

Title:	Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Associated Policies:	Anti-Bullying Policy Behaviour Policy Child on Child Abuse Policy Data Protection/GDPR Policies Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy RSHE Policy Safer Recruitment Procedures Single Equality Policy Whistle Blowing Policy

1 KEY Contact details at Northampton School for Girls

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAIL
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Abigail Boddy	aboddy@nsg.northants.sch.uk safeguarding @nsg.northants.sch.uk
Deputy DSL Team	Cath Carre George Simmons Claire Green (Post 16) Julia Smallman (SENCO) Paul Parker (online safety lead)	ccarre@nsg.northants.sch.uk gsimmons@nsg.northants.sch.uk cgreen@nsg.northants.sch.uk jsmallman@nsg.northants.sch.uk pparker@nsg.northants.sch.uk
Other contactable members of the DSL team	Heads of Academic Standards are all DSL trained and can be contacted directly Julia Smallman has responsibility for Looked After and Previously Looked After students	jsmallman@nsg.northants.sch.uk
Headteacher	Cristina Taboada-Naya	c.taboada-naya@nsg.northants.sch.uk
Designated Officer (Local Authority)		Designated Officer admin 07831 123 193 LADOConsultations@NCTrust.co.uk
Nominated Safeguarding Governor	Dawn Lewis	Clerk@nsg.northant.sch.uk

1. Key Contacts and Definitions

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

MASH can advise on whether a family needs early help or whether they meet the threshold for statutory child protection. Telephone 0300 126 7000 or Email: MASH@nctrust.co.uk Any **member of staff can make a MASH referral**

Local Authority Designated Officer (DO)

To make a referral directly to Social Care if a child is in immediate danger, contact Children's Social Care during the evening, at night or at the weekend phone the out of hours team on 01604 626938. An operator will take the details of the call and your contact details. They will then pass this information over to the duty social worker. Additional advice and support can be found at the NSPCC at help@nspcc.or.uk or via the 24 hour help line 0800 800 5000. **Any member of staff can contact the LADO directly.**

2. Policy Statement of Aims

NSG is committed to providing an environment, which safeguards and promotes the welfare, safety and health of our students in line with our mission and values statements. We expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment. We will always act in the best interest of the child.

The school aims to ensure that:

- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding.
- Staff are trained in recognizing and reporting safeguarding issues.
- Staff encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them.
- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare .

The following arrangements secure this climate which safeguards and promote the welfare of children:

- Prevention – NSG will provide an environment, establish and maintain an ethos where all students feel secure, are encouraged to talk and in which they are listened to carefully. Staff and volunteers will be trained regularly to understand their responsibilities with regard to reporting safeguarding or child protection concerns.
- Protection – NSG will ensure that each member of staff, governor or other visitor involved in regulated activity with students has an up-to-date DBS check and is sufficiently trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to Child Protection concerns.
- Support – The NSG '3 Respects' ethos provides structured systems of support for all students. This includes teaching students, as part of the curriculum, to keep themselves safe from all forms of abuse and appointing appropriately qualified and experienced staff (DSLs and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs)) to provide advice, training and support around safeguarding concerns.
- Communication – NSG will work closely with its parents/carers to ensure appropriate communications and actions are undertaken. The school will develop and maintain links with relevant external agencies in all matters relating to safeguarding and child protection.

3. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2024\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#), and the [Governance Handbook](#).

We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local [safeguarding partners](#)

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the schedule to the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of students at the school
- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B (11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children

- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their students with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting students (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled students. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment
- [The Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve student outcomes. Some students may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, bi-phobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination.

NSG commits to work in partnership with the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) and will follow their guidance, implement their systems and protocols for referring families for early help and reporting child protection concerns. The Partnerships will ensure that NSG is aware of issues within the community that are relevant to them.

4. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

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

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

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm.

Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

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

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The following **3 safeguarding partners** are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- The local authority (LA)
- Integrated care boards (previously known as clinical commissioning groups) for an area.
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, the school will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

Alleged perpetrator(s) and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

See **Appendix 2** for definitions and guidance on a wide range of safeguarding issues.

See **Appendix 3** for the main issues in our locality.

5. Equality Statement

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

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or health conditions (see section 10)
- Are young carers.
- May experience discrimination due to race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality.
- Have English as an additional language.
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation.
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation.
- Are asylum seekers.
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs.
- Are looked after or previously looked after (see section 12)
- Are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions.
- Whose parent/carers has expressed an intention to home educate.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility: **"Everybody, Everyday"**. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and is consistent with the procedures of the three safeguarding partners. **Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.** Regular training and updates for all members of staff and volunteers and prominent signage throughout the school will be provided to ensure that anyone who comes into contact with children understands their responsibility to observe, identify and report any concerns in line with the schools reporting procedures.

Northampton School for Girls commitment to the highest priority of safeguarding is based on an acknowledgment that 'it could happen here'.

The school plays a crucial role in preventative education. This is in the context of a whole-school approach to preparing students for life in modern Britain, and a culture of zero tolerance of sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and sexual violence/harassment. This will be underpinned by our:

- Behaviour policy
- Pastoral support system
- Planned programme of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:
 - Healthy and respectful relationships
 - Boundaries and consent
 - Stereotyping, prejudice, and equality
 - Body confidence and self-esteem
 - How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour)
 - The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and FGM and how to access support.
 - What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they're always unacceptable.

6.1 All staff

All staff will:

- Annually read, understand and sign a declaration that they have read **part 1 and annex B** of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), and review this guidance at least annually
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents and carers. This includes making parents and carers aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)
- Provide a safe space for students who are LGBTQ+ to speak out and share their concerns.

All staff will be aware of their responsibility to:

- Identify children who need help or protection.
- Understand and employ school based systems which support safeguarding, including; this safeguarding and child protection policy, the staff acceptable use policy and code of conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies, the behaviour policy, all online safety policies including the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, as well as specific safeguarding issues such as the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education (CME), who are at risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE) or indicators of FGM, radicalization and serious violence
- Recognise that students can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home and online.
- Help identify emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment (EHA and statutory assessments)
- Students that may be more vulnerable. (Including children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bi or trans or asexual (LGBTQ+))

See **Appendix 4** for raising a safeguarding concern at NSG.

6.2 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school.

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Out of hours they can be contacted by email at safeguarding@nsg.northants.sch.uk. (Please note this is not 24hr service) When the DSL is absent, the deputies listed in Section 1 will act as cover. They also support the out of hours/out of term time cover.

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters.
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children.
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly.
- Have a good understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at NSG.
- Ensure they are aware and up to date with latest national and local guidance and requirements, ensuring this is shared with all key personnel. For example, the presence of an 'appropriate adult' to support a student in the case of a police investigation/search or an understanding of the local specialist support available to support children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment.

The DSL will also keep the Headteacher informed of any issues and liaise with local authority case managers and designated teacher for child protection concerns as appropriate. In addition, at Northampton School for Girls the DSL is responsible for:

- ensuring that all staff in the school receive initial training and appropriate regular update training (including provision of training on how to report a safeguarding concern through the academy's CPOMS safeguarding referral system).
- ensuring relevant records are passed on appropriately when students transfer to other schools or are being educated at alternative provision or off-site education.
- ensuring that safer recruitment checks are carried out and that the academy's Single Central Record is up to date in line with statutory requirements, as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019).
- Ensuring that school policies are informed by and updated following both local and nation issues.

6.3 The governing board

All governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety and attend safeguarding training at least annually

The governing board will:

- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- Appoint a link governor to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL.
- Ensure all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, and that such training is regularly updated and is in line with advice from the safeguarding partners.
- Ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and review their effectiveness. This includes:
 - Making sure that the leadership team and staff are aware of the provisions in place, and that they understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training.
 - Reviewing the [DfE's filtering and monitoring standards](#), and discussing with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting these standards

Make sure:

- The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support.
- Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies.
- The DSL has lead authority for safeguarding, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.
- The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors).
- That this policy reflects those children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised.
- Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll) the Governing body are required to seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply.

The Chair of Governors will act as the 'case manager' if an allegation of abuse is made against the Headteacher, where appropriate (**see Allegations of Abuse Against Staff and Whistleblowing Policies**).

6.4 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction. Understand and follow the procedure included in this policy.
- Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the school and via the school website.
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent.
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and update this regularly .

- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this.
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see **Allegations of Abuse Against Staff and Whistleblowing Policies**).

7. Confidentiality

In this and subsequent sections, when we make any references to the DSL we mean "the DSL (or deputy DSL team)"

NSG will hold records in line with our GDPR policy and Records Retention schedule. Non-confidential records will be easily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them. Therefore, all safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made (and the reasons for those decisions) must be recorded onto the secure CPOMS system.

Staff should note:

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.
- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests.
- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children.
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL.
- If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk .

If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment the DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children.

The DSL should consider that:

- Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
- The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care.
- Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains.

Regarding anonymity, all staff will:

- Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system.

- Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved.
- Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities.

If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL.

The government's [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#) includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information.

If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded promptly (within 5 days) securely, and separately from the main student file. In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

8. Recognising abuse and acting

Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger

Make a referral to children's social care and/or the police immediately if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger. Anyone can make a referral. Contact details can be found in section 1. Tell the DSL as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

You can also follow the following link to the GOV.UK webpage for reporting child abuse to our local council:

<https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

8.1 Reporting a concern within school if a child makes a disclosure to you.

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions.
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset.
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner.
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret.
- Then upload this information to the school CPOMs system -- you should type up the details of the conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words, stick to the facts, and avoid judgement opinion or comment. The DSL should be alerted as soon as possible.

Bear in mind that some children may:

- Not feel ready, or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected
- Not recognise their experiences as harmful
- Feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers

None of this should stop you from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL if you have concerns about a child.

If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm or is in immediate danger) log your concerns on CPOMS and where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

The DSL will normally seek to discuss any safeguarding concerns about a student with their parents/carers. This must be handled sensitively. However, if the DSL believes that a student is experiencing or may have experienced abuse or neglect or is at risk of suffering significant harm, they seek advice first from the Local Safeguarding Board.

8.2 Making a referral following a reported concern.

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children's social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so. (If you make a referral directly you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.)

The local authority will make a decision within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves. The DSL will keep the case under constant review and the school will consider a referral to local authority children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.

8.3 Actions following a referral.

Where the DSL contacts the Local Safeguarding Board or makes a MASH referral the agreed course of action will be followed. The school will be guided by MASH in this respect.

All Child Protection records will be maintained in a confidential file at the school. In light of the ongoing Goddard Inquiry, no records will be destroyed until the Inquiry has been concluded, and only after the child has reached the age of 25

8.4 If you discover that FGM has taken place, or a student is at risk of FGM.

Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs". FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'. Any teacher who discovers (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that an act of FGM has been carried out on a student under 18 must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

Please note: The mandatory reporting procedures say:

'It is recommended that you make a report orally by calling 101, the single non-emergency number.' 'Where there is a risk to life or likelihood of serious immediate harm, professionals should report the case immediately to police, including dialling 999 if appropriate'. In most cases 'reports under the duty should be made as soon as possible after a case is discovered, and best practice is for reports to be made by the close of the next working day'.) Unless they have good reason not to, the teacher involved should also discuss

the case with the DSL who will involve children's social care as appropriate. Staff should not examine students.

This duty for teachers does not apply in cases where a student is *at risk of FGM* or *FGM is suspected* but is not known to have been carried out. (Staff should never examine students.) Where a case of *FGM is suspected* or *there is a risk of FGM being carried out* a member of staff should speak to the DSL. Local advice can also be found at [local safeguarding procedures](#).

Below is a very short summary and must be read in conjunction with the mandatory reporting guidance. (See <http://safeguarding.link/fgmreporting>

Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a student under 18 must speak to the DSL who will make the referral.

8.5 If you have concerns about extremism

As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, schools have a duty to 'prevent people being drawn into terrorism'. This has become known as the 'Prevent Duty'.

Where staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalized, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead has received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism and is able to support staff with any concerns they may have. Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include [Channel](#), the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

The DfE also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. **Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.**

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- Think someone is in immediate danger
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- See or hear something that may be terrorist-related

8.6 If you have a concern about mental health.

Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. You may refer to the Department for Education guidance on [mental health and behaviour in schools](#) for more information.

- If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action by following the steps in section 8.1/8.2
- If you have a mental health concern that is **not** also a safeguarding concern, speak to the Head of Academic Standards to agree a course of action.

8.7 Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher, volunteer, or contractor/whistleblowing

Any staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague, temporary/supply teacher or volunteer towards a student must remember that the welfare of the children is paramount.

The school **Whistleblowing policy and procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Staff** describe the actions that enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence with the Headteacher. This includes behaviour that is defined as “low-level”.

If you have a concern or an allegation is made about a member of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers, or contractors, you must report it to the Headteacher as soon as possible.

If the concern or allegation relates to the Headteacher, it must be reported directly to the Chair of Governors and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) without delay.

The guidance in KCSIE should be followed where it is alleged that anyone working in the school or college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers and volunteers has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children.
 - behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.
- This includes behaviour inside and outside of the school.

If you receive an allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organisation was using the school premises for running an activity for children, follow our school safeguarding policies and procedures, informing the LADO, as you would with any safeguarding allegation.

8.8 Allegations of abuse made against another student.

At NSG we recognise that children are capable of abusing other children. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”.

All child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for students. We also recognise there is a generalised view of child-on-child abuse being of a gendered nature. We do not hold this view at NSG where all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Most cases of students hurting other students will be dealt with under our school’s behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put students in the school at risk .
- Is violent
- Involves students being forced to use drugs or alcohol.
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, up skirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including sexting)

At NSG we will minimise the risk of child on child abuse by:

- Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour, including requesting or sending sexual images
- Ensuring our curriculum helps to educate students about appropriate behaviour and consent.
- Ensuring students know they can talk to staff confidentially through the pastoral and PSHE programmes

- Ensuring staff are trained to understand that a student harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy

More information can also be found in the school Child on Child Abuse Policy

8.9 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes ('sexting') based on guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety

If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery'), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must **not**:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a student to share or download it (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL)
- Delete the imagery or ask the student to delete it
- Ask the student(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility)
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the student(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved
- You should explain that you need to report the incident and reassure the student(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

Initial review meeting

The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children's social care if:

- there is an immediate risk to student(s)
- a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care
- it is necessary to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed)
- further information is required to decide on the best response
- the image(s) has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown)
- immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services
- relevant facts about the students involved which would influence risk assessment.
- there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual
- to contact parents or carers of the students involved (in most cases parents/carers should be involved)

The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children's social care if:

- The incident involves an adult
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to SEN)
- What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any student in the images or videos is under 13.
- The DSL has reason to believe a student is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming)

- If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the Headteacher will review the risks and may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. All incidents of this nature will be recorded in CPOMS.

In line with updates in KCSIE (2024) the above actions may include making referrals against the wishes of the young person; and considering the potential impact of social media breaching confidentiality.

- Teaching students about the issues surrounding sexting as part of the PSHE education and computing programmes, and ensuring our curriculum helps to educate students about appropriate behaviour and consent. Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:
 - What it is
 - How it is most likely to be encountered
 - How to report an incident whether they have sent, received, or are made aware that one of their peers has been involved in sending or receiving such images. (Students are always encouraged to speak to their safe person and/or their Tutor, Pastoral Mentor or Head of Academic Standards)
 - The consequences of requesting, forwarding, or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment.
 - Issues of legality
 - The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation

Students also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:

- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images.
- The receipt of such images

Students are made aware of the school procedures around this issue so they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the child's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. We recognise the importance of ensuring students feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns and/or allegations.

To achieve this, we will:

- Put systems in place for students to confidently report abuse are easily understood and easily accessible for students. Ensure that students are familiar with these systems, including the context of every child identifying a safe space and a safe person within school. Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted through Tutor time activities PSHE/RSE curriculum and the assembly programme.
- Make it clear to students that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback.
- Ensure that students are aware that any issues regarding student safety, well-being and safeguarding are recorded in CPOMS and reported to the DSL.

9. Online safety and the use of mobile technology

Northampton School for Girls is committed to promoting the welfare and safety of our students when using digital technologies.

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. With reference to the DfE Teaching Online Safety in Schools guidance, the school recognises the importance of the contribution it can make to protecting and supporting students across the school in their use of these technologies. (Please see the Online Safety and Acceptable Use policy for further information.)

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of students, staff, volunteers and governors.
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology.
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community.
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

The 4 key categories of risk

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

- **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- **Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- **Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

To meet our aims and address the risks above, we will:

- Educate students about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:
 - The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
 - Keeping personal information private
 - How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
 - How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring students are encouraged to do so, including where they're a witness rather than a victim.
- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, the risks of online radicalisation, and the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring. All staff members will receive refresher training as required and at least once each academic year.
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them, so they know how to raise concerns about online safety.

- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:
 - Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use but will limit such use to non-contact time when students are not present.
 - Staff will not take pictures or recordings of students on their personal phones or cameras without the permission of the Headteacher.
- Make all students, parents/carers, staff, volunteers, and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology. We recognise that many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e. 3G, 4G and 5G). At NSG "When children use the school's network to access the internet, they are protected from inappropriate content by our filtering and monitoring systems which are regularly reviewed for their effectiveness. However, because many students are able to access the internet using their own data plan, we seek to minimise inappropriate use in school through the curriculum and by applying consistently the "NSG Expects" rules on phones in school.
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a student is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones.
- Make sure all staff, students and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search students' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#).
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems.
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community.
- Provide regular safeguarding and children protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively.
- Review the child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly.

This section summarises our approach to online safety and mobile phone use. For full details about our school's policies in these areas, please refer to our online safety and acceptable use policy and filtering and monitoring procedures which can be found on our website.

10. Notifying parents or carers

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents or carers. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.

Other staff will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

If we believe that notifying the parents or carers would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so.

(In the case of allegations of child-on-child abuse please see the Child-on-Child abuse policy for details)

11. Students with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues

We recognise that students with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges, and are 3 times more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration.
- Students being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other students.
- The potential for students with SEN, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

Weekly safeguarding review meeting are attended by the SENCO to ensure their vulnerabilities are recognised and additional support is provided to meet student needs

12. Students with a social worker

Students may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour, and mental health.

The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

Where we are aware that a student has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the student's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:

- Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks

The provision of pastoral and/or academic support

13. Looked-after and previously looked-after children

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. In particular, we will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads.

We have appointed a designated teacher who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with [statutory guidance](#).

The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.

As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

- Work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
- Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how student premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans.

14. Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies

14.1 Complaints against staff

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our policy for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff.

14.2 Other complaints

Other complaints will be handled through our complaints procedure.

14.3 Whistleblowing

Concerns regarding the way the school safeguards students, including poor or unsafe practice, or potential failures will be dealt with through the whistleblowing policy.

15. Record-keeping

We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule. All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in CPOMS. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved.
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

Any non-confidential records will be readily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the school.

If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded within 5 days securely, and separately from the main student file. In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

16. Training

16.1 All staff

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including on whistleblowing procedures and online safety, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect.

This training will be regularly updated and will:

- Be provided through annual face to face CPD, additional online specialist CPD, 'bitesize' learning throughout the academic year covering current school based, local and national safeguarding issues.
- Be integrated, aligned, and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning.

- Have regard to the Teachers' Standards to support the expectation that all teachers:
 - Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment.
 - Have a clear understanding of the needs of all students.

All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

Contractors who are provided through a private finance initiative (PFI) or similar contract will also receive safeguarding training.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

16.2 The DSL and deputies

The DSL and deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years. They will also undertake Prevent awareness training. In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).

16.3 Governors

All governors receive training about safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) at induction, which is regularly updated. This is to make sure that they:

- Have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge.
- Can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding.

As the Chair of Governors may be required to act as the 'case manager' if an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, they receive training in managing allegations for this purpose.

16.4 Recruitment

Interview panels

At least 1 person conducting any interview for any post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training in line with local safeguarding procedures.