



Whitmore Park Primary School

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

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Approved by Co-Chair of Governors:	Mr Karl Miles and Mrs Rosella Brennan	Date:	September 2023
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Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Jacqueline McGibney

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Ms Amanda Morris, Mrs Lynsey smith, Mrs Sue Squires and Miss Sam Carney

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1 Definitions

1.1 'Safeguarding' is defined in **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)** as;

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

1.2 'Child Protection' is the intervention that occurs when children have been significantly harmed or are at risk of significant harm.

1.3 'Child' refers to everyone under the age of 18.

1.4 'Parent' refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role for example adoptive parents, stepparents and foster carers.

1.5 'Staff' or 'members of staff' refers to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff, governors, volunteers and trustees working in or on behalf of **Whitmore Park Primary School**.

1.6 Within this policy, we use the term 'victim', although it is recognised that not everyone considers themselves to be a victim or would want to be described in this way. We also recognise the importance of not using the terminology of 'perpetrator' in relation to children in cases where the behaviour can be harmful to both parties. The appropriate use of terminology will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

2 Introduction

2.1 We recognise that safeguarding, child protection, and promoting the welfare of children is an essential part of our duty of care to all students. As such, all staff and governors have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. We understand that safeguarding, child protection and promoting the welfare of all children is everyone's responsibility and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children. We recognise that our school is part of a wider safeguarding system for children and work closely with other agencies to promote the welfare of children. We maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and will consider what is in the best interests of each child in line and upholding the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010.

2.2 The purpose of this policy is to;

- Promote safeguarding and child protection and to demonstrate Whitmore Park Primary School's commitment to keeping children safe;
- Provide all members of staff with the information required to meet their safeguarding duty and protect children from harm;
- Provide stakeholders with clear information relating to Whitmore Park Primary School's safeguarding and child protection procedures;
- Ensure that staff understand, can recognise and can respond to the indicators of abuse, exploitation or neglect;

- Ensure that all staff are aware of their mandatory reporting duty in relation to Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003; and
- Ensure that children are protected from maltreatment or harm.

2.3 Whitmore Park Primary School is committed to the following principles;

- All children have the right to be protected from harm.
- Children should feel safe and secure and cannot learn unless they do so.
- All staff are responsible for keeping children safe and have a responsibility to act if they think a child is at risk of harm.
- All staff take on a responsibility to promote children's welfare
- Providing support to families and/or children as soon as a problem emerges is essential to improving outcomes for children and families.

2.4 Safeguarding aims

2.4.1 The safeguarding aims of Whitmore Park Primary School, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) are to;

- work to identify children who are suffering or likely to suffer abuse, exploitation or neglect and act to protect them;
- work with relevant services and agencies to ensure that children are protected from harm;
- provide a learning environment for children which is safe and secure;
- teach children how to keep themselves safe and provide structures for them to raise concerns if they are worried or at risk of harm;
- support children's mental health and wellbeing;
- ensure that we adhere to safer recruitment guidance and legislation, deal promptly with allegations of abuse against staff and take bullying and harassment seriously;
- train staff effectively in all safeguarding issues (including online safety) and in their responsibilities for identifying and protecting children that are or may be at risk of harm;
- have a designated safeguarding lead and designated deputies, who will provide support to staff, students and families;
- recognise that all children may be vulnerable to abuse, but be aware that some children have increased vulnerabilities due to special educational needs or disabilities or particular protected characteristics (LGBTQ+, etc);
- maintain a robust recording system for any safeguarding or child protection information;
- ensure that everyone in Whitmore Park Primary School understands the safeguarding procedures; and to
- regularly review policies and procedures to ensure that children are protected to the best of our ability.

2.5 This policy adheres to the following documents;

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2023\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 \(updated 2022\)](#)
- [Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings \(May 2019\)](#)
- [Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings addendum \(April 2020\)](#)
- [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners \(2015\)](#)

2.6 We continue to work closely with the Local Authority and the Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership to safeguard children across the city.

2.7 Please note that there are a number of other documents (statutory and non-statutory) that inform our policy and practice. A list of these can be found in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023).

2.8 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies;

Behaviour and Restraints Policy, Attendance Policy, Anti-Bullying and e-Safety Policy

Links to these policies can be found in Appendix A.

2.9 Scope

2.9.1 This policy applies to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff, governors, volunteers and trustees working in or on behalf of Whitmore Park Primary School. All references in this document to 'staff' or 'members of staff' should be interpreted as relating to the aforementioned unless otherwise stated.

2.9.2 Rather than duplicating content from Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) in this policy, it should be understood that Whitmore Park Primary School will always refer to this document as the benchmark for all safeguarding practice.

3 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Role of the Governing Body

3.1.1 Governing bodies have a strategic leadership responsibility for our safeguarding arrangements. We have a senior board level lead role carried out by Mrs Deborah Austin. Part 2 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) sets out the responsibilities of governing bodies. As part of these overarching responsibilities the Governing Body will;

- Have a strategic leadership responsibility for Whitmore Park Primary School safeguarding arrangements
- Aware of the obligations under the [Human Rights Act 1998](#) , the [Equality Act 2010](#) and the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#)
- Ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation;

- Ensure a whole school approach to safeguarding, including the use of mobile and smart technology in school;
- Ensure that policies, procedure and training are effective and comply with the law at all times and that they allow concerns to be responded to in a timely manner;
- Ensure Whitmore Park Primary School consider local authority and Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership policies and supply information as requested by the safeguarding partners (the Local Authority, a clinical commissioning group for an area within the local authority and the chief office of police for a police area within the local authority);
- Ensure Whitmore Park Primary School have an effective child protection policy, that it is published on the school website. It is also available in the staffroom and the main office. This is reviewed annually;
- Ensure Whitmore Park Primary School have a staff behaviour policy or Code of Conduct which refers to low level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing procedures alongside acceptable use of technologies;
- Ensure that all staff and governors undergo safeguarding and child protection training on induction (including online safety and filters and monitoring processes) and this is regularly updated;
- Ensure Whitmore Park Primary School contribute to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance;
- Ensure that there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying when children may be experiencing mental health problems;
- Ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety as a whole school approach and curriculum planning but recognising that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children. See section 12 of this policy for further information;
- Put in place and follow appropriate safeguarding responses for children who are absent from education;
- Appoint an appropriate member of staff from the senior leadership team to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Understand the local criteria for action and local protocol for assessment;
- Recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies but take a risk-based approach to level of information that is provided to temporary staff, volunteers and contractors;
- Ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to keep children safe online and share information regarding online abuse and risks including where to access advice with parents and carers;
- Respond to allegations of abuse against the headteacher whilst ensuring there are procedures in place to manage safeguarding concerns or allegations against staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors); and
- Ensure safer working practice is embedded and effective within policies.

3.2. The Role of the Headteacher

3.2.1 The headteacher will;

- Ensure that this policy is reviewed annually at minimum and ratified by the governing body;
- Ensure that this policy and associated procedures are adhered to by all staff;
- Ensure that all staff are made aware of the named governor for safeguarding and the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Ensure that the role of 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' is explicit in the role-holder's job description including leading on filters and monitoring processes;
- Decide whether to have one or more deputy safeguarding leads and ensure they are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Organise appropriate cover for the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead for any out of hour/out of term activities;
- Appoint a 'Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children' to promote the educational achievement of children looked after;
- Appoint a lead for online safety; (DSL will still retain ultimate responsibility for this)
- Promote a whole school approach to safeguarding;
- Promote resilience to social and emotional wellbeing, which is tailored to the needs of the children;
- Ensure that all recruitment follows the 'Safer Recruitment' guidance and a single, central record is maintained with details of all members of staff who are in contact with children;
- Respond to low level concerns and allegations of abuse against all other members of staff including supply staff, volunteers and contractors;
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service and Teaching Regulation Agency as required;
- Ensure that the school collaborates with Children's Services, the Police, Health services and other services to; promote the welfare of children; provide a co-ordinated offer of early help assessments when need is identified; contribute to inter-agency plans for children subject to children protection plans and to protect children from harm;
- Safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (Teaching Standards, 2012); and
- Ensure that children's Services (from the host local authority or placing authority) have access to Whitmore Park Primary School to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct a section 47 or section 17 assessment, as per Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023).

3.3 The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

3.3.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Whitmore Park Primary School is Mrs Jacqueline McGibney. Our Deputy Designated Safeguard Leads (DDSL) in the DSL's absence are Ms Amanda Morris, Mrs Lynsey Smith, Mrs Sue Squires and Miss Sam Carney.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will;

- Take overall lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and filters and monitoring);
- Liaise with the safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018);
- Always be available during term time school hours for staff in Whitmore Park Primary School to discuss safeguarding concerns. If they are not available, a deputy will be made available;
- Undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out this role updated a minimum of biannually;
- Act as a source of support and expertise on matters relating to safeguarding and child protection to ensure that other members of staff can carry out their safeguarding duty;
- Be best placed to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns;
- Identify if children may benefit from early help;
- Act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners;
- Make referrals to Coventry's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) where children have been harmed or are at risk of significant harm;
- Make referrals to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern and/or support staff that make a referral to Channel;
- Support the school with regards to their responsibilities under the Prevent duty and provide advice and support on protecting children from radicalisation;
- Refer cases to the police where a crime may have been committed;
- Ensure all staff have read and understood Part 1 and/or Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023);
- Update their knowledge and skills regularly and keep up with any developments relevant to their role;
- Provide staff in school with the knowledge, skills and support required to safeguard children;
- Take responsibility for the accurate and timely recording of safeguarding and child protection concerns and take overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection files;
- Take responsibility for the transfer of safeguarding files when a child leaves Whitmore Park Primary School;
- Attend or ensure an appropriate representative attends multi-agency safeguarding or child protection meetings;
- Promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- Work closely with other relevant education professionals (e.g. SENCO, Virtual School Head) to ensure children with additional vulnerabilities are safeguarded;
- Help to promote educational outcomes of child who have experienced or are experiencing safeguarding or child protection issues by sharing relevant information with teachers and the school leadership team;
- Promote a 'culture of safeguarding', in which every member of the Whitmore Park Primary School community acts in the best interests of the child;

- Ensuring Whitmore Park Primary School knows who its cohort of children or have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations;
- Regularly meet (every half term at a minimum) with the safeguarding link governor and/or Chair of Governors to review safeguarding in Whitmore Park Primary School; and
- Liaise with the headteacher regarding safeguarding cases and issues.
- Liaise with the senior mental health lead when safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health
- Be Aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult – PACE code C 2019

3.3.2 Further details on the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be found in Annex C of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023).

3.4 The Role & Responsibilities of all Staff within School

3.4.1 School staff play a particularly important role because they are in a position to identify concerns early in order to provide help for children. All staff in Whitmore Park Primary School;

- Have a responsibility to provide a safe environment, where children can learn;
- Will be able to identify indicators of abuse, exploitation or neglect; with an awareness of safeguarding issues that put children at risk of harm and behaviours associated with these risks;
- Should know what to do if a child tells them that he/she is being abused, exploited or neglected but that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abuse, exploited or neglected and/or recognise their experience as harmful;
- Will be aware of indicators of child-on-child abuse and procedures to deal with this;
- All staff, but especially the DSL and deputies, will also consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families;
- Will be made aware of; the safeguarding and child protection policy; the school behaviour policy; the staff behaviour policy; information about the safeguarding response to children absent from education; the role of the designated safeguarding lead and systems in Whitmore Park Primary School that support safeguarding and child protection;
- Will be provided with a copy of Part 1/Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) annually and receive annually updated training on their safeguarding roles and responsibilities;
- Will receive regularly updated safeguarding and child protection training including online safety;
- Will receive safeguarding updates throughout the year as part of continuous professional development;
- Should be able to contribute to the development of safeguarding policy and practice;

- Will be made aware of the early help assessment process and understand their role in it;
- Should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help and will discuss early help requirements with the safeguarding lead in the first instance;
- May be required to support social workers and other agencies following a referral;
- Will be made aware of the process for making referrals to Children's Services (through the MASH), understand statutory assessments and the role that they may be expected to play in such assessments;
- Should be prepared to make referrals to the MASH if they have concerns about a child's welfare and understand the role that they may be expected to play in such assessments;
- Understands the referral process to the (LADO) and the role they play should they have concerns or allegations are made against any member of staff;
- Should always seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are unsure; and
- All teachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (Teaching Standards, 2012).

3.5 Multi-Agency Working

3.5.1 Whitmore Park Primary School is committed to multi-agency working and operates under Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and local safeguarding arrangements.

3.5.2 Whitmore Park Primary School will work with Children's Services the Police, Health services, local Early Help practitioners and other relevant agencies to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

3.5.3 We work closely with our local Family Hub to ensure children receive appropriate, co-ordinated Early Help Assessments

Pathways Family Hub
Lawrence Saunders Road
Coventry
CV6 1HD

Telephone: 024 7697 8130 **Email:** PathwaysFamilyHub@coventry.gov.uk

3.5.4 The Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) have designated that schools and colleges are a named 'relevant agency'. As such, the school is under a statutory duty to co-operate with published CSCP arrangements.

4 Types of abuse

4.1 As outlined above, all staff will be trained in indicators of abuse, exploitation and neglect and should be able to recognise signs of these. We recognise that abuse,

exploitation and neglect along with other safeguarding issues are complex and often multidimensional and therefore don't fall solely under one category. Types of abuse or harm can take many forms including directly inflicting harm on a child or failing to protect a child from harm online as well as face to face both inside and outside of the school/college as well as online, including the multi-faceted occurrence of factors causing emotional harm.

The four main types of abuse that staff are trained to recognise are;

- Physical abuse;
- Sexual abuse;
- Emotional abuse;
- Neglect.

4.2 Types of abuse (Taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023)

Type of abuse	Information
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. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.
Physical abuse	A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
Emotional abuse	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 a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or

	<p>developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including 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.</p>
Sexual abuse	<p>Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.</p> <p>The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of this and of Whitmore Park Primary school's policy and procedures for dealing with this.</p>
Neglect	<p>The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide</p>

	adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
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4.3 Indicators of abuse can be found in Appendix B.

4.4 If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's services (through the MASH) and any member of staff can make this referral. A Designated or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead should be available at all times, but in exceptional circumstances the member of staff should speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team or seek advice directly from Children's Service and then take appropriate action. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be made aware as soon as possible.

4.5 Staff, parents and the wider community should report any concerns that they have about the welfare of children, however minor or seemingly insignificant. Staff should not assume that someone else will report concerns.

4.6 The school recognises that any child can be the victim of abuse and may benefit from early help. However, the school will be particularly vigilant to potential need for early help if a child;

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (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 a risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- is at risk of 'honour-based' abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;

- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.
- is a privately fostered child.

4.7 Whitmore Park Primary School recognises that abuse can take many different forms. Staff will also receive training on the following issues and action will be taken if Whitmore Park Primary School believes that a child is at risk of or is the victim of;

- bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice based and discriminatory
- child criminal exploitation and sexual exploitation including involvement in county lines);
- domestic abuse;
- emotional abuse;
- fabricated or induced illness;
- faith-based abuse;
- female genital mutilation;
- forced marriage;
- gangs or youth violence;
- gender-based violence;
- hate;
- mental health;
- neglect;
- peer on peer abuse;
- physical abuse;
- radicalisation;
- relationship abuse;
- serious violence and harassment;
- sexual abuse;
- sexual violence or sexual harassment (including peer on peer abuse);
- sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude and semi-nude images/videos;
- So-called 'honour-based' abuse;
- trafficking and modern slavery.

4.8 Whitmore Park Primary School will also take action to protect;

- Children absent from education;
- Children missing from home or care.

4.8.1 There are other familial issues that can have a detrimental impact on children.

We work with other agencies in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) to support children and families in the following circumstances;

- Children facing the court procedures and/or children in the court system;
- Children with family members in prison;
- Children who are homeless;
- Children who need a social worker.

4.9 Children potentially at greater risk of harm

4.9.1 Whitmore Park Primary School recognises that some children need a social worker due to abuse, neglect or complex family circumstances and that abuse and trauma can leave children vulnerable to further harm, as well as educational disadvantage.

4.9.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will hold information relating to social workers working with children in the school.

4.9.3 This information will inform decisions about safeguarding and promoting welfare (including the provision of pastoral and/or academic support).

4.10 Children absent from Education

4.10.1 Whitmore Park Primary School understands that children that are absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and criminal exploitation – particularly county lines.

4.10.2 Whitmore Park Primary School will report information to the Local Authority when problems are first emerging **and if there is a need** for the removal of a child from roll.

4.11 Elective Home Education

4.11.1 Whitmore Park Primary School recognises that many home educated children have a positive learning experience and the decision is one with the child's best interests at heart.

4.11.2 Since 2016, Whitmore Park Primary School has a statutory duty to inform the Local Authority of all deletions from roll. When Elective Home Education is the reason for this removal, the Local authority and other key professionals will work alongside Whitmore Park Primary School to coordinate a meeting with parents where possible ideally before a final decision is made.

4.12 Children requiring Mental Health support

4.12.1 Whitmore Park Primary School recognise that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children includes preventing the impairment of children's mental health or development.

4.12.2 All staff will be aware that mental health problems may be an indicator that a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

4.12.3 Staff will not attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem unless they are appropriately trained.

4.12.4 Whitmore Park Primary School recognise that staff are well-placed to observe behaviour that may indicate that a child is experiencing a mental health problem, or is at risk of developing one. There are clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems. If staff are concerned that a child is suffering a mental

health problem, they should speak to the SENCO, mental health lead and the DSL who will speak to parents and refer where appropriate to CAMHS, SEMH+L for an assessment, the family GP.

4.12.5 If staff are concerned that a child is experiencing a mental health problem that is also a safeguarding concern, they must report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) immediately.

4.12.6 Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by children, to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe, are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum. The specific content of lessons is determined by the specific needs of the cohort but alongside the PSHE Association Guidance and Protective Behaviours to ensure that mental health and emotional wellbeing issues are taught in a safe and sensitive manner.

Through reflection and positive discussion, the children are given opportunities to talk through a wide range of issues relating to our modern world as well as improving their own state of mindfulness. Whitmore Park Primary Schools Mental Health policy reflects the overall school aims, and ethos of the school. It is linked to safeguarding, British values, rights and responsibilities, relationship education and the importance of physical activity and diet for a healthy lifestyle. The children are given the tools to develop their resilience, self-confidence, identity, and relationships.

Targeted support

Whitmore Park Primary School offers support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils which may include, Primary Group Work/Mental health and wellbeing groups, therapeutic activities including art, Lego therapy and relaxation and mindfulness techniques (Thrive).

Whitmore Park Primary School makes use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate (confidential electronic CPOMs system)

The policy supports the mental health and wellbeing of children with SEND, especially those with issues related to mental health. The school follows the SEND policy with regards to identifying, supporting, and signposting these children.

The Mental Health and Wellbeing leader ensures effective and regular monitoring takes place to identify and spread good practice across the school. This is done informally through surveys, activity days, conversation with staff and pupils and liaison with the Inclusion Team. They ensure that all staff and pupils know how to access key people and information in order to support the wellbeing of all. The Mental Health and Wellbeing leader engages supportively with colleagues, communicating latest relevant information through notice boards, e-mail and conversation. They attend any relevant training designed to promote the mental health and wellbeing of staff and students and disseminate through staff meetings.

4.12.7 Further information, guidance and advice regarding mental health can be found on page 44 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022.

4.13 Children who are Lesbian, Gay, Bi or Trans (LGBT+)

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT 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.

Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum and there is a range of support available to help schools counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

5 Responding to signs of abuse

5.1 If a member of staff, parent or member of the public is concerned about a child's welfare, they should report it to the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible. On occasions when the designated safeguarding lead is not available, it should be reported to the deputy safeguarding lead without delay. Although any member of staff can make a referral to Children's Services where possible there should be a conversation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5.2 If anyone other than the Designated Safeguarding Lead makes a referral to Children's Services or to the police, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible.

5.3 All staff will be alert to indicators of abuse and will report any of the following to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately;

- Any concern or suspicion that a child has sustained an injury outside what is reasonably attributable to normal play;
- Any concerning behaviours exhibited by children that may indicate that they have been harmed or are at risk of harm, including unusual changes in mood or behaviour, concerning use of language and/or concerning drawings or stories.
- Any significant changes in attendance or punctuality;
- Any significant changes in a child's presentation;
- Any concerns relating to people who may pose a risk of harm to a child; and/or
- Any disclosures/allegations of abuse that children have shared.

5.4 There will be occasions where a child discloses/alleges abuse directly to a member of staff. If this happens, the member of staff will;

- listen carefully to the child and believe what they are saying;

- not promise confidentiality, as information may need to be passed on so the child and family can receive additional support;
- only ask for clarification if something is unclear and will not ask 'leading' questions;
- report disclosure to the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible, certainly by the end of the day;
- only discuss the issue with colleagues that need to know about it; and
- will write up the disclosure and pass it to the designated safeguarding lead. It is likely they will have had a discussion with the DSL prior to this but delay should be avoided.

5.5 The designated safeguarding lead will make a decision about the action that needs to be taken following a member of staff raising a concern about a child, or following a direct disclosure recording a clear rationale. The DSL may consider the following options;

- Managing support for the child internally within school;
- Seek advice from the social worker advice line in the MASH;
- Instigate single agency intervention and work directly with the family to improve the situation;
- Offer an Early Help Assessment to provide multi-agency help to a family;
- In cases where children are deemed to be at significant risk of harm, the DSL will refer cases to the MASH for consideration for statutory intervention. Parental consent will be obtained wherever possible before referring cases to the MASH. However, if Whitmore Park Primary School is worried that telling parents will mean the child is at greater risk of harm, we may do this without informing them.
- If parents do not consent to a referral but the school believes that a child is at significant risk of harm, a referral will still be made to Children's Services.

5.6 For further information about the Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership's 'Right Help, Right Time' guidance, which is used by Whitmore Park Primary School to make decisions about protecting children, please visit <http://www.coventry.gov.uk/righthelprighttime>.

5.7 See page 25 for flowchart of actions that will be taken where there are concerns about a child (taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2023).

5.8 In cases where members of staff become aware that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) has been carried out on a female below the age of 18, they have a mandatory duty to report this to the police without delay and will do so. Staff should refer this to the DSL first, but the legislation requires regulated health and Children's Service professionals and teachers in England and Wales to make a report to the police where, in the course of their professional duties, they either;

- are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was

necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth.

If you believe a child is at risk of FGM, a referral to the MASH is also required.

5.9 Whitmore Park Primary School have a duty to refer any children who are living in a private fostering arrangement to the local authority. Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (or under 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a close relative. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and a carer, expected to last 28 days or more, or the school are aware the 28 days has been exceeded.

5.10 All schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 in the exercise of their functions to have "due regard" to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. See Appendix B for further information on Whitmore Park Primary School's Prevent duty.

5.11 If any member of staff is unsure about signs of abuse or neglect, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5.12 Child on Child Abuse

5.12.1 Whitmore Park Primary School understands that both adults and other children can perpetrate abuse, and can happen inside and outside of school, online or face to face. Child on Child abuse is taken very seriously and can include bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying), abuse in intimate personal relationships between children, physical abuse, sharing of consensual or non-consensual images of videos, causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, sexual violence and/or harassment, upskirting, and initiation/hazing ceremonies. Whitmore Park Primary School recognise that safeguarding issues can manifest as child-on-child abuse.

Please see the link below for our Child on Child Abuse Policy and Behaviour and Restraint Policy <https://www.whitmorepark.org/policies-procedures/>.

5.12.2 All members of staff will be made aware of the school's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse. The school will ensure staff understand what is meant by child-on-child abuse and the school policy on child-on-child abuse through regular safeguarding training/CPD.

5.12.3 Whitmore Park Primary School will work to prevent child on child abuse by: Whitmore Park Primary School will ensure staff understand what is meant by child on child Abuse and the school policy on child on child abuse by continuing to promote positive relationships through our school values.

5.12.4 Although it is recognised that if there are no reported cases, such abuse may still be taking place. If an allegation of child-on-child abuse is made, Whitmore Park Primary School will investigate this through in-house systems (See Child on Child Abuse Policy and behaviour policy for Guidance). Any allegations will be recorded on CPOMS.

5.12.5 In the event that an allegation of child-on-child abuse is made, victims, alleged perpetrators and any other children affected will be supported by the Senior Leadership team, DSL/Inclusion Team, any outside agencies where appropriate and referral to the MASH will be considered.

5.12.6 Whitmore Park Primary School will never pass off child on child abuse as 'banter', 'having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or other such termination that does not recognise the harm caused. This should be a Zero-tolerance approach as this could lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours. It is recognised with this, that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

5.12.7 Whitmore Park Primary School will adhere to guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) when responding to incidents of child-on-child abuse.

5.12.8 All staff will be made aware that 'upskirting' is a criminal offence.

5.13 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

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

5.13.2 CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing, vehicle crime, threatening violence on others or even carrying weapons.

5.13.3 Whitmore Park Primary School is responsible for recognising children involved in CCE are victims of exploitation and should be recognised as such due to the harm they have experienced even if they appear to have consented to the criminal activity.

5.13.4 CSE is a form of child sexual abuse including physical contact and non-contact online activities including the internet or by phone. This can happen over time or as a one off and may happen without the child recognising this as abuse or harmful.

5.13.5 Whitmore Park Primary School recognises that children of the age of 16 and 17 who can legally consent to a sexual relationship may also be the victims of CSE but may not recognise this.

5.14 Sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude and semi-nude images or videos

5.14.1 "Sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude and semi-nude images or videos" refers to any sharing of youth-produced sexual imagery between children.

This includes;

- A person under the age of 18 creating and sharing sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under the age of 18;
- A person under the age of 18 sharing sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with a peer under the age of 18 or an adult;
- A person under the age of 18 being in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18.

5.14.2 Whitmore Park Primary School has a responsibility to educate children in the risks relating to 'sharing consensual or non-consensual nude images or videos' and how to keep themselves safe online. Please see the link <https://www.whitmorepark.org/policies-procedures/> for the following policies: e-Safety, Sex and Relationships Education.

5.14.3 Any incidents or suspected incidents of 'sharing consensual or non-consensual nude images or videos' should be reported to the DSL without delay.

5.14.4 Once reported to the DSL, the DSL will decide on the appropriate course of action. This could include;

- Referrals to the MASH in regards to all parties involved (also the police if an urgent response required);
- Confiscation of mobile phones in line with guidance 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation, (January 2018);
- Support for young people involved to prevent reoccurrence;
- Sanctions in accordance with the behaviour policy;

5.14.5 Any incidents of 'sharing consensual or non-consensual nude images or videos' involving the following will result in a MASH and sometimes a Police referral;

- Adult involvement;
- Coercion or blackmail;
- Children under the age of 13;
- Extreme, or violent content;
- Immediate risk of harm.

5.14.6 Staff will not view images or videos on pupil devices. Confiscated devices will be stored securely and passed to the relevant agencies.

5.14.7 We will work with parents as necessary if their child is involved in the sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude images or videos.

5.14.8 We operate a culture of safeguarding and young people should feel confident to disclose if they have sent an inappropriate image of themselves. Children will always be supported to retrieve and delete the images.

5.15 Domestic Abuse

5.15.1 Domestic abuse can be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. It can also include psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional acts of abuse.

5.15.2 The school recognises that children can be a victim of Domestic Abuse by seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects or suffering domestic abuse in their own personal relationships. These all have a detrimental impact on childrens health, well-being, development and ability to learn.

5.16 Searching, Screening and Confiscation

5.16.1 Where necessary, searching, screening and confiscation will be used to safeguard a child/children in Whitmore Park primary School.

5.16.2 The school adheres to 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools (January 2018).

5.16.3 Please see the following link here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1091132/Searching_Screening_and_Confiscation_guidance_July_2022.pdf

5.17 Online Safety

5.17.1 Whitmore Park Primary School recognises that in today's world, children need to be safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material with many children having unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via their mobile phone. The breadth of issues can be categorised currently into four areas of risk as taken from Keeping Children Safe In Education 2022:

- Content – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content (pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, and extremism)
- and or financial scams

5.17.2 Whitmore Park Primary School understand that the above can take place on a students phone or smart device (including smart watches) whilst at school/college or elsewhere. The school have responded to this by having a whole school approach to online safety which aims to protect and educate students, parents and staff in their use of technology.

All staff, pupils and parents are required to sign an acceptable use agreement.

Parent/carer's agreement: I agree that my child can use the school's ICT systems and internet when appropriately supervised by a member of school staff. I agree to the conditions set out for pupils using the school's ICT systems and internet, and for using personal electronic devices in school, and will make sure my child understands these.

Staff, Governors, Volunteers and Visitors agreement: I will only use the school's ICT systems and access the internet in school, or outside school on a work device, for educational purposes or for the purpose of fulfilling the duties of my role.

I agree that the school will monitor the websites I visit and my use of the school's ICT facilities and systems.

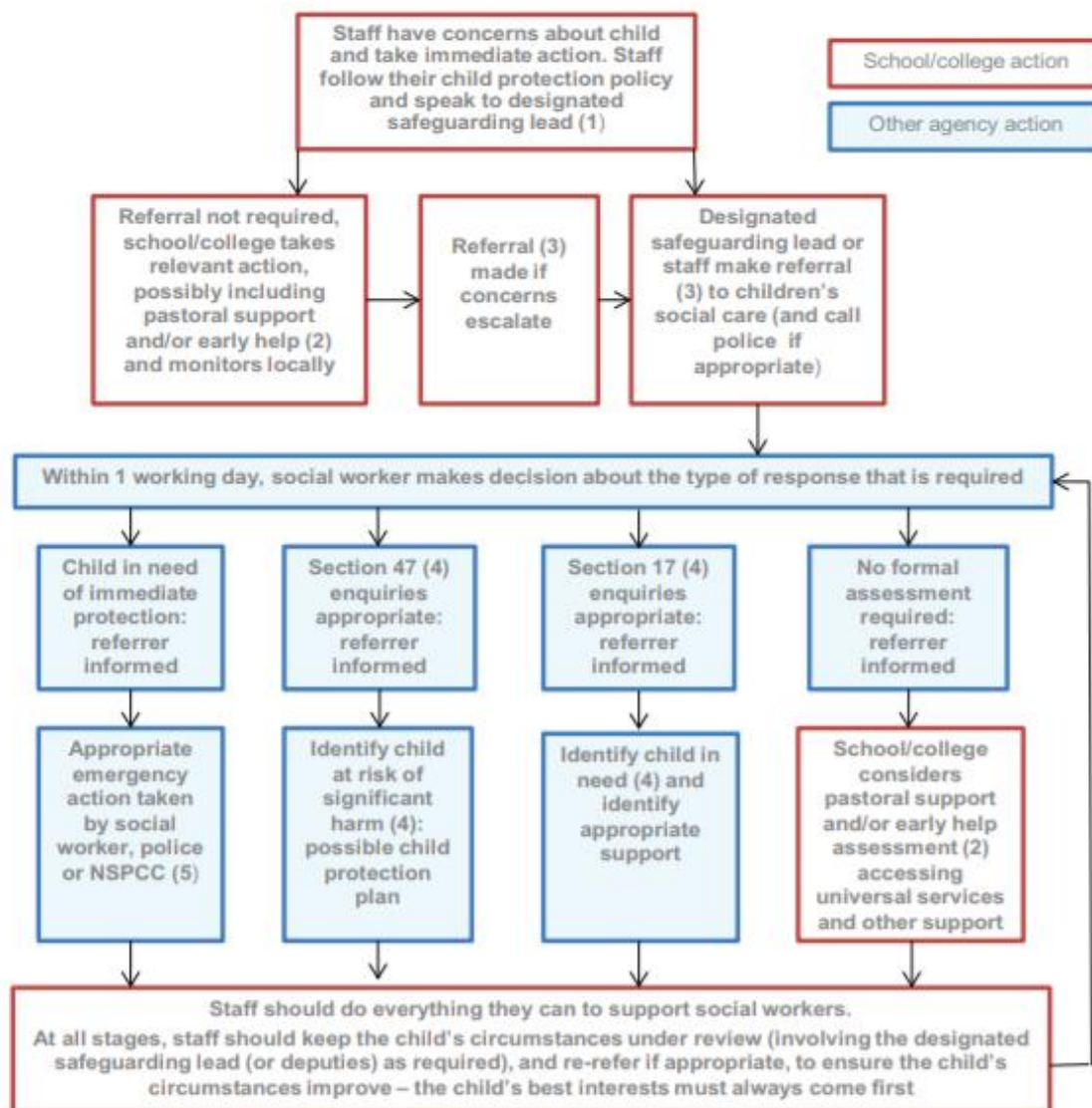
I will take all reasonable steps to ensure that work devices are secure and password-protected when using them outside school, and keep all data securely stored in accordance with this policy and the school's data protection policy.

I will let the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and ICT manager know if a pupil informs me they have found any material which might upset, distress or harm them or others, and will also do so if I encounter any such material.

I will always use the school's ICT systems and internet responsibly and ensure that pupils in my care do so too.

5.17.3 The school has also established mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any concerns highlighted through our filter and monitoring systems for both staff and students. The effectiveness of this is regularly reviewed with staff aware of how to escalate concerns. Whitmore Park Primary School uses a system called Senso to filter and monitor all devices in school and iPads. The system will identify 'key Words' that are of concern (swear words, sexual language words, insulting words) and any safeguarding incidents. These will be immediately reported to staff members who monitor the system (Savvy IT and a member of the Senior Leadership team) so they can take appropriate actions (speak to parents, speak to staff, raise concern with social care and/or police).

Actions where there are concerns about a child



(1) In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.

(2) Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides detailed guidance on the early help process.

(3) Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

(4) Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

(5) This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

- Contact – being subject to harmful online interaction with other users (peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit)

- Conduct – online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm (making, sending and receiving explicit images)

Commerce – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing

5.18 To raise concerns about children, members of staff should contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) by telephone to discuss the referral. They should then complete the online Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) and submit this to the MASH. The school will follow up referrals if we do not receive feedback from Children's Services to ascertain the outcome of all referrals.

MASH Telephone number: 02476 788 555

MASH online referral form: <http://www.coventry.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren>

Out of hours Emergency Duty Team: 02476 832 222

Prevent/Channel Referrals: Refer to MASH (mash@coventry.gov.uk) and to CTU_GATEWAY@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk

5.18.1 If a child's situation does not appear to be improving following a referral, Whitmore Park Primary School may re-refer the child. We will also consider using the [Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership's Managing Professional Disagreements policy](#) to ensure that our concerns have been addressed and that the situation improves for the child.

6 Record-keeping

6.1 All concerns, discussions and decision made will be recorded in writing and kept confidential and stored securely.

6.2 A written record of all safeguarding and/or child protection concerns, discussions and decisions made will be kept in individual children's files. This will be separate from the main school file and will only be accessed by the relevant safeguarding staff.

6.3 Whitmore Park Primary School keeps all safeguarding files electronically, using a system called Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS).

Prior to this Whitmore Park Primary School kept written records of all safeguarding and/or child protection concerns; discussions and decisions made which are kept securely in individual children's files. These files will be separate from the main school files and will only be accessed by the relevant safeguarding staff.

6.4 Staff will submit all concerns in writing to the DSL at the earliest opportunity. This may be after having a verbal conversation, but conversations will also be followed up in writing.

6.5 In the event that a child moves school, the safeguarding file will be transferred to the new setting securely and separately from the main school file in a timely manner (within

5 days for in-year transfers). Once received by the new school, this school will not retain the information.

6.6 Whitmore Park Primary School will seek to hold at least two emergency contacts for every child.

6.7 All data processed by Whitmore Park Primary School is done so in line with the General Data Protection Guidelines and the Data Protection Act (2018). Please see the following link <https://www.whitmorepark.org/policies-procedures/> to the schools website for the Data Protection policy and Privacy Notice.

6.8 Further information regarding information sharing and data processing in relation to safeguarding can be found in Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023).

7 Photography and Images

7.1 Consent from parents to photograph children at school events for promotional reasons will be sought when the child joins Whitmore Park Primary School. Whitmore Park Primary School will also use 'My Child at School' (MCAS: parent portal/app) annually to ask parents to update their preferences regarding photographs of their children. A paper document will be sent to any parent's who do not have access to 'My Child at School'.

7.2 Parents can withdraw consent at any time and must notify Whitmore Park Primary School if they do not wish their child's photographs to be used.

7.3 Photographs of children used publicly will not be displayed with their name or other identifiable personal information.

7.4 Photographs of children will be processed in line with the General Data Protection Regulation.

8 Early Help Assessment

8.1 Whitmore Park Primary School is committed to supporting families as soon as a possible problem arises. It is more effective to support a family through early help than reacting to a problem later. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers have a role to play in safeguarding children. Whitmore Park Primary School is committed to working closely with its neighbouring family hub to work with families in the community to improve outcomes for children.

Pathways Family Hub
Lawrence Saunders Road
Coventry
CV6 1HD

Telephone: 024 76 978130 **Email:** PathwaysFamilyHub@coventry.gov.uk

8.2 Whitmore Park Primary School works within the Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership's '[Right Help, Right Time](#)' framework, available on the CSCP website.

9 Staff training

9.1 In order for staff to be able to understand and discharge their safeguarding and child protection duties, Whitmore Park Primary School has committed to training staff throughout the academic year. All staff members will be made aware of Whitmore Park Primary School's safeguarding processes and structures and will receive training on these as part of their induction. As part of this training and their annual refresher, they will also receive;

- This 'Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy';
- The staff Code of Conduct
- Copies of Part 1 and/or Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023)
- School procedures for Children Absent from Education
- The school Behaviour and Restraints Policy

9.2 All staff at Whitmore Park Primary School receive the annual Safeguarding Refresher Training in September (including PREVENT). They will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection training and updates that the Safeguarding Team receives throughout the year, including online safety, Mental Health, PREVENT. This will be at staff meetings, through emails, e-bulletins and CPD. Governors and new staff (as part of their induction) will also receive safeguarding training.

9.3 Whitmore Park Primary School recognise that children may engage in risky behaviours that may put them at additional risk of danger. These can include drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and the sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude images or videos. Staff will also be trained in these areas in order to be able to further recognise if a child is at risk of harm.

9.4 All staff are 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 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 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 Safer Recruitment

10.1 Whitmore Park Primary School is committed to providing children with a safe environment, in which they can learn. We take safer recruitment seriously and all staff are subject to the following checks;

- Identity check;
- DBS clearance;
- Prohibition from teaching checks (where required);
- Barred List check;

- Section 128 checks (as required - leadership and management);
- Reference check (two references required);
- Professional qualifications check ;
- Right to work in the UK check;
- Further checks for those who have lived outside the UK;
- Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006 checks (as required); and
- Verification of the candidate's mental and physical fitness may also be **sought**.

10.2 A record of all checks completed for members of staff will be recorded on the Single Central Record.

10.3 All new members of staff will be required to obtain DBS clearance. Whitmore Park Primary School reserves the right to re-check DBS clearance for any member of staff where information is received that indicates they may pose a risk to children and may request candidates to register on the DBS update service.

10.4 At least one member of every interview panel will have undertaken Safer Recruitment training which it is recommended is refreshed every 2 years.

10.5 We take proportionate decisions on whether to check individuals above and beyond what is legally required dependant on individual circumstance.

10.6 Any visitor to Whitmore Park Primary School who has not been subject to the necessary checks will be supervised at all times and a risk assessment completed.

10.7 All safer recruitment practices at Whitmore Park Primary School comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023). See Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) for further information.

The link for our Safer Recruitment Policy can be found in Appendix A.

11 Allegations of abuse against staff

11.1 Whitmore Park Primary School takes all safeguarding matters including low level concerns and/or allegations that harm to a child has occurred against staff (including agency, volunteers and contractors) seriously and will manage them in line with this policy, Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) and the CSCP Guidance, ['Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers'](#).

11.2 Allegations or concerns may include

- Staff having behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Staff possibly committing a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Staff behaving towards a child or children in a way that indicates that he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- Staff behaving or possibly behaving in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (including behaviour outside of work). This is known as 'Transferable risk'.

11.3 If a concern or allegation of abuse arises against the Headteacher, or should there be a conflict of interest to the Headteacher, it must be immediately reported to the Co-Chair of Governors.

11.4 If a concern or allegation of abuse arises against any member of staff, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor other than the Headteacher, it must be reported to the Headteacher without delay.

11.5 Concerns or allegations of abuse against staff must be reported to the Headteacher or Co-Chair of Governors as appropriate and not discussed directly with the person involved.

11.6 The Headteacher or Co-Chair of Governors should consider if the concern or allegation meets the harms threshold for Designated Officer intervention and seek guidance/advice if unsure by emailing lado@coventry.gov.uk. 'Low-level' concern does not mean it is not significant. This is a term used for any concern (no matter how small) that an adult working with a child may have breached the staff Code of Conduct and does not meet the harm threshold. Examples of which may include:

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door. Or;
- Humiliating pupils.

The details of the LADO can be found on the front of this policy. Immediate referrals can be made via the following link

https://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/206/coventry_safeguarding_children_partnership/2628/local_authority_designated_officer_lado

11.7 Concerns relating to a position of trust issue will be referred to the Local Authority designated officer within 24 hours. In accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* 2023, the school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

11.8 If a child has suffered or may have suffered abuse or harm, a MASH referral will also be made.

11.9 In the instances where an allegation is dealt with internally, the Local Authority designated officer will provide information and support to Whitmore Park Primary School in managing the allegation.

11.10 A referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service will be made if a member of staff is dismissed or removed from their post as a result of safeguarding concerns, irrespective of whether they have resigned.

11.11 Supply Teachers and all contracted staff

11.11.1 Although Whitmore Park Primary School does not directly employ supply teachers and contractors, the school will ensure that any concerns or allegations are referred to LADO and the relevant agency informed as the employer.

11.11.2 Whitmore Park Primary School will never cease to use a supply teacher for safeguarding reasons without liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer and reaching an agreed outcome.

11.11.3 Governing bodies/proprietors will liaise with the supply agency to determine whether to suspend or redeploy the supply teacher whilst they carry out their investigation.

11.11.4 Whitmore Park Primary School will inform supply agencies of its process for managing allegations, including inviting the agency's human resource manager (or equivalent) to meetings and regularly updating agencies on relevant school policies. The school will usually take the lead because agencies do not have direct contact with children or staff, so will not be able to gather information.

11.12 Governors

11.12.1 If an allegation or concern is about a Governor, the school/college will follow local procedures.

11.13 Volunteers

11.13.1 Risk assessments and a DBS check will be requested for all volunteers. Under no circumstances will a volunteer prior to satisfactory checks being completed be alone with children unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

11.14 Whistleblowing

11.14.1 Whitmore Park Primary School operates a culture of safeguarding and all staff should report any concerns about poor or unsafe practice, or Whitmore Park Primary School safeguarding processes to the senior leadership team.

11.14.2 Appropriate whistleblowing procedures are in place whereby the senior leadership team will take all concerns seriously.

11.14.3 In the event that a member of staff is unable to raise an issue with senior leadership in school, they should refer to Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education for additional guidance on whistleblowing procedures.

11.15 Complaints Procedure

Whitmore Park Primary School operates a complaint procedure which will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a pupil that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a pupil or attempting to humiliate them, bullying or belittling a pupil or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by the headteacher, other members of the senior leadership team and governors.

Please see the link here for the Complaints policy:
<https://www.whitmorepark.org/policies-procedures/>

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures. (Also refer to Low level concerns)

Complaints which escalate into a child protection concern will automatically be managed under the school's child protection procedures.

12 Promoting safeguarding and welfare in the curriculum

12.1 Whitmore Park Primary School recognises the importance of teaching children how to stay safe and look after their mental health and are committed to equipping children with the skills and knowledge to have successful and happy lives.

12.2 Whitmore Park Primary School will teach children about safeguarding, including online safety. As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, the school will cover relevant issues in line with government guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education

12.3 Schools play a crucial role in preventative education. Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-school or college approach that prepares pupils and students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment. The school/college will have a clear set of values and standards, upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school/college life. These will be underpinned by the school/college's behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence based RSHE delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum (RSHE). Please see the link here: <https://www.whitmorepark.org/policies-procedures/> for the schools Sex and Relationships Policy.

12.3 Children at Whitmore Park Primary School will receive the following as part of our promotion of safeguarding across the curriculum:

- The children receive weekly PHE lessons that cover a range of safeguarding issues across the year, including staying safe at home and outside of school, in relationships, online and in terms of emotional wellbeing. These sessions also teach the emotional literacy and life skills needed to make safe choices in their present and future lives. The content of our PHE scheme is decided annually based on the priorities identified for our children's wellbeing.
- Weekly assemblies reinforce our school's 'Golden Values' and promote the children's welfare, such as anti-bullying week or online safety days.
- Relationships and Sex education is taught in years 1- 6 as part of our PSHE curriculum. Parent sessions are held for all parents prior to SRE lessons. This is in line with the statutory status of Relationships and Health Education for September 2020.
- Online safety units of work for all ages are included in the Computing curriculum.

- Whitmore Park Primary School have embraced Thrive. Whole class Thrive sessions will be delivered regularly. Identified children may receive 1:1 or Small Group sessions.
- Safeguarding whole school assemblies
- Road safety
- Mental health workshops
- Pupil Survey's

Parents:

- Updates (website, newsletters) and parent meetings for online safety
- Mental health awareness
- PSHE parent consultations

12.4 Education at home and remote education

Whitmore Park Primary School use SeeSaw platform for EYFS and Key Stage 1 and the Showbie platform for Key Stage 2 for education at home.

Please see the link here: <https://www.whitmorepark.org/policies-procedures/> for the Remote Learning Policy for details of keeping in touch with children who are learning at home protocols.

Whitmore Park Primary School continues to work under the KCSIE/WTSC (Working Together to Safeguard Children) policies when children are learning at home.

Any safeguarding concerns regarding children who are learning at home are reported to the DSL / DDSL via the usual school procedures (CPOMs).

13 Children Looked After

13.1 The most common reason for children to be looked-after is because they have experienced abuse and/or neglect. Whitmore Park Primary School recognises that children looked after may have additional vulnerabilities by virtue of this. The Designated Lead for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children is Miss Sam Carney.

13.2 Staff will receive training on how to best safeguard children who are Looked-After and who have been Previously Looked-After.

13.3 Whitmore Park Primary School will work with Personal Advisors when children leave care (where applicable).

13.4 Whitmore Park Primary School is committed to working with other agencies to ensure the best outcomes for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After children.

14 Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or physical health needs

14.1 As outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023), Whitmore Park Primary School is aware that children with additional needs or disabilities may be more vulnerable to abuse both online and offline and additional barriers may exist when recognising abuse and neglect. This could be because;

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- Being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content.

14.2 Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the designated safeguarding lead and SENCO. Staff will also be trained in recognising signs of abuse in children with SEN and disabilities or certain medical conditions.

14.3 Staff will take into account the needs of a child when responding to concerns of abuse or when taking a disclosure. We recognise that some children require specialist intervention to communicate and advice from the SENCO will be sought in these circumstances.

14.4 Safeguarding learning opportunities within the curriculum will be appropriately differentiated to ensure all children can access it.

15 Use of reasonable force

15.1 There may be occasions when staff are required to use reasonable force to safeguard children. We will not use any more force than is proportionate and necessary.

At Whitmore Park Primary School positive handling and restraint of children will only ever be used as a last resort at the school and will be reinforced with high quality staff training and thorough risk assessing procedures. Positive handling will only be used when all other strategies have failed or to prevent injury or harm to the child or other people at the school. Positive handling may be required to help facilitate the inclusion of children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and will only be carried out by members of staff who have undergone accredited training. All incidents are recorded in the Red bound book and incidents are recorded on the Incident and de-briefing sheets and CPOMs. Positive handling will be used in conjunction with the Behaviour Management Policy

16 Alternative Provision

Whitmore Park Primary School will continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of children placed with an alternative provision provider and will be satisfied that this provider meets the needs of the pupil. Written confirmation from the provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out will be sought on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff.

16.2 The DSL will continue to have oversight of all pupils accessing any part of their learning from an alternative provider or delivery online or offsite provided by any organisation or individual not employed by the school. The DSL will ensure that robust arrangements are in place for timely and effective information sharing of safeguarding information between the school and alternative/external providers.

16.3 The DSL will also take responsibility for ensuring that robust procedures are in place to confirm attendance and to enable the swift reporting of non-attendance and children going missing from alternative/ external providers at any time when they should be with that provider.

17 Summary

17.1 Whitmore Park Primary School is committed to safeguarding children and will always make safeguarding decisions that are in the best interests of each child. For further information or if you have any queries about this policy, please contact Whitmore Park Primary School.

Appendix A

Whitmore Park Primary School's safeguarding policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the following policies; many of which can be found by following this link to our school's website <https://www.whitmorepark.org/policies-procedures/> The school adheres to Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership Policies, which can be found here:

- [Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers \(CSCP\)](#)
- [Allegations Against Members of Staff](#)
- Anti – Bullying Policy
- Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour and Restraints Policy
- Children Absent from Education Procedures
- Complaints Policy
- Critical Incident Plan
- Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice
- Equalities Policy
- E-Safety Safety Policy
- [Managing Professional Disagreements \(CSCP\)](#)
- Health & Safety Policy
- HR & Governance Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- IT Policy
- Lone Working Policy/Home visits guidance
- Medicine & First Aid Policy
- Primary-Secondary Transition Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Site Security Policy (Internal School Files)
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Needs Children Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy

Appendix B – Further Safeguarding Information

Types of Abuse

As outlined in paragraph 4.4, the school will take action if we believe a child is at risk of or is suffering from abuse. Abuse is not limited to physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect. For further information on the definitions of the types of abuse below, please refer to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023), Annex A.

See below for policy information relating to other key safeguarding issues. All decisions taken in responding to concerns of abuse will be taken in the best interests of the child.

Bullying, including cyber- or online-bullying

Whitmore Park Primary School takes all forms of bullying seriously and will respond sensitively and quickly to any reported bullying. Children should report any bullying to their class teacher, to the DSL or to any trusted member of staff and we will work to resolve it. We also teach the children at Whitmore Park Primary School about the dangers of bullying through our curriculum. Bullying can take many forms and we have several policies that cover different aspects of bullying. Please see the Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour and Restraints Policy and Child on Child Abuse Policy for further information.

Child Criminal Exploitation (including involvement in county lines)

County lines is the organised criminal distribution of drugs from the big cities into smaller towns and rural areas using children and vulnerable people.

Staff in Whitmore Park Primary School are aware of the occurrence of children being vulnerable to potential exploitation through links with older children in the community, online gaming and social media. Contextual knowledge of our community/family's and staff vigilance means that concerns are logged and acted upon promptly. Children are taught about the dangers of being influenced and involved in criminal activities during PSHE lessons at an age-appropriate level.

The key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes for pupils at school.

Indicators of lack of sleep, hunger, dirty clothes, emotional instability, poor academic performance and poor attendance may be evident. Whitmore Park Primary School are vigilant with attendance of all pupil's and monitor pupil's attendance daily. Any concerns are raised with the Safeguarding, Attendance and Welfare Team; who will take the appropriate action to safeguard pupils.

Also comments and discussions about online activity, phone usage, unusual friendships (children much older perhaps), gifts being bought or money given to them could reveal evidence of exploitation.

Concerns about children at Whitmore Park Primary School should be reported to the DSL/DDSLs who will take the appropriate actions to safeguard the children. Any concerns are recorded on CPOMS.

Domestic abuse

Whitmore Park Primary School is an Operation Encompass school; this means that we receive logs from the police following any domestic abuse incidents that have taken place in a child's home within the last 24 hours. Staff do not discuss this with parents and understand the implications of doing so. Any disclosures of domestic abuse made by a child or parent are reported to the MASH team as required and expected.

Fabricated or induced illness

We are very rigorous on identifying why pupils don't attend school. Where concerns are raised that this may be a possibility for a pupil; the Safeguarding team will investigate further and take appropriate actions E.g. advice and referral if necessary to social care. Any concerns are recorded on CPOMS.

Faith-based abuse

The term 'belief in spirit possession' is the belief that an evil force has entered a child and is controlling him or her. Sometimes the term 'witch' is used and is the belief that a child is able to use an evil force to harm others. In all these cases, genuine beliefs can be held by families, carers, religious leaders, congregations, and the children themselves that evil forces are at work. Families and children can be deeply worried by the evil that they believe is threatening them and abuse often occurs when an attempt is made to 'exorcise', or 'deliver' the child. Exorcism is the attempt to expel evil spirits from a child. (Safeguarding Children from Abuse Linked to a Belief in Spirit Possession 2007) The belief in 'possession' or 'witchcraft' is widespread. It is not confined to countries, cultures or religions, nor is it confined to new immigrant communities in this country. Any concerns about a child, which arise in this context, must be taken seriously and reported to the DSL's urgently and a referral will be made to the MASH team and police if necessary.

Female genital mutilation (A form of so-called 'honour-based' abuse)

Staff have knowledge of types, indicators and symptoms of FGM. All staff understand they have a mandatory duty to report to the police without delay, if they become aware that FGM has been carried out on a female below the age of 18. Staff will monitor and look out for unusual/changes in behaviour. Our attendance officer will also meet families who are looking to take extended leave, especially near to school holidays and will ask families where we have concerns.

NSPCC FGM Helpline

0800 028 3550

fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk

Forced marriage (A form of so-called 'honour-based abuse')

Staff understand the implications of forced marriage on our children. Staff are aware of the police teams and charities (see below) that work with victims of forced marriage and fully understand the necessity to report concerns raised by our children, whether those concerns be for themselves, siblings or parents. After conversations with family members or the child, the DSL will seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit, contact the MASH team and/or police accordingly.

[Forced Marriage Unit: \(+44\) 020 7008 0151 - Forced Marriage](#)

[Coventry Haven Women's Aid Coventry Haven](#)

[Karma Nirvana Honour Network: 0800 5999 247- Karma Nirvana](#)

[Panahghar \(Coventry\): 02476 228952 - Safe House](#)

[Freedom Charity: 0845 607 0133 Freedom Charity](#)

Gangs or youth violence

Using PSHE we discuss conflict and resolution and as part of this have open discussions with children as to how problems can be solved. If children at Whitmore Park Primary School were raising concerns about older siblings, the DSL would contact the sibling's school where possible to share those concerns and decide together on an appropriate course of action. E.g. liaising with multi-agencies such as social care and the police.

Gender-based violence

Gender based violence is unacceptable for our children. Staff will report any concerns to the DSL and a referral to the MASH and/or the police will be made where appropriate.

Hate

Any hate based language or actions against another person is not tolerated at Whitmore Park Primary School. It is dealt with via our behaviour policy and children are taught explicitly about the dangers of extreme language and using language that discriminates against others. Staff will challenge all language that is unacceptable and will not accept any language as 'banter' or 'jokes'. Neither will it be considered as acceptable if children use words or language that they do not understand that cause offence and discriminate.

Homelessness

Staff are aware of the on-going concerns for many of our family's that become homeless. The Safeguarding and Welfare Team at Whitmore Park Primary School will always seek to support families struggling to find stable accommodation and are aware of the changes to benefits and the Universal Credit system that has added pressure to our families' budgets. The Breakthrough Project helps people across Coventry and Warwickshire who are experiencing poverty and disadvantage through 'money mentoring' sessions.

Projects - Groundwork

(So-called) 'Honour-based' abuse (For FGM and Forced Marriage, types of so-called 'honour-based' abuse, see above)

Radicalisation and Extremism

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces. Terrorism is an action that:

- Endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people;
- Causes serious damage to property; or
- Seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat of terrorism must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Schools have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk. We will assess the risk of children in our school being drawn into terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force. We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place and equip our pupils to stay safe online at school and at home. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology.

Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period. Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour. The government website Educate against Hate and charity NSPCC say that signs that a pupil is being radicalised can include:

- Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- Changes in friendship groups and appearance
- Rejecting activities they used to enjoy
- Converting to a new religion
- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions

- Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- Possessing extremist literature
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem or be victims of bullying or discrimination. Staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong. Whitmore Park Primary School is committed to providing a secure environment for pupils, where children and young people feel safe and are kept safe. All adults at the school recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility irrespective of the role they undertake or whether their role has direct contact or responsibility for children or not. Staff have received training on Prevent and completed the Channel Awareness training online. Staff are fully aware of their responsibilities to report any concerns to the DSL/DDSL. Staff also fully understand radicalisation and extremism in the context of our community and will discuss both during PHSE/SMSC lessons with children at an age-appropriate level. Any concerns that staff have, will be discussed with parents (and in some cases the MASH team and/or the police)

Staff can seek advice from Manjeet Pangli the Prevent Co-Ordinator in Coventry, who offers support and challenge in relation to the Prevent agenda, furthermore support will be offered via Channel referrals when the DSL feels this is appropriate after discussions with all of the above.

manjeet.pangli@coventry.gov.uk

Mobile: 07944208499

CTU_GATEWAY@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk

The Department for Education has set up a helpline for teachers who have questions and/or concerns about extremism. Teachers can call: 0207 340 7264 or email: counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

Relationship abuse

Coercive behaviour is not tolerated at Whitmore Park Primary School and whilst our children may not be of age to participate in typical relationship abuse, our staff are vigilant of signs of manipulation within social and peer groups and will challenge this via our behaviour policy. Should a child make a disclosure about themselves, older siblings or friends and /or parents, which include indicators of relationship abuse, the DSL/DDSL will follow up with advice from MASH and refer where necessary.

Serious Violence

Staff in Whitmore Park Primary School are aware of the occurrence of children being exposed to serious violence in their community, due to ongoing gang related violence. Contextual knowledge of our community and staff vigilance means that any concerns are logged and acted upon promptly. Children are taught about the dangers of being influenced and involved in criminal activities during PHSE lessons at an age-appropriate

level.. Children are also taught about Knife Crime and the risks associated with carrying weapons as well as the impact that this has on our community.

Indicators which may signal that a child is at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime may include:

- Increased absence from school
- Change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- Significant decline in performance
- Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions (this could indicate that the child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation (see above))
- Risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include:
 - Being male
 - Having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
 - Having experienced child maltreatment
 - Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery

Staff are aware of these indicators and risk factors. If a member of staff has a concern about a pupil being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this to the DSL/DDSL.

Sexual violence or sexual harassment (including Child on Child abuse)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur:

- Between 2 children of any age and sex
- Through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children • Online and face to face (both physically and verbally)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school. If a victim reports an incident, it is essential that staff make sure they are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. Some groups are potentially more at risk.

Evidence shows that girls, children with SEN and/or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) children are at greater risk. Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Challenging inappropriate behaviours
- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable,
- Will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up

Challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Whitmore Park Primary School promotes a zero-tolerance policy in regard to any kind of sexual violence or sexual harassment (including child on child abuse) If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them which relates to child on child sexual violence and/or sexual harassment, they are expected to speak to the DSL/DDSL.

Sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude images and videos

Children are taught about the dangers of sending images of themselves via social media or messaging apps. They are taught that it is illegal in all cases for anyone to send inappropriate images of children and that it will lead to police involvement and MASH referral. Parents are made aware of this and encouraged to speak to the DSL/DDSL for further guidance.

Trafficking and modern slavery

Children are taught about the dangers of sending images of themselves via social media or messaging apps. They are taught that it is illegal in all cases for anyone to send inappropriate images of children and that it will lead to police involvement and MASH referral. Parents are made aware of this and encouraged to speak to the DSL/DDSL for further guidance.

Children Absent From Education (CAFE), home or care

The school will also take action to protect;

- Children absent from education
- Children missing from home or care

All staff should be aware that children being absent from school, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child

going missing in future. It is important that staff are aware of their school's unauthorised absence procedures and children missing education procedures.

It is important that Whitmore Park Primary School's response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

Children Absent from Education (CAFE)

- The school implements the following procedures when there are concerns about a children absent from education:

Staff Procedures for Children Absent in Education

Attendance Team:

- Ensure school registers are completed by 9am (Class Teachers)
- Attendance Team: at close of registers staff will ensure that all messages are taken from the absence line and are added to the relevant registers. Where there are still missing marks staff will call the class to double check if the child is or isn't in school before any calls are made to parents for reasons of absence
- 'First Day Calling' commences as soon as all registers are complete. Voicemail messages will be left if no answer and/or a text or email is sent to the parents/carers to determine why the child is absent. Absent pupils who are on the Safeguarding and Child Protection register will be contacted first, then pupils with Persistent Absence and finally any other pupils who are absent
- Where necessary a Home Visit will be done by the Attendance Team/Deputy Head teacher; if there are ongoing concerns around attendance for the pupil and/or if the pupil is subject to Safeguarding E.g. CP Plan, CIN Plan, EH Plans or assessments open to social care, so that they can make reasonable enquires to establish the reason for absence/whereabouts of the child
- All staff in school are to report any concerns that they may have around a child's absence – as they may have information additional to the Attendance Team E.g. may have overheard the child saying they are moving, going to another school, going on holiday. This information will then be followed up by the Attendance Team
- A pupil is classed as a Child Absent from Education after 10 days absence without permission. If no contact has been made with the family and the child has not returned to school E.g. failed to have returned after a holiday, family reported to have left the area, child has failed to take up a place at school; the Attendance team should make the following checks before completing a referral form to the Local Authority Children Absent in Education Team to report the child's absence:

- Ask the friends of missing pupils for any current information
- Check emergency contact number
- Check free school meals database
- Check records to see if there are siblings at another school - ring school
- Check with the School Nurse
- Complete a Home Visit

If a pupil has not returned to school after 20 days they can be removed from the schools register after the Local Authority has been informed of the situation.

Where we have concerns that children and their families have moved out of the area, or are unable to attend school for reasons that cause concern – fleeing DV; FGM; criminal behaviour; substance misuse; poor mental health etc, then we will refer to the MASH team as appropriate. Staff are fully aware of all concerns that may lead to absences from school and receive regular updates on the various issues during staff training.

Children Missing from home or care

As above, but in the event that the Safeguarding, Attendance and Welfare Team are made aware that a child is missing from home or care; they will liaise with external multi-agency services to report their concerns E.g. police and social care.

Private Fostering

Whitmore Park Primary School have a duty to refer any children who are living in a private fostering arrangement to the local authority.

We will do this through a MASH referral. It is important that parents/carers inform us if a child is going to be staying at an alternative address to that of their primary care-givers for more than 28 days.

A private fostering arrangement is essentially one that is made privately (that is to say without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. Private foster carers may be from the extended family, such as a cousin or great aunt. However, a person who is a relative under the Children Act 1989 i.e. a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of the full or half blood or by marriage) or stepparent will not be a private foster carer. A private foster carer may be a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child, or someone previously unknown to the child's family who is willing to privately foster a child. The period for which the child is cared for and accommodated by the private foster carer should be continuous, but that continuity is not broken by the occasional short break. Exemptions to this definition are set out in Schedule 8 to the Children Act 1989

Indicators of abuse

See below for possible indicators of abuse. (Taken from *What to do if you are worried a child is being abused*, 2015)

- Children whose behaviour changes – they may become aggressive, challenging, disruptive, withdrawn or clingy, or they might have difficulty sleeping or start wetting the bed;
- Children with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty;
- Children with consistently poor hygiene;
- Children who make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends, without an obvious reason;
- Children who don't want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities;
- Children who are having problems at school, for example, a sudden lack of concentration and learning or they appear to be tired and hungry;
- Children who talk about being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers;
- Children who reach developmental milestones, such as learning to speak or walk, late, with no medical reason;
- Children who are regularly missing from school or education;
- Children who are reluctant to go home after school;
- Children with poor school attendance and punctuality, or who are consistently late being picked up;
- Parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to practitioners' concerns;
- Parents who collect their children from school when drunk, or under the influence of drugs;
- Children who drink alcohol regularly from an early age;
- Children who are concerned for younger siblings without explaining why;
- Children who talk about running away; and
- Children who shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements.

The school recognises that the above list of indicators is not exhaustive and staff will receive training on indicators of abuse.