governor	Mrs K Baker	01379 870315 office@hartismere.com
Designated person for children in care	Mrs C Jones Ms P Farenden	01379 870315
Chair of Trustees	Marion Ravenhill	office@hartismere.com

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of Hartismere School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is to ensure that every child who is a registered student at our school is safe and protected from harm. This policy will give clear direction to staff, volunteers, visitors and parents about the expected behaviour and our legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children at our school. We will always work to provide help and support to meet the needs of children and young people as soon as problems emerge and to protect children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. 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 interest of the child.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Our school fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children from harm and to support and promote the welfare of all children who are registered students at our school. The key elements of our policy are prevention, protection and support.
- 2.2 Our policy applies to all students, staff, parents, Governors, volunteers, and visitors.
- 2.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2026), which is statutory guidance to be read and followed by academies and colleges, and alongside 'Working together to safeguard children' (March 2026), a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. 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 arrangements. These arrangements sit under the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership. All staff in school must read 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' Part 1.

These documents are available via the following links:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a4cf903b7203c4c023fd2f3/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2026.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/69fb1c28d0e316a40f269a5b/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2026_a_guide_to_multi_agency_working.pdf

3. PROCEDURES

- 3.1 At least one person conducting any interview for a post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and will be in line with local safeguarding procedures. Candidates for posts at the school will be informed that online searches will be undertaken as part of pre-recruitment checks.

- 3.2 When new staff, volunteers or regular visitors join our school they will be informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. A copy of the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is available on the website or a hard copy can be made available on request from the Main Office. They will also be shown the safeguarding recording process on My Concern and given information on how to complete it. Relevant checks will be undertaken for any visitors working with children.
- 3.3 Every new member of staff or volunteer will have an induction period that will include essential safeguarding information. Claire Jones and Geoff Luxton will be responsible for ensuring that the programme is both organised and implemented. The induction will include basic safeguarding information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, how to record any such disclosure and issues of confidentiality surrounding any disclosure. The induction will also remind and highlight to staff and volunteers of their responsibility to safeguard all children at our school and the remit of the role of the Senior Designated Professional and Designated Safeguarding Leads.
- 3.4 New staff who have not had any child protection training or staff who have had training more than three years ago will complete safeguarding induction and then be included in the full statutory *Introduction to Safeguarding* training.
- 3.5 All regular visitors and volunteers to our school will be told where our policy is kept, will be given a set of safeguarding procedures, will be told who all of our Senior Designated Leads are including who alternate staff members are, and what the recording and reporting system entails. There is a notice displayed in reception with the relevant names and telephone numbers on, including contact details for the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO).
- 3.6 When a new student joins our school, all parents and carers will be informed that we have a Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. This will be given to parents should they request a copy. Parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries and what happens should we have cause to make a referral to Customer First (first point of contact for social services in Suffolk).

4. TRAINING

- 4.1 Every member of staff will undertake appropriate safeguarding training at least every three years. The Designated Safeguarding Leads, the alternate designated members of staff and any other senior members of staff who may be in a position of making referrals or attending child protection conferences or core groups will attend Designated Safeguarding Lead training. This training will be updated at least every two years.
- 4.2 Our Governing Body will also undertake appropriate training to ensure they are able to carry out their duty to safeguard all the children at our school. The named link Governor will also undertake Single Central record checks, on a regular basis, with the Lead DSL. The Lead DSL will be responsible for coordinating pupil panels for the link Governor to look at safeguarding within the school.

- 4.3 We actively encourage all of our staff to keep up to date with the most recent local and national safeguarding advice and guidance. This can be accessed on www.suffolksp.org.uk.
- 4.4 Staff can find the most up to date national safeguarding information on <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection>
- 4.5 The Headteachers and the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be used as a first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern in our school.

5. CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES

- 5.1 Staff members may be asked to attend a child protection conference on behalf of the school in respect of an individual child. Usually, the person attending from school will be the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Assistant Headteacher in charge of safeguarding, or deputy. In any case, the person attending will need to have as much relevant up to date information about the child as possible.

A child protection conference will be convened if a referral has been made and following an investigation the findings are such that the child is considered to be at risk of harm, or if the child is already subject to a Child Protection plan or Child in Need plan. A review conference will be held to monitor the safety of the child and the required reduction in risk.

- 5.2 Staff may be required to attend child protection conferences or core group meetings to represent the school. For the most up to date information regarding child protection conferences, staff will have access to *Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2026* and will have access to multi agency training to equip them to carry out this task.
- 5.3 All reports for child protection conferences will be prepared in advance using the *Education Report to Child Protection Conference Form*. The information contained in the report will be shared with parents either at the conference or before and will include information relating to the child's physical, emotional and intellectual development. A risk assessment relating to the continuing risk of harm to the child will also be included, if required.
- 5.4 Child protection conferences can be upsetting for parents. We recognise that we are likely to have more contact with parents rather than other professionals involved. We will work in an open, honest and transparent way with any parent whose child has been referred to Children's Services or whose child is subject to a Child Protection plan. Our responsibility is to promote the protection and welfare of all children and our aim is to achieve this in partnership with our parents.

6. CHILD IN CARE/ LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND OUR SCHOOL

- 6.1 We will ensure that our school is doing all that we can to help children in care fulfil their potential and contribute to school life. It is the responsibility of the Designated person to ensure that each child has a Personal Education Plan (PEP) as part of their overall care plan.
- 6.2 The Designated person or their representative will meet with other agencies to review the progress of all children at Hartismere School who are in care or looked after, including working with the virtual school head to discuss how the needs of the Looked After Child may best be met

- 6.3 The Governing Body will ensure that there is a named Governor with responsibility for Children in care/ Looked After Children. This is Mrs K Baker.

7. PRIVATE FOSTERING

- 7.1 A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes halfsiblings and stepparents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins. Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.
- 7.2 We have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where we are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although academies have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the School. However, it should be clear to the School who has parental responsibility.
- 7.3 School staff should notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The School itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

8. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) AND DISABILITIES

- 8.1 Children and young people with SEN and disabilities can be more susceptible to safeguarding risks, such as:
- Staff may not be able to spot the signs of abuse in children with SEND or assume that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.
 - Pupils with SEND may be prone to peer group isolation and more vulnerable to bullying, coercion and 'grooming' without outwardly showing any signs.
 - Pupils with SEND may experience increased feelings of anxiety which prevent them from 'speaking out'.
 - Some pupils with SEND rely on adults for personal care, and this vulnerability puts them at greater risk of being harmed or abused.
 - Pupils with SEND are more likely to work alone with a single adult, putting them at greater risk of being harmed or abused.
 - Pupils with SEND may not be able to recognise that they are being abused
- 8.2 In addition to these increased risk factors, disabled children and young people may have communication difficulties which make it difficult to tell others what is happening to them. Adults, including professionals assessing their needs and caring for them, may concentrate on the child's special needs and overlook signs and symptoms that they are being maltreated.

8.3 All staff must therefore be aware of and extra vigilant to the possible indicators of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation for disabled children and young people. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will liaise regularly with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and the appropriate year team, maintaining a culture of vigilance and being alert to any relevant new information or concerns.

8.4 If staff have a concern for a disabled child or young person they must consider:

- The child/young person's communication needs and how they can communicate effectively with them
- What information in relation to the child/young person's disability and special needs staff need to be aware of in order to assess risk of abuse
- What resources staff require in order to undertake an informed assessment of safeguarding risk
- Where child protection issues are considered regarding a child with disabilities, there must be involvement by key professionals who know the child well, including those who have a comprehensive understanding of the child's disability, method of communication, and any associated medical condition.

8.5 Schools should consider what specialist advice, guidance and training may be required in order for staff to understand why children with SEND can be more vulnerable to abuse and how to recognise signs of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation of disabled children and young people.

8.6 Children and young people who are, or may be LGBT are not inherently at additional risk of harm, but they can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT. Students know the trusted adults in school with whom they can be open, and the safe spaces, such as the School's wellbeing service, the learning support department and the Blue Room are available to help them speak out or share their concerns with members of staff. The School's programme of RSHE, as well as its life lessons and tutor programme helps students counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

9. SAFE STAFF

9.1 All adults who come into contact with our children have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. There is a legal duty placed upon us to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of our children are competent, confident and safe to do so.

9.2 Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the wellbeing and very best outcomes for our children. We do recognise that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made. Allegations sometimes arise from a differing understanding of the same event, but when they occur they are distressing and difficult for all concerned.

9.3 We also recognise that many allegations are genuine and there are some adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children. We will take all possible steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that the adults in our school are safe to work with our children. We will always ensure that the Suffolk Safeguarding Children's Board procedure *Responding to Position of Trust Concerns*

September 2020 is adhered to. All adults who come into contact with children will be made aware of the steps that will be taken if an allegation is made.

- 9.4 Any allegations concerning members of staff should be reported to the headteachers in the first instance. Advice in Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026) (Safeguarding Concerns or allegations made about staff, including trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) will be used by the headteachers to establish where concerns:

- meet the harm threshold
- are low level concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

We will seek advice where deemed appropriate from our LADO. Neither the Headteachers nor any other member of school staff will investigate these matters. We will seek and work with the advice that is provided where appropriate.

- 9.5 If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors) harming or posing a risk of harm to children, then:
- this should be referred to the headteachers
 - where there is a concern/allegation about either of the headteachers, this should be referred to the chair of governors,
 - Should an allegation be made against the Headteacher/s, this should be reported to the Chair of the Governing Body who will liaise with the LADO.
 - If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers or contractors) that does not meet the harm threshold, then this should be shared in accordance with the School's low-level concerns policy.

There will be occasions when some form of physical contact is inevitable, for example if a child has an accident, is hurt or is in a situation of danger to themselves or others around them. The school refers to the Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People 2022 when discussing the appropriateness of the use of physical contact.

- 9.6 If staff, visitors, volunteers or parent helpers are working with children alone they will, wherever possible, be visible to other members of staff. They will be expected to inform another member of staff of their whereabouts in school, who they are with and for how long. Doors, ideally, should have a clear glass panel in them and be left open.
- 9.7 There are sensible steps that every adult should take in their daily professional conduct with children. This can be found in the Investigation, Referral and Support Coordinator guidance for *Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings*.

10. OUR ETHOS

- 10.1 Our school will establish and maintain an environment where our students feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to. Children at our school will be able to talk freely to any member of staff or regular visitor to our school if they are worried or concerned about something.

- 10.2 All staff and regular visitors will, either through training or induction, know how to recognise a disclosure from a child and they will know how to manage this. We will not make promises to any child, and we will not keep secrets. Every child will know what their chosen adult will have to do with whatever they have been told.
- 10.3 All staff will be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or are being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.
- 10.4 The School's approach is a preventative one as this is most effective in the preparation of pupils and students for life in modern Britain and helps create a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment. The School's programme of evidence-based RSHE is delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and is reinforced throughout the whole curriculum. The programme is developed to be fully inclusive and age and stage of development appropriate (especially when considering the needs of children with SEND and other vulnerabilities).
- 10.5 At all times we will work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies.
- 10.6 The School's approach to online safety is governed by the four areas of risk outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026):
- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism and extreme sexual or physical violence
 - contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or AI applications that simulate this; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
 - conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images, including AI generated images and online bullying)
 - commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams
- 10.7 Where the School provides remote education, guidance from the DfE *Safeguarding and remote education and Providing remote education: guidance for schools* is used, along with guidance from the NSPCC. Guidance for families is provided on the School's website under *'Remote Education Provision: guidance for pupils, parents and carers*

11. RECORDS AND MONITORING

- 11.1 If we are concerned about the welfare or safety of any child, adults in school will record their concern on 'My Concern' (a secure, online reporting system) which immediately alerts the Designated Safeguarding Lead, deputy and identified staff. Any written information will be kept in a separate named file, in a secure cabinet and separate from the child's academic file. These files are the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads and information will only be shared within school on a need to know basis for the protection of the child.
- 11.2 Any safeguarding information will be kept in the file and will be added to as and when it is pertinent to do so. Copies of referrals, invitations to child protection conferences, core groups and reports will be stored there.
- 11.3 Reports of a concern to the Safeguarding Designated Lead must be recorded on 'My Concern' which includes a record of the person recording the information. If written notes are produced, the notes will be signed and dated by the person with the concern and those notes stored in the child's file as outlined in 11.2.
- 11.4 If a child leaves our school roll, we will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead makes contact with the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the new school and the file will be forwarded within 5 days.

12. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 12.1 At Hartismere School the Headteachers are responsible for identifying a senior member of staff to be the Safeguarding Designated Lead. Through appropriate training, knowledge and experience, our Designated Safeguarding Leads will liaise with Children's Services and other agencies where appropriate and make referrals to Children's Services.
- 12.2 Any concern for a child's safety or welfare will be recorded on 'My Concern' and given to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Senior Safeguarding Designated Lead at Hartismere School is currently Mrs C Jones, Assistant Headteacher. Other Safeguarding Designated Leads may represent our school at child protection conferences and core group meetings and will be responsible for ensuring that all staff members and volunteers are aware of our policy and the procedure they need to follow. The Designated Person for Looked After Children at Hartismere School is Miss P Farenden.
- 12.3 The Safeguarding Designated Lead and the other Designated Safeguarding Leads will ensure that all staff, volunteers and regular visitors have received appropriate child protection information during induction and have access to single agency training. Where appropriate, the Safeguarding Designated Lead will also ensure further joint agency training is applied for and attended by staff who are required to attend.
- 12.4 The Designated Safeguarding Leads are responsible for:
- Managing referrals from School staff or any others from outside the School;
 - Working with external agencies and professionals on matters of safety and Safeguarding;

- Undertaking relevant training and attending update sessions;
- Raising awareness of Safeguarding and child protection amongst the staff and parents;
- ensuring that child protection information is transferred to the pupil's new school/School within five days of the start of a new term or within five days for an in-year transfer
- Ensuring that the School have a nominated governor to liaise with the Designated Lead for Suffolk and any partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse made against the principal
- Ensuring all staff receive the appropriate training, and keep it up to date, in line with advice from Suffolk County Council.
- Notifying the Children's Social Care department if there are concerns over unexplained absences of a pupil;
- Informing the local authority when a private fostering arrangement is in place
- Managing security within the School and reviewing it annually;
- Ensuring that important policies, such as those for behaviour and bullying, are kept up to date;
- Keeping up to date all child records;
- Have an overview of the numbers of Safeguarding and child protection referrals, and report (with anonymised information), to the Governing body termly and annually about the School Safeguarding activity over the previous term or year.
- Having in place effective ways to identify emerging problems and potential unmet needs for individual children and families;
- Ensuring that the curriculum makes best use of Citizenship and PSHE opportunities to cover Safeguarding issues with children
- Ensuring at least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training.
- Ensuring the adherence to statutory responsibilities to check staff working with children, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for checks beyond what is required; and ensuring volunteers are appropriately supervised.
- Ensuring procedures are in place to handle allegations against members of staff and volunteers.
- Ensuring there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children.
- Ensuring that there is support available for staff involved in difficult child protection cases/incidents both at the School and externally through counselling and/or other services.
- Creating a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and in the School's development;
- Ensuring through the safeguarding curriculum that students know the process of raising a concern (about themselves or a friend/other), that they know the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy), and are aware of other support mechanisms such as ChildLine etc.
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead to promote the educational achievement of children who are Looked After and to ensure that this person has appropriate training and making this policy available to parents and carers as appropriate;
- Ensuring that our staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role;
- Ensuring all staff have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time

- Ensuring all records are kept up to date and secure and kept separately from the main student file in a locked location.
 - Fulfilling their duties in line with KCSIE 2026 Appendix B
- 12.5 The Governing Body of the School will ensure that our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is in place and is reviewed annually.
- 12.6 The Governing Body will receive a safeguarding report that will record training that has taken place, the number of staff attending and any outstanding training requirements for the school. It will also record all safeguarding activity that has taken place, for example, meetings attended, reports written, training or inductions given. It will not identify any individual students.
- 12.7 Should an allegation be made against the Headteachers of the school, the Chair of Governors will be responsible for liaising with the Local Authority.
- 12.8 At all times the Headteachers and Governing Body will ensure that safer recruitment practices are followed. We will question the contents of application forms if we are unclear about them, we will undertake enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and we will carry out an online search as part of our due diligence on the shortlisted candidates in accordance with the guidance in Part Two of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026). We will use any other means of ensuring we are recruiting and selecting the most suitable people to work with our children. We will use the recruitment and selection process to deter and reject unsuitable candidates and will adhere to the requirements of *Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2026*.
- 12.9 All School staff are responsible for:
- Knowing who the School's Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) are.
 - Raising any concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. Anyone can make this referral.
 - Completing a safeguarding record on 'My Concern' when making a referral. Staff should be clear that this should be done immediately, always on the same day.
 - Being alert to the signs of abuse and their need to refer any concerns to the designated staff member;
 - Maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here'. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child.
 - Knowing the School's procedures for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, and reporting any such concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
 - Listening to, and seeking out, the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people;
 - Sharing information and working together to provide children and young people with the help they need;
 - Referring to the Headteachers any concerns about another member of staff, or if the concerns are about the Headteachers, referring them to the chair of governors;
 - Raising concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the School's safeguarding regime through the Hartismere Family of Schools Trust's Whistleblowing Policy;

- Being aware of Suffolk's Safeguarding Procedures; <https://suffolksp.org.uk/> and ensuring these procedures are followed.

13 RECORDING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

13.1 How to report any concerns:

- Clear procedures on reporting any concerns are given to all staff/volunteers in the School. This is done as part of the staff induction training and staff are given a reminder of this annually in refresher training.
- All concerns should be reported using the School's online safeguarding concern system, 'My Concern' (preferable), or, if the concern is written, then on paper which is signed, dated, uploaded to 'My Concern' and stored in the student's safeguarding file. 'My Concern' records should always be completed as soon as possible, on the same day. Staff should never wait until the next day to record a concern. These will immediately alert the DSL and relevant, identified members of staff.
- The School takes its responsibility to safeguard young people seriously. Failure to follow these reporting procedures may result in disciplinary action.
- If at any time it is considered that a child has suffered significant harm or is likely to do so, a referral should be made to **Customer First on 0808 800 4005** or Police Child Abuse Investigation Team 101 on or 999 if there is a concern that a child needs immediate protection.
- If the child has an injury that requires medical attention, the child protection process will not delay the administration of first aid or emergency medical assistance.
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads and any deputies should liaise with the safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children. NSPCC: 'When to Call the Police' should help Designated Safeguarding Leads understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do.
- At Hartismere School we have a clear procedure for reporting concerns. If a student talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, the staff member will let the student know that the staff member must pass the information on to the safeguarding team (DSL) in order to offer the proper support that the pupil requires. Staff members will allow them to speak freely and will not ask investigative questions.
- The staff member will tell the student what will happen next. It is the duty of the member of staff to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead what has been discussed. The staff member will write up details of the conversation as soon as possible on the 'My Concern' system or the orange safeguarding recording concerns form (Appendix 2) if they do not have access to 'My Concern'. These are located in the school office and in the staffroom.

13.2 Any member of staff, and visitors who do not have access to 'My Concern' are required to complete an orange safeguarding recording concerns form. These can be obtained from the school office or staffroom and will then be passed to **Mrs C Jones** if they have a Safeguarding concern about a child in our school.

13.3 Staff should not wait until the following School day to report a concern. Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis only.

13.4 Issues or concerns will not be discussed with colleagues, friends or family unless necessary for the welfare of the child.

14 SUSPECTING THAT A CHILD IS AT RISK OF HARM

- 14.1 There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a student may be at risk, but have no 'real' evidence. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the student the opportunity to talk.
- 14.2 Staff should use 'My Concern' to record these early concerns. Following an initial conversation with the student, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mrs C Jones, Mrs D Buttle (Key stage 3), Mrs C Jones (Key stage 4), Mrs J Hudson (Key stage 5).
- 14.3 Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the School's Behaviour Policy where necessary (located on the School website). However, there will be occasions when a student's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures. The School acknowledges that some children can be particularly vulnerable or may have an increased risk of abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare. To ensure that all of our students receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children that are considered to be vulnerable.

15. NOTIFYING PARENTS/ CARERS

- 15.1 The School will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a student with their parents. The Designated Safeguarding Leads will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure. However, if the School believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child, exacerbate the problem or compromise the safety of a staff member, advice will first be sought from Children's Social Care through the Suffolk MASH consultation line.

16. REFERRAL TO CHILDREN'S SERVICES/ SOCIAL CARE

- 16.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or alternate DSL) will make a referral to Children's Social Care if it is believed that a student is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The student (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

17. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

- 17.1 The Child Protection Policy links with our Behaviour, SEN, Attendance, Data Protection, Health and Safety, Recruitment and Vetting, Complaints and Allegations of Abuse policies, statements and procedures.

18. CHILD PROTECTION, SAFEGUARDING AND ABUSE

- 18.1 Abuse, neglect or exploitation and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

- 18.2 **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.
- 18.3 Abuse may take a number of forms, including physical, sexual, emotional, or neglect. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. All staff should consider whether children are at risk of abuse in situations outside their families, including teenage relationship abuse in the form of physical, sexual, emotional abuse, stalking and financial exploitation. The concept of significant harm is the threshold that justifies intervention in family life in the best interests of the child. There are no absolute criteria for what constitutes significant harm. Relevant factors include the severity of ill treatment, the degree of harm, the duration or frequency of abuse or neglect, and the presence of threat or coercion. A single traumatic event may cause significant harm, or a compilation of events which interrupt, change or damage the physical or psychological development of a child.
- 18.4 All staff have a duty to recognise the potential indicators of abuse, neglect or modern slavery and are aware of the risks potential abusers may pose. They all receive training to recognise concerns and to raise them with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

19. UNIVERSAL SERVICES AND COMMUNITY BASED EARLY HELP AND THE TARGETED EARLY HELP LEVEL OF FAMILY HELP

- 19.1 At Hartismere School staff are trained in recognising the signs of Child Abuse and Extremism and are committed to and know the benefit of Early Help as a way of supporting families and young people before their needs become acute and Social Care or another specialist intervention may be necessary.
- 19.2 The School has a range of robust safeguarding procedures in place, which put the safety and protection of children at the heart of any decision.
- 19.3 The primary aim of the school's Early Help systems is to try to intervene early with families before it gets to the stage where a child may be at risk of harm.
- 19.4 The school will always involve the family in all Early Help strategies, and most will only be put in place with their permission. The school will aim to work with families in a supportive, non-judgemental way so that trust is built up and the best possible outcomes achieved.
- 19.5 Staff and volunteers working within the School should be alert to the potential need for early help for children. Staff and volunteers should consider following the procedures identified for initiating early help for a child who:
- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
 - has special educational needs (SEN) (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
 - has a mental health need
 - is a young carer
 - is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
 - is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home

- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or sexual or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues or domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage
- is a privately fostered child
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day

20 SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

- 20.1 School staff can access government guidance as required on the issues listed below via GOV.UK and the Safeguarding topics page on the SSCB website or by clicking the links to further resources regarding these topics:

[Bullying including cyberbullying](#)
[Children Missing in Education](#)
[Child missing from home or care](#)
[Child sexual exploitation \(CSE\)](#)
[Domestic Violence](#)
[Drugs](#)
[Fabricated or induced illness](#)
[Faith abuse](#)
[Female genital mutilation \(FGM\)](#)
[Forced Marriage](#)
[Gangs and Youth based violence](#)
[Gender- based violence/ violence against women and girls \(VAWG\)](#) [Hate](#) [Mental health](#) [Missing children and adults](#) [Private fostering](#) [Preventing radicalisation](#) [Relationship abuse](#) [Sexting](#) [Trafficking](#)
[Child on child abuse](#) [County Lines](#)

21 TYPES OF ABUSE

- 21.1 There are four types of child abuse as defined in 'Keeping Children Safe in education' (September 2026) as follows:

22 PHYSICAL ABUSE

- 22.1 Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
- 22.2 The physical signs of abuse may include:
- unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body;
 - multiple bruises- in clusters, often on the upper arm, outside of the thigh;

- cigarette burns;
- human bite marks;
- broken bones;
- scalds, with upward splash marks;
- multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge

22.3 Changes in behaviour that can also indicate physical abuse:

- fear of parents being approached for an explanation;
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts;
- flinching when approached or touched;
- reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather or PE;
- depression;
- withdrawn behaviour;
- running away from home.

22.4 Most children will collect cuts, bruises and injuries and these should always be interpreted in the context of the child's medical and social history, developmental stage and the explanation given. Most accidental bruises are seen over bony parts of the body, e.g. elbows, knees, shins, and are often on the front of the body. Some children, however, will have bruising that is more than likely inflicted rather than accidental. Important indicators of physical abuse are bruises or injuries that are either unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given, or visible on the 'soft' parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely, e.g. cheeks, abdomen, back and buttocks. A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern.

23 EMOTIONAL ABUSE

23.1 Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

23.2 Emotional abuse can be difficult to identify as there are often no outward physical signs. Indications may be a developmental delay due to a failure to thrive and grow. However, children who appear well-cared for may nevertheless be emotionally abused by being taunted, victims of name calling, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix or play with other children.

23.3 Changes in behaviour which can indicate emotional abuse include:

- neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking;
- being unable to play;
- fear of making mistakes;
- sudden speech disorders;
- self-harm;
- fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour;
- developmental delay in terms of emotional progress.

24 SEXUAL ABUSE

24.1 Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact or non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children (child-on-child abuse).

24.2 The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- pain or itching in the genital area;
- bruising or bleeding near genital area;
- sexually transmitted disease;
- vaginal discharge or infection;
- stomach pains;
- discomfort when walking or sitting down;
- pregnancy

24.3 Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn;
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people;
- having nightmares;
- running away from home;
- sexual knowledge which is beyond their age, or developmental level;
- sexual drawings or language;
- bedwetting;
- eating problems such as overeating or anorexia;
- self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts;
- saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about;
- substance or drug abuse;
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money;
- not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence);

- acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults.

25. NEGLECT

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

25.1 It may include a failure to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment),
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers);
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment;
- neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

25.2 It can be difficult to recognise neglect. However, its effects can be long term and damaging for children. The physical signs of neglect may include:

- Being constantly dirty or 'smelly';
- constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children;
- losing weight, or being constantly underweight;
- inappropriate or dirty clothing

25.3 All staff have undergone training within the *Introduction to Safeguarding* course run by the school in conjunction with Suffolk County Council and Schools Choice- this training is updated at least every 3 years. The training outlines, recognises and responds to any concerns where any form of abuse may be or has been occurring.

26. HARM

26.1 Harm is the ill-treatment or impairment of health and development including, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, intellectual, emotional, social, or behavioural development.

26.2 Any incidents of harm must be reported by pupils, staff or members of the public. Any allegation must be recorded using the School's safeguarding procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately using the school's 'My Concern' system or orange safeguarding recording form.

26.3 Appropriate actions may be taken with external agencies, police and parents/ legal guardians and are completed in a timely manner. Further actions may be taken against the offender in conjunction with the School's Behaviour Policy.

27. CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE (INCLUDING HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE)

27.1 Child-on-Child abuse can manifest itself in many ways and may include bullying, serious physical harm, threats involving weapons, cyber bullying, online abuse, gender-based abuse, harmful sexual behaviour.

Child-on-Child sexual abuse is sexual abuse that happens between children of a similar age or stage of development. It can happen between any number of children and can affect any age group (Department for Education (DfE), 2018).

- 27.2 All staff have undergone Child-on-Child abuse training within the *Introduction to Safeguarding* course run by the school. This training is updated every 3 years. The training outlines, recognises and responds to any concerns where child-on-child abuse may be or has been occurring. Staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the School and/or can occur between children outside of these environments.
- 27.3 All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Leads (and alternates), should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside of their families. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.
- 27.4 Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with child-on-child abuse. This could, for example, include girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation-type violence.
- 27.5 We will minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by maintaining an inclusive learning environment where diversity is celebrated, raising awareness through our rich curriculum; life lessons; wellbeing programme; assemblies; tutor time and through the RSE curriculum.
- 27.6 At this school we believe that all children have a right to learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the School and other students/pupils. We recognise that some students/pupils will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the School’s behaviour policy.
- 27.7 Occasionally, allegations may be made against students/pupils by others in the School, which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is likely that to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a pupil, some of the following features will be found:

The allegation:

- is made against an older pupil and refers to their behaviour towards a younger pupil or a more vulnerable pupil or where there is an imbalance of power within their relationships
 - is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
 - raises risk factors for other pupils in the School
 - indicates that other pupils may have been affected by this student
 - indicates that young people outside the School may be affected by this student
- 27.8 We will support the victims and perpetrators and alleged perpetrators of child-on-child abuse by working closely with any external agencies. Where appropriate, we will complete risk assessments in response to allegations in order to establish next steps and how to support the student involved.

27.9 Child on child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both victim and alleged perpetrator.

27.10 Any incidents of child-on-child abuse are taken extremely seriously and may be reported by pupils, staff or members of the public. Any allegation must be recorded using the School's safeguarding procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately using the school's 'My Concern' system or orange safeguarding recording form. Appropriate actions may be taken with external agencies, police and parents/ legal guardians and are completed in a timely manner. Further actions may be taken against the offender in conjunction with the School's behaviour policy.

28. HARMFUL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

28.1 The departmental advice, when referring to sexual violence refers to sexual offences as described under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. This includes: rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault. The advice sets out that sexual harassment is 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. It is likely to violate a child's dignity, and/or makes them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or creates a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

28.2 Any incidents of harmful sexual behaviour are taken extremely seriously and may be reported by pupils, staff or members of the public. Any allegation must be recorded using the School's safeguarding procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately using the school's 'My Concern' system or orange safeguarding recording form. Appropriate actions may be taken with external agencies, police and parents/ legal guardians and are completed in a timely manner. Further actions may be taken against the offender in conjunction with the School's behaviour policy.

29. GENDER IDENTITY DISCRIMINATION

29.1 Discrimination, bullying, and harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression is not tolerated at Hartismere School.

29.2 If an incident of gender discrimination occurs, staff are required to follow the safeguarding reporting process. Any incidents of gender identity discrimination are taken extremely seriously and may be reported by pupils, staff or members of the public. Any allegation must be recorded using the School's safeguarding procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately using the school's 'My Concern' system or orange safeguarding recording form. Appropriate actions may be taken with external agencies, police and parents/ legal guardians and are completed in a timely manner. Further actions may be taken against the offender in conjunction with the School's behaviour policy.

30. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

30.1 Violence Against Women and Girls is the term given to all forms of violence and abuse experienced disproportionately by women and girls, or experienced by them because of their gender. It is linked to women and girls' inequality and is neither acceptable nor inevitable.

- 30.2 Any incidents are taken extremely seriously and may be reported by pupils, staff or members of the public. Any allegation must be recorded using the School's safeguarding procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately using the school's 'My Concern' system or orange safeguarding recording form. Appropriate actions may be taken with external agencies, police and parents/ legal guardians and are completed in a timely manner. Further actions may be taken against the offender in conjunction with the School's behaviour policy.

31. HONOUR BASED VIOLENCE (HBV)

- 31.1 Honour based abuse is a term describing harmful behaviours used to control and punish a member of a family or social group to protect cultural and religious beliefs, in the name of honour.
- 31.2 So-called 'honour-based' violence encompasses 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.
- 31.3 All forms of so-called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV.
- 31.4 Any incidents of HBV abuse are taken extremely seriously and may be reported by pupils, staff or members of the public. Any allegation must be recorded using the School's safeguarding procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately using the school's 'My Concern' system or orange safeguarding recording form. Appropriate actions may be taken with external agencies, police and parents/ legal guardians and are completed in a timely manner. Further actions may be taken against the offender in conjunction with the School's behaviour policy.
- 31.5 All staff have undergone HBV training within the *Introduction to Safeguarding* course run by the school- this training is updated every 3 years. The training outlines, recognises and responds to any concerns where HBV abuse may be or have occurred.

32. FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

FGM is a form of child abuse and is a criminal offence in the UK. It is the partial or total removal of the female genital organs for non-medical purposes.

- 32.1 Staff need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. **Where a member of staff discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, he or she has a statutory duty to personally report it to the police and inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**
- 32.2 The Serious Crime Act 2015 sets out a duty on professionals (including teachers) to notify police when they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. This will usually come from a disclosure. Under no circumstances should School staff physically examine pupils.

- 32.3 All staff have undergone FGM training within the Introduction to Safeguarding course run by the school in conjunction with SSCB- this training is updated every 3 years. The training outlines, recognises and responds to any concerns where FGM abuse may be or has been occurring.
- 32.4 Education for pupils on FGM abuse is conducted in RSHE lessons and as part of the Life Lessons programme.
- 32.5 For further advice from the Home Office on FGM, please go to:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/female-genital-mutilation>

33. FORCED MARRIAGE

- 33.1 A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. A marriage must be entered into with the free and full consent of both parties; there must be a choice.
- 33.2 Forced marriage is recognised as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.
- 33.3 The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical (including threats, actual physical violence and sexual violence) or emotional and psychological (for example, when someone is made to feel like they're bringing shame on their family). In some case people may be taken abroad without knowing that they are to be married. When they arrive in that country, their passport(s)/travel documents may be taken to try to stop them from returning to the UK.
- 33.4 An arranged marriage is not the same as a forced marriage. In an arranged marriage, the families take a leading role in choosing the marriage partner, but both parties are free to choose whether to enter into the marriage or not.
- 32.5 Forced marriage is an abuse of human rights, a form of violence against men and women. It is child abuse when it affects children and abuse of vulnerable people when it affects those with disabilities.
- 33.6 Any incidents or allegations of forced marriage are taken extremely seriously and may be reported by pupils, staff, or members of the public. Any allegation must be recorded using the School's safeguarding procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately using the school's 'My Concern' system or orange safeguarding recording form. Appropriate actions may be taken with external agencies, police and parents/ legal guardians and are completed in a timely manner. Further actions may be taken against the offender in conjunction with the School's behaviour policy.
- 33.7 All staff have undergone forced marriage training within the *Introduction to Safeguarding* course run by the school in conjunction with SSCB- this training is updated every 3 years. The training outlines, recognises and responds to any concerns where abuse may be or have occurred.

34 BREAST IRONING/FLATTENING

- 34.1 Breast ironing or flattening is the process during which young pubescent girls' breasts are ironed, massaged, flattened and/or pounded down over a period of time (sometimes years) in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely. Girls aged between 9 and 15 have hot pestles, stones or other implements rubbed on their developing breast to stop them growing further. In the vast majority of known cases breast ironing is carried out by mothers or grandmothers.
- 34.2 Breast ironing is a form of physical abuse that has been condemned by the United Nations and identified as Gender-based Violence. Although countries where breast ironing is prevalent have ratified the African Charter on Human Rights to prevent harmful traditional practices, it is not against the law.
- 34.3 Concerns have been raised that breast ironing is also to be found amongst African communities in the UK, with as many as 1,000 girls at risk. Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) mentions breast ironing as part of the section on so-called 'Honour'-based abuse.
- 34.4 Staff or volunteers worried about the risk of breast ironing in the School should refer through the appropriate channels to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible who will make a referral to children's services. If staff or volunteers are concerned that the girl is in immediate danger, contact the police by calling 999.
- 34.5 The DSL will need to contact the Foreign and Commonwealth Office if the girl has been taken abroad:
- telephone: 020 7008 1500
 - from overseas: +44 (0)20 7008 1500
- 34.6 All staff have undergone breast ironing training within the *Introduction to Safeguarding* course run by the school in conjunction with SSCB- this training is updated every 3 years. The training outlines, recognises and responds to any concerns where abuse may be or have occurred.
- 35. CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION (CCE) CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE) AND EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS (COUNTY LINES AND SERIOUS VIOLENCE)**
- 35.1 Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious imbalance, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. This can be committed or facilitated by an organised network or gang and victims may identify as part of this group. This may constitute modern slavery.
- 35.2 The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

- 35.3 Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual, and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.
- 35.4 Any incidents of CSE or CCE abuse are taken extremely seriously and may be reported by pupils, staff, or members of the public. Any allegation must be recorded using the School's safeguarding procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately using the school's 'My Concern' system or orange safeguarding recording form. Appropriate actions may be taken with external agencies, police and parents/ legal guardians and are completed in a timely manner. Further actions may be taken against the offender in conjunction with the School's behaviour policy.
- 35.5 All staff have undergone CSE and CCE training within the *Introduction to Safeguarding* course run by the school- this training is updated every 3 years. The training outlines, recognises and responds to any concerns where abuse may be or have occurred.

36. COUNTY LINES

- 36.1 'County lines' is the police term for urban gangs supplying drugs to suburban areas and market and coastal towns using dedicated mobile phone lines or "deal lines". It involves child criminal exploitation (CCE) as gangs use children and vulnerable people to move drugs and money. Gangs establish a base in the market location, typically by taking over the homes of local vulnerable adults by force or coercion in a practice referred to as 'cuckooing'. County lines is a major, cross-cutting issue involving drugs, violence, gangs, safeguarding, criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery, and missing persons; and the response to tackle it involves the police, the National Crime Agency, a wide range of Government departments, local government agencies and VCS (voluntary and community sector) organisations. County lines activity and the associated violence, drug dealing and exploitation has a devastating impact on young people, vulnerable adults and local communities.
- 36.2 Any incidents of county lines abuse are taken extremely seriously and may be reported by pupils, staff or members of the public. Any allegation must be recorded using the School's safeguarding procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately using the school's 'My Concern' system or orange safeguarding recording form. Appropriate actions may be taken with external agencies, police and parents/ legal guardians and are completed in a timely manner. Further actions may be taken against the offender in conjunction with the School's behaviour policy.
- 36.3 All staff have undergone county lines training within the *Introduction to Safeguarding* course run by the school- this training is updated every 3 years. The training outlines, recognises and responds to any concerns where abuse may be or have occurred.
- 36.4 Signs to look out for:
- Persistently going missing from school or home and / or being found out-of-area;
 - Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones;
 - Excessive receipt of texts / phone calls;
 - Relationships with controlling / older individuals or groups;
 - Leaving home / care without explanation

- Suspicion of physical assault / unexplained injuries
- Parental concerns
- Carrying weapons
- Significant decline in school results / performance
- Gang association or isolation from peers or social networks
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being

37. GROOMING

- 37.1 Grooming is the process by which an individual prepares a child, significant adults and the environment for abuse of this child. Children and young people can be groomed online, by a stranger or by someone they know. Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age. Many children and young people do not understand that they have been groomed, or that what has happened is abuse. The signs of grooming are not always obvious. In older children, signs of grooming can easily be mistaken for 'normal' teenage behaviour, but you may notice unexplained changes in behaviour or personality, or inappropriate sexual behaviour for their age.
- 37.2 All staff are required to report any suspicions or disclosures of grooming through the Hartismere School reporting process. Any allegation must be recorded using the safeguarding procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately using the school's 'My Concern' system or orange safeguarding reporting form. All actions will be completed in a timely manner and communication with external agencies, Police, parents, and legal guardians may be included.
- 37.3 All staff have undergone training to enable them to recognise grooming behaviour within the *Introduction to Safeguarding* course run by the school. This training is updated every 3 years.
- The training outlines, recognises and responds to any concerns where grooming may be taking place or may have occurred.

38. PREVENTING RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM

- 38.1 The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act, 2015, places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children's services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism: the 'Prevent duty'.
- 38.2 Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:
- showing sympathy for extremist causes
 - glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
 - making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside the School
 - evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
 - advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
 - out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent.)
 - secretive behaviour
 - online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles

- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- advocating violence towards others

38.3 At Hartismere School all staff have undergone Prevent training within the *Introduction to Safeguarding* course run by the school- this training is updated every 3 years. The training outlines, recognises and responds to any concerns where abuse may be or have occurred. Training on the Prevent Duty is updated for all staff annually.

38.4 Where staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalised they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. All suspicions and disclosures of Radicalisation and Extremism must be reported immediately through the Hartismere School Safeguarding reporting process.

38.5 Any allegation must be recorded using the Safeguarding procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately using the school's 'My Concern' system. All actions will be completed in a timely manner and will involve communication with external agencies.

39. CHANNEL

39.1 Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. In addition to information sharing, if a staff member makes a referral to Channel, they may be asked to attend a Channel panel to discuss the individual referred to determine whether support is required.

39.2 Any member of staff who has made the referral may be required to participate in the Channel forum. This may also include the DSL.

40. DOMESTIC ABUSE AND YOUNG PEOPLE

40.1 Abuse can encompass but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional.

40.2 Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn

40.3 We encourage students to come forward by raising awareness of the issue and teaching the students about healthy relationships through RSE, the wider curriculum and modelling behaviour in the School.

- 40.4 The School is part of the Operation Encompass programme and may receive information through this channel about domestic violence that has occurred. If the information is shared, then the School will record the information and work with any agencies involved.
- 40.5 Any incidents of domestic abuse are taken extremely seriously and may be reported by pupils, staff or members of the public. Any allegation must be recorded using the School's safeguarding procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately using the school's 'My Concern' system or orange safeguarding recording form. Appropriate actions may be taken with external agencies, police and parents/ legal guardians and are completed in a timely manner.

41. MAKING OR SHARING OF NUDES OR SEMI-NUDES

- 41.1 Making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit messages. They can be sent using mobiles, tablets, smartphones, laptops - any device that allows the sharing of media and messages.
- 41.2 A young person is breaking the law if they:
- take an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend;
 - share an explicit image or video of a child, even if it's shared between children of the same age;
 - possess, download or store an explicit image or video of a child, even if the child gave their permission for it to be created.
- 41.3 Hartismere School will adhere to the guidance issued by the Department for Education guidance in *Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (March 2024)*
- 41.4 All staff will be trained in e-safety and will have a role in preventing young people from making or sharing nudes or semi-nudes. All staff will be available and approachable for students to make disclosures about this issue which will then be referred to the DSL for further investigation. Every child is different, so our approach will be based on their character and our relationship with them.
- 41.5 We will seek to prevent young people making or sharing nudes or semi-nudes through educating them about the laws and potential consequences. This may be addressed in: e-safety sessions during lessons, specialised e-safety sessions RSE, life lessons and assemblies.
- 41.6 All incidents of this nature will be addressed with a safeguarding approach whether they are consensual or non-consensual situations.
- 41.7 Any incidents are taken extremely seriously and may be reported by pupils, staff or members of the public. Any allegation must be recorded using the School's safeguarding procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately using the school's 'My Concern' system or orange safeguarding recording form. Appropriate actions may be taken with external agencies, police and parents/ legal guardians and are completed in a timely manner. Further actions may be taken against the offender in conjunction with the School's behaviour policy.

42. UPSKIRTING

- 42.1 Under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, upskirting is a criminal offence punishable by up to two years in prison. Upskirting' is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.
- 42.2 Victims are often unaware that the abuse has taken place, until the video or picture is drawn to their attention. When this is the case the victim or observer should report their concern through the School's safeguarding referral system.
- 42.3 Any incidents of upskirting are taken extremely seriously and may be reported by pupils, staff or members of the public. Any allegation must be recorded using the School's safeguarding procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately using the school's 'My Concern' system or orange Safeguarding recording form. Appropriate actions may be taken with external agencies, police and parents/ legal guardians and are completed in a timely manner. Further actions may be taken against the offender in conjunction with the School's behaviour policy.

43. MENTAL HEALTH

- 43.1 All staff should be 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.
- 43.2 Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- 43.3 Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic 'adverse childhood experiences' (ACEs), this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. We will ensure that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.
- 43.4 We will ensure that we have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.
- 43.5 We seek to embed positive mental health and mental health awareness through our School to create a culture where pupils can self-identify, signpost peers and seek support themselves. We undertake staff training and promote mental health awareness through the RSE, pastoral curriculum, life lessons, assemblies and charity events.
- 43.6 All mental health concerns are taken seriously and may be reported by pupils, staff or members of the public. All concerns must be recorded using the School's safeguarding procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately using the school's 'My Concern' system or orange safeguarding recording form.

44. ONLINE SAFETY

- 44.1 Where children are being asked to learn online at home, appropriate steps have been taken by the School to ensure that children continue to be safeguarded, this should include:
- Reminders to students and staff as to how to report safeguarding concerns
 - Signposting for children and parents as to how to stay safe online
 - Safeguarding procedures in place to ensure the safety and security of online lessons

45. E-SAFETY

- 45.1 We are thoroughly committed to improving student's e-safety awareness at Hartismere School. Our Technology Acceptable Use policy is signed up to by all students and staff. If a student, parent/carer, or member of staff has a concern relating to e-safety, they are encouraged to report it. They can report it directly to the safeguarding team at the School.
- 45.2 We seek to embed e-safety through our curriculum, assemblies, life lessons and form time. We believe in creating a culture where pupils can self-identify, signpost peers and seek support themselves. Through lessons in computing, RSHE and tutor time pupils are made aware of risks posed around the four C's (content, contact, conduct and commerce). Staff are updated through briefings from the online safety lead (OSL) and monthly email updates.
- 45.6 The school has robust web filters which record and monitor the online activity of the children within the School. Children's online activity may be monitored if they trigger the web filters. Any inappropriate usage may be a safeguarding concern and actions may be taken if it contravenes the School's behaviour policy. All concerns must be recorded using the School's safeguarding procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately using the school's 'My Concern' system or orange safeguarding recording form. The DSL and OSL meet monthly to review filtering and monitoring standards within the school. The Lead Safeguarding Governor has oversight of these checks at least termly.

46. CHILDREN WHO ARE ABSENT FROM EDUCATION

- 46.1 All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education, which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area. Effective information sharing between parents, schools, colleges, and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children are safe and receiving suitable education. We adhere to the "[Working together to Improve School Attendance](#)" (2026) guidance.
- 46.2 A child being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation.
- 46.3 Any child who is absent from education will be monitored and if the school feel they are at risk then parents/ carers will be contacted. In some cases, the school may conduct home visits and/or contact

the police.

46.4 A register is taken by staff during every period of the school day and monitored by year teams. Daily contact to parents/carers is made if a child is missing.

46.5 The DSL will be alerted, and actions will be taken to ensure the safety and whereabouts of the child is obtained.

46.6 A referral will also be completed by the DSL after 10 consecutive days of absence and social care services notified. This is in conjunction with the School's attendance policy.

47. **HOMELESSNESS**

47.1 Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is aware of routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.

47.2 In most cases, school staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised that in some cases children and young people could be living independently from their parents or legal guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support.

47.3 Children's Services will be the lead agency for these young people and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or an alternate) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

48. **BULLYING**

48.1 Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'.

48.2 There is no legal definition of bullying. But it is usually defined as repeated behaviour which is intended to hurt someone either emotionally or physically, and is often aimed at certain people because of their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation or any other aspect such as appearance or disability. Bullying can take many forms including:

- physical assault
- social bullying
- threatening behaviour
- name calling
- cyberbullying

- 48.3 Any incidents of bullying are taken extremely seriously and may be reported by pupils, staff or members of the public. Any allegation must be recorded using the School's safeguarding procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately using the school's 'My Concern' system.

Appropriate actions may be taken with external agencies, police and parents/ legal guardians and are completed in a timely manner. Further actions may be taken against the offender in conjunction with the School's behaviour policy.

49. ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

- 49.1 At Hartismere, any alternative provision we offer follows robust safeguarding procedures and are governed by a culture of vigilance and professional curiosity.

We have one main setting which offers alternative off site provision: West Suffolk College. Students attend one day each week and are transported by their parents. A small number of year 10 and 11 students are enrolled on a 14-16 provision motor vehicle course. West Suffolk College has Ofsted inspection reports (the most recent being May 2022) and fulfills all of the statutory safeguarding procedures required. West Suffolk College notifies the school that day if any students are absent and this is followed up by the school. There is an educational agreement between West Suffolk College and the school which outlines the commitment and procedures from both parties. West Suffolk College reports on the progress and attitude of students as part of their own reporting systems and the school receives copies of the reports.

We also offer extended work experience placements at Horham Dairy Farm. Students have the opportunity to work on a variety of projects involved in the general operations of the farm. Students attend the farm one day each week. Hartismere staff physically visit the farm twice a year, once when the placements begin in October and again June/July when considering the next cohort. There is also phone contact on a monthly basis and the farm writes an annual report on each student. They have enhanced DBS checks on all staff who work with the students. The students are transported by taxi (with the appropriate insurance, DBS checks and safeguarding training with Suffolk and Norfolk County Council) from Hartismere to the farm so any absences can be followed up on the day. They are collected by their parents at the end of the day so there is direct communication between the farm and parents on a regular basis. We have copies of all appropriate health and safety and insurance documentation. The farm have also agreed to not have any students from other schools attend on the same day as Hartismere students to minimise any risk.

Students who attend off site provision at West Suffolk College or extended work experience at Horham Dairy Farm reduce the number of option subjects they take for GCSE. The space on their timetable is allocated to supervised catch up sessions where work is set by subject teachers and assistance is given through the Learning Support department to ensure they are up to date with their studies. These students do not miss RSHE lessons.

We have a small number of students who access tutoring from their own homes. This is always arranged in conjunction with the National Tutoring Service or the Alternative Tutoring Service via Suffolk or Norfolk County Council.

If a new provision was arranged the appropriate checks would be carried out before any students attended provision in line with statutory safeguarding procedures.

50. USE OF PREMISES FOR NON-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

- 50.1 Where we hire or rent out our facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) we ensure that appropriate arrangements as per the DfE guidance Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings are in place to keep children safe.
- 50.2 We will seek assurances that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed). Safeguarding requirements are included as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.
- 50.3 If an allegation is made relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using school premises for non-school activities, we will follow the safeguarding policies and procedures outlined above.

51 REGULATIONS AND SAFEGUARDING REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO SCHOOL PREMISES

- 51.1 Schools must not allow children into toilets designated for the opposite biological sex.
- 51.2 Where a gender questioning child does not want to use the toilet designated for their biological sex then the school will consider an alternative toilet facility, for example, a self-contained individual toilet.
- 51.3 Schools must not allow children to undress in front of children of the opposite biological sex.
- 51.4 When responding to a request to support any degree of social transition, a school must not allow a child access to changing rooms designated for the opposite biological sex. The school will consider whether alternative changing facilities can be provided.

52 CHILDREN WHO ARE QUESTIONING THEIR GENDER

- 52.1 Schools should not initiate any action regarding social transition. Members of staff should not adopt any changes relating to social transition unless a decision has been made by the school in co-ordination with the child and their parents.
- 52.2 The school will work with the child and the child's parents to determine what is in the best interests of the child.
- 52.3 Where a child who is questioning their gender asks for support from school, the school should engage with parents as a matter of priority. In cases where a child confides in a member of staff about their feelings but does not ask for changes to be made, there is no reason to break this confidence unless additional safeguarding concerns apply.
- 52.4 Schools are legally required to record and make staff aware of a child's biological sex in all cases.

53. MANAGEMENT OF THE POLICY

- 53.1 The School will at all times adhere fully to the statutory guidance in place from the Department of Education issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Education (Non-Maintained Special Academies) (England) Regulations 2011, Currently: Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory guidance for academies and colleges (September 2026) and the departmental advice: What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – Advice for practitioners (May 2024). Nothing written in this policy overrides the School's duties under such legislation.
- 53.2 The Governing Body will oversee the policy, ensure its implementation and review its content on an annual basis. The DSL and Deputy DSL's will report on safeguarding activity and progress within the School to the Governing Body annually.