PENNTHORPE
NURSERY PRE-PREP PREP

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY 2026 – 2027

THIS POLICY INCLUDES EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

Policy Author:	Deputy Head Pastoral – Emma Gould
Date reviewed by author:	October 2026
Next review date:	October 2027

Governor sign – off		
Governor: Iain Regan-Smith	Date:	11.10.26

This policy works in conjunction with many policies but specifically Pennthorpe School's: *Behaviour Management: Rewards and Sanctions Policy ; Anti-Bullying and Cyber-Bullying Policy ; EYFS Personal Care Policy; Use of Children's Images Policy ; Online Safety Policy ; Acceptable Use Policy ; Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy ; Whistleblowing Policy ; Health and Safety Policy ; Staff Code of Conduct (incorporating the Low-Level Concerns Policy) ; Visitors in School Policy ; Missing Child Policy ; Low Level Concerns Policy*

1. Contacts:

Internal contacts:

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Emma Gould (Including Online & Digital Safety)	egould@pennthorpe.com 01403 822391
Deputy DSLs	Matt Barnett - mbarnett@pennthorpe.com Ellie Cooper - ecooper@pennthorpe.com Chris Franklin - cfranklin@pennthorpe.com Charlotte Gallina Breese - cgallinabreese@pennthorpe.com Leah Goddard (including EYFS) – lgoddard@pennthorpe.com Sophie Rego - srego@pennthorpe.com Victoria Tso - vtso@pennthorpe.com	
Nominated Safeguarding Governor	Iain Regan-Smith	ireganssmith@pennthorpe.com

If at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to the children's social care services (Integrated Front Door) immediately or alternatively call 999/emergency services. Any person can make a referral but they must then inform the DSL.

External contacts:

West Sussex's **Integrated Front Door (formerly MASH)** is the single point of contact for safety concerns about a young person or child.

Normal Hours: 01403 229900

Out of Hours: 0330 222 6664
WSChildrenServices@westsussex.gov.uk

West Sussex **Safeguarding Children Partnership**, wsscp@westsussex.gov.uk

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West Sussex's **Single Point of Access** is a dedicated service which provides a simplified single route to access specialist emotional wellbeing and mental health support.
0300 304 0462
SPFT.WestSussexSPOA@nhs.net

The West Sussex **Safeguarding in Education Team**, including the MASH Education Advisers:
0330 222 4030
Safeguarding.Education@westsussex.gov.uk

West Sussex **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)/Children's Safeguarding Managers,** is where to report allegations against adults who work with children
0330 222 6450
LADO@westsussex.gov.uk

For non-urgent advice on **Extremism,** please contact the DfE dedicated helpline/email for staff and Governors: 020 7340 7264 counter.extremism@education.gov.uk

West Sussex **Prevent Team:** 0330 222 4223 Beverly.knight@westsussex.gov.uk

Non-emergency telephone number: 101 and talk to the Prevent Officers
In a more urgent situation contact the local police force: on 01273 475432 or email prevent@sussex.pnn.police.uk
For emergencies, use the anti-terrorist hotline: 0800 789 321

To report **FGM**, please contact Local Police force 101 (the non-emergency police number)
For advice relating to FGM, you can call the national FGM helpline on 0800 028 3550.

NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline 0808 800 5000 help@nspcc.org.uk

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2. Policy Statement

Pennthorpe School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people and expects all staff, governors, volunteers, visitors and contractors to share this commitment.

The welfare of the child is the school's paramount concern.

We recognise that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children encompasses:

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

The school is committed to maintaining a safeguarding culture in which:

- children feel safe
- children's voices are heard
- concerns are acted upon promptly
- staff remain professionally curious
- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

Every child has the right to be protected regardless of:

- age
- sex
- race
- disability
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender identity
- culture
- language
- family circumstances
- socioeconomic background

The school adopts a child-centred approach at all times and seeks to understand and respond to concerns from the perspective of the child.

3. Legislative Framework

The policy will be reviewed annually or whenever significant changes in legislation or local safeguarding arrangements occur. This policy was written with particular regard to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2026
- Independent School Standards Regulations 2026
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance 2026
- Information Sharing to Safeguard Children and Young People (updated 2026)
- Prevent Duty Guidance
- West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSSCP) Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Local Threshold Guidance
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)

- Children Missing Education (2024)
- Restrictive Interventions including Use of Reasonable Force in Schools (2026)

And reference to a range of other guidance and documentation which includes, but is not limited to:

- UKCIS Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes (2024)
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Domestic Abuse Act (April 2021) and Operation Encompass Handbook for Schools
- Education and Training (welfare of children) Act 2021
- Online Safety Act 2023
- Filtering and Monitoring Standards for Schools and Colleges
- When to call the police - Guidance for Schools and Colleges (September 2020)
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act (12 April 2019)
- Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 (updated 2019)
- Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines (updated October 2023)
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (updated 31 August 2018)
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education Act 2002 et al
- National Referral Mechanism guidance: adult (England and Wales) (updated June 2018) (NRM)
- Data Protection Act (May 2018) (DPA)
- DfE: Definition and a guide for working to protect children from child sexual exploitation (Feb 2017)
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (DfE guidance)
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults Working with Children and Young People in Education Settings (Safer Recruitment Consortium)
- Teacher misconduct: the prohibition of teachers (updated February 2022)
- Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (CTSA)
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Promoting the education of looked after children (updated February 2018)
- Care Act 2014
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012
- Terrorism Act 2000
- PHE advice: Mental health and behaviour in school guidance
- DfE advice: Preventing and tackling bullying, mental health, and behaviour in schools
- National Crime Agency CEOP Education Programme: Protecting children and young people from online child sexual abuse through education
- HM Gov: Educate Against Hate (www.educateagainsthate.com/)
- The UK safer internet centre (www.saferinternet.org.uk) appropriate filtering and monitoring
- The National Education Network: Digital Responsibility guidance
- When to call the police, non-statutory guidance from the National Police Chiefs' Council.
- DCMS: Online Safety Guidance - A Business Guide for Protecting Children On Your Online Platform
- UKCIS Education for a Connected World Framework
- DfE Meeting Digital and Technology Standards in Schools and Colleges
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4. Roles and Responsibilities:

The Governing Body:

The Governing Body has strategic responsibility for safeguarding arrangements across the school.

Governors will ensure:

- safeguarding is effective
- safeguarding systems are regularly reviewed
- safer recruitment procedures are implemented
- staff receive appropriate safeguarding training
- appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place *formally reviewed at least annually*
- safeguarding remains a standing item in governance oversight

Governors receive safeguarding training at induction and regular updates thereafter.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

The DSL takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection throughout the school, including EYFS and online safety.

The DSL is responsible for:

- managing referrals
- coordinating safeguarding action
- working with external agencies
- supporting staff
- maintaining safeguarding records
- promoting safeguarding culture
- ensuring staff training remains current
- overseeing policy development

The DSL maintains oversight of all safeguarding concerns and ensures children receive the right support at the right time.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL):

Deputies support the DSL and are trained to the same standard.

Whilst activities may be delegated to deputies, ultimate lead responsibility remains with the DSL.

All Staff *(throughout this policy, the term 'staff' refers to all temporary, supply, visiting and volunteer adults)*:

Every member of staff has a responsibility to:

- safeguard children
- maintain professional curiosity
- identify concerns
- record concerns accurately
- report concerns immediately
- complete safeguarding training
- understand local safeguarding procedures

- contribute to a culture of vigilance

All staff must recognise that: **It could happen here.**

Volunteers, Contractors and Visitors:

Any adults working with or around children at Pennthorpe School must:

- follow safeguarding requirements
- understand how to report concerns
- behave in accordance with the school's safeguarding expectations
- undergo **full** safer recruitment checks if undertaking regulated activity
- not start employment within the EYFS prior to the receipt of an enhanced DBS clearance

Parents:

Parents are encouraged to work in partnership with the school.

Where appropriate, the school will involve parents in safeguarding processes; however, the school will act without parental consent where this is necessary to protect a child from harm.

5. Safeguarding Culture and Prevention:

Creating a Safe Environment:

At Pennthorpe School, we seek to provide a safe, positive and supportive environment in which:

- children feel valued
- safeguarding concerns are recognised early
- respectful relationships are promoted
- emotional wellbeing is supported
- diversity is celebrated
- discrimination is challenged

The school maintains a culture where safeguarding concerns are understood as everyone's responsibility.

Listening to Children:

The school promotes a culture of listening. Children are encouraged to:

- speak to trusted adults
- seek help for themselves
- seek help for others
- report worries
- contribute their views

Children are reassured that concerns will be taken seriously.

Safeguarding in the Curriculum:

All opportunities are taken across the curriculum to reinforce learning around safeguarding with specific and planned delivery through PSHEE, RSE, computing, assemblies and pastoral provision. Children learn about:

- healthy relationships
- online safety
- consent
- personal safety
- mental wellbeing
- recognising abuse
- seeking help
- resilience
- managing risk

Online Safety:

The school recognises technology, and particularly the rapid rise in use, and development of, AI as a significant safeguarding issue.

Children are taught:

- safe online behaviours
- critical thinking
- risks associated with AI technologies
- recognising online manipulation
- misinformation and disinformation
- safe use of devices and social media

The school maintains appropriate filtering and monitoring systems to safeguard pupils online and takes appropriate action if monitoring raises any cause for concern.

Mobile phones and smart technology:

Pennthorpe operates a mobile phone-free environment for all pupils during the school day.

Children are not permitted to use personal mobile phones, smartwatches with cellular features or personal recording devices on the school grounds. *Any child who requires a mobile phone before or after school eg if they have permission to walk to school unaccompanied, must leave their phone at the School Office upon arrival.*

Staff must adhere to creating a mobile-free environment by only using personal devices in all staff areas and storing phones away from the children during the school day. EYFS areas of school are completely mobile free and therefore staff must put their phones into the locked cabinets provided.

Visitors to the school are asked to refrain from using their mobile devices where at all possible and, in the rare instance that they need to be used, are asked to move away from children to an area out of reach/sight of the children.

6. Training, Education and Support:

Staff Training:

Pennthorpe recognises that safeguarding training is fundamental to creating a culture of vigilance and ensuring staff are equipped to identify risk, respond appropriately and safeguard children effectively.

All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction and at regular intervals thereafter.

Training is designed to ensure that all staff:

- understand their safeguarding responsibilities
- can identify indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- understand reporting procedures
- understand their responsibility to record and report concerns
- understand local safeguarding processes
- understand online safety and digital safeguarding risks
- understand the importance of professional curiosity

All staff receive:

- annual safeguarding updates
- regular safeguarding briefings
- updates when legislation changes
- training linked to emerging safeguarding themes

Training may be delivered through:

- face-to-face training
- online learning
- safeguarding bulletins
- staff meetings
- safeguarding workshops
- external training providers

The school maintains a comprehensive safeguarding training record.

Safeguarding Induction:

All newly appointed staff, volunteers, governors, contractors and regular visitors receive safeguarding induction.

Induction includes:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education *(Part 1 in full for all staff – DSLs and Governors will be directed to read other sections as well)*
- This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Prevent Duty guidance
- identity of the DSL and DDSL team
- how to report a safeguarding concern

Staff are informed that safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately.

Designated Safeguarding Lead Training:

The DSL and DDSLs undertake training appropriate to their role and maintain continuing professional development through:

- formal L3 safeguarding training (at least every 2 years)
- local authority training
- safeguarding network meetings
- safeguarding updates
- reading and research

The DSL ensures safeguarding knowledge remains current and reflects legislative developments, local safeguarding priorities and emerging risks.

Pupil Development:

Developing children's understanding around safeguarding is delivered through the wider curriculum as well as pastoral provision.

Pupils are taught:

- how to stay safe
- how to seek help
- what a healthy relationship looks like
- how to respect others
- methods to promote online safety
- resilience
- understanding about consent
- how to recognise abuse
- how to manage one's own personal wellbeing

Teaching and development is delivered in an age-appropriate manner and responds and adapts to current and changing safeguarding risks.

7. Responding to Concerns:

Recognising Concerns:

All staff should be alert to signs which may indicate that a child:

- is suffering abuse
- is at risk of abuse
- requires additional help or support
- may benefit from Early Help
- may require statutory intervention

Staff must remain professionally curious and should never assume someone else will act. There is no hard-and-fast rule for what to report, anything unusual or that does not feel 'right' for a child should be shared. Nothing is 'too little to share'. *If you think 'should I share this' then you definitely should.*

What staff must do:

If a member of staff has a concern about a child they must:

- Listen carefully – *a child may choose anyone to disclose abuse to, and it is vital we all listen in the moment* (see below for guidance on managing a disclosure)
- Reassure the child
- Record the concern, using the child's words where at all possible
- Report the concern immediately to the DSL (or a deputy in their absence) - *if reporting is done verbally, it MUST be followed up in writing, preferably via MyConcern*
- Follow the school's reporting procedures.

Concerns must be reported using MyConcern wherever possible.

What staff must NOT do:

Staff must not:

- investigate
- ask leading questions
- promise confidentiality
- contact parents where abuse is suspected
- delay reporting concerns
- discuss concerns with individuals who do not need to know

Handling a disclosure:

Where a child makes a disclosure staff should:

- remain calm
- listen carefully
- believe the child
- reassure appropriately
- explain that the information must be shared
- record the disclosure using the child's own words

Staff should refer immediately to the DSL or, in their absence, a DDSL or the Head.

IMMEDIATE RISK:

If a child is believed to be at immediate risk of significant harm:

- **Children's Social Care must be contacted immediately via the IFD (see top of policy for contact details)**
- **Police should be contacted where appropriate *do not be afraid to call 999 if you have extreme concern for the safety of a child***
- **The DSL must be informed immediately – in their absence, contact a DDSL or the Head.**

REMEMBER - any person can make a referral.

8. Early Help, Child in Need and Child Protection:

School-level support:

Where concerns do not meet statutory safeguarding thresholds, the school may provide support through:

- pastoral monitoring
- mentoring
- wellbeing support
- parent meetings and advice
- safeguarding planning
- SEND intervention
- signposting to online materials and/or support services
- encouragement for self-referral to support services from within the family

Early Help:

Pennthorpe believes that intervening early is the most effective way of improving outcomes for children and families.

Early Help may be appropriate where:

- concerns are emerging
- additional support is required
- vulnerabilities are present
- family circumstances are impacting wellbeing

The DSL will usually determine the most appropriate response and a need for Early Help; however, any member of staff can raise concern via the IFD which may lead to Early Help support. Families must consent to a referral for Early Help.

Child in Need:

A Child in Need is a child who is at risk of harm or abuse and requires services to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development. Child in Need support plans fall under Section 17 of the Children Act. Working in a multi-agency format, parents voluntarily adhere to the plan; failure to do so, may escalate concern.

Where concerns indicate a child may be a Child in Need, the DSL will make a referral via the IFD, after having spoken to the parents, and then work with relevant agencies to secure appropriate support.

Child Protection:
Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, a Child Protection referral will be made immediately via the IFD. A Child Protection plan falls under Section 47 of the Children Act and all parties, including parents, must adhere to the details of the plan to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child.

The DSL will work closely with Children's Social Care and other safeguarding partners for a child who is subject to a Child Protection plan.

Where possible, parents should always be informed of a referral or discussion concerning their child; however, ***if their child is at significant risk of harm or abuse, especially within their home, parents do not need to be contacted before referral, and in some cases, should not be contacted before referral. **NB: ANYONE CAN MAKE A REFERRAL via the IFD.*****

9. Specific Safeguarding Issues:

Pennthorpe recognises that safeguarding concerns can occur in many forms.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Child-on-Child Abuse
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- County Lines
- Domestic Abuse
- Radicalisation and Extremism
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Forced Marriage
- Honour-Based Abuse
- Online Abuse
- Serious Violence
- Mental Health Concerns
- Children Missing Education
- Homelessness
- Private Fostering
- Cybercrime

All concerns relating to these issues will be treated seriously and responded to in accordance with statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures.

Detailed guidance can be found within the appendices to this policy.

LGB and Gender-Questioning:

Staff at Pennthorpe are aware of the heightened risks of mental health difficulties, bullying, or distress for children who may be questioning their identity, gender or sexuality. When required, we will prepare child-centred, sensitive plans and support systems alongside pastoral care in conjunction with parents *unless doing so would put the child at risk of harm*.

10. Managing allegations against adults:

General principles:

Pennthorpe recognises that concerns can be raised regarding adults working with children.

The school seeks to:

- protect children
- support fair investigations
- act promptly
- comply with statutory guidance

Low-level concerns:

Pennthorpe promotes a culture where concerns can be raised before behaviour becomes more serious.

A low-level concern is any behaviour which:

- is not in line with an element of the staff code of conduct
- causes a sense of unease
- may not meet the allegation threshold

Low-level concerns should be raised via the appropriate MS form. All concerns reported this way will go to the Head. If the concern is about the Head, the person holding the concern should contact the Chair of Governors on rsharkey@pennthorpe.com

Records will be maintained appropriately.

Whistleblowing:

All staff have a professional responsibility to report concerns that may affect the safety or welfare of children, one that could bring the school into disrepute or one that is an illegal activity

The school promotes a culture where concerns are raised openly and without fear of victimisation. Concerns should be brought to the attention of the Head unless the concern is about the Head in which case, the Chair of Governors should be contacted.

The NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline remains available where staff do not feel able to raise concerns internally.

Allegations that meet the harm threshold:

An allegation may meet the harm threshold where an individual has:

- harmed a child
- possibly harmed a child
- committed a criminal offence against a child
- behaved in a manner indicating they may pose a risk to children
- behaved in a way indicating they may not be suitable to work with children

Where this threshold is met:

- the Head must be informed immediately
- concerns regarding the Head must be reported to the Chair of Governors
- the LADO will be contacted without delay

11. Record keeping and information sharing:

Accurate safeguarding records are essential in promoting and protecting the welfare of children.

All staff are required to record safeguarding concerns promptly, accurately and factually. Records should clearly distinguish between:

- fact
- observation
- allegation
- professional opinion

Where a child makes a disclosure, staff should record:

- the date and time
- the child's own words wherever possible
- the nature of the concern
- actions taken
- any advice received
- subsequent outcomes

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions and actions taken must be recorded using the school's safeguarding recording system, MyConcern.

Safeguarding records must include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up
- decisions made and the rationale for those decisions
- actions taken
- outcomes achieved

Safeguarding files will be maintained separately from a child's educational file and will be stored securely with access restricted to appropriate safeguarding personnel.

The DSL maintains oversight of safeguarding records and regularly reviews them to ensure:

- timely action has been taken
- concerns are appropriately monitored
- patterns and cumulative concerns are identified
- risks are appropriately managed

Safeguarding records will be retained in accordance with statutory guidance and the school's data retention arrangements.

Where a pupil transfers to another educational setting, safeguarding records will be transferred promptly, securely and separately from the main pupil file.

Information Sharing:

Pennthorpe recognises that effective safeguarding depends upon information being shared appropriately between professionals and agencies.

The school will comply with:

- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Information Sharing Guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working Together to Safeguard Children

The school recognises that data protection legislation does not prevent the sharing of information for safeguarding purposes.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, relevant information may be shared:

- without consent
- where obtaining consent could place a child at risk
- where doing so is necessary to protect a child

Information sharing decisions will always be:

- necessary
- proportionate
- relevant
- accurate
- timely
- secure

The welfare of the child remains the overriding consideration when making decisions regarding information sharing.

The DSL will seek advice from Children's Social Care, the Local Authority, police or other safeguarding partners where appropriate.

Multi-Agency Working:

Pennthorpe is committed to working collaboratively with all safeguarding partners.

This may include:

- Children's Social Care
- Police
- Health Services
- West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Education Welfare Services
- Early Help Services
- CAMHS and mental health services
- Other educational providers

The school recognises that effective multi-agency working improves outcomes for children and enables concerns to be addressed at the earliest opportunity.

12. **Monitoring, Review and Quality Assurance:**

Pennthorpe is committed to maintaining effective safeguarding arrangements and ensuring continuous improvement. The school will:

- review safeguarding systems regularly
- monitor safeguarding practice
- review safeguarding records and trends
- evaluate safeguarding training
- respond to safeguarding audits and recommendations
- implement improvements where required

The DSL will work closely with the Safeguarding Governor and Governing Body to monitor safeguarding effectiveness throughout the year.

Policy Review:

This policy will be reviewed:

- annually
- following significant safeguarding incidents
- when legislation changes
- when local safeguarding arrangements change
- where school review identifies a need for amendment

Any deficiencies or weaknesses identified in safeguarding arrangements will be addressed immediately.

Governance oversight:

The Governing Body has responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements remain effective and compliant. The Governing Body will:

- receive safeguarding reports
- review safeguarding effectiveness
- challenge and support safeguarding leaders
- ensure statutory duties are met

The Safeguarding Governor will meet at least termly *(½ termly where possible)* with the DSL to review safeguarding practice and provide appropriate challenge and support.

Pennthorpe Commitment:

Pennthorpe School remains fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

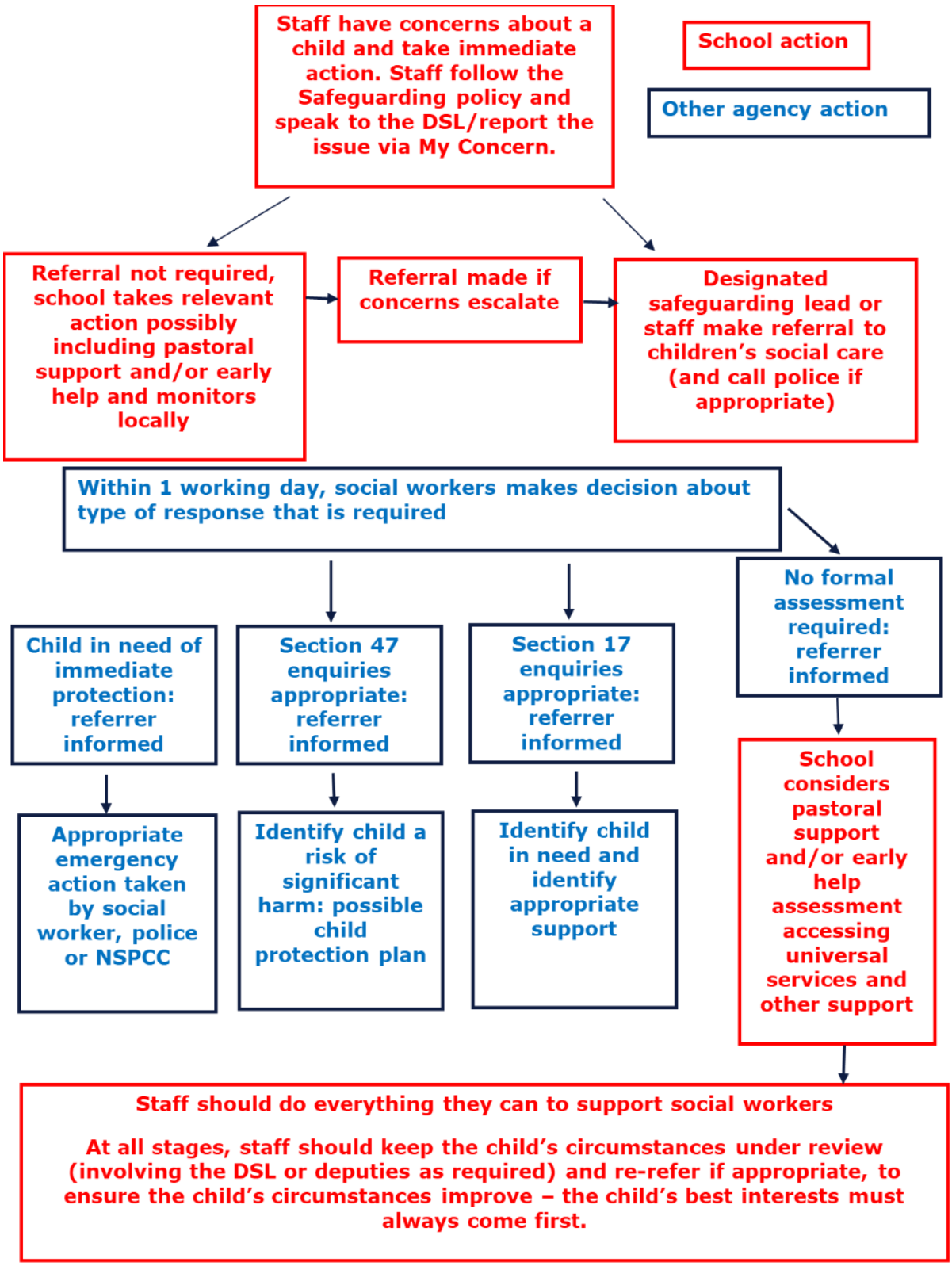
The school strives to create an environment in which all children:

- feel safe
- are listened to
- are respected
- are valued
- know how to seek help

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and remains at the heart of all decision-making across the school.

The welfare of the child will always be the school's paramount concern and will drive all decision-making.

13. APPENDIX A: Actions where there are concerns about a child



KEY PRINCIPLES: ***it could happen here; listen; record; report; never investigate; never delay; the welfare of the child is paramount.***

14. APPENDIX B: Types of Abuse and Safeguarding Concerns

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Abuse may occur:

- within families
- within communities
- online
- offline
- by adults
- by other children

Staff must understand that safeguarding concerns rarely occur in isolation and may overlap.

Physical abuse:

...physical harm of a child at the hands of another

Physical abuse may involve:

- hitting
- shaking
- throwing
- poisoning
- burning
- drowning
- suffocating
- causing physical harm

Possible Indicators

- unexplained injuries
- repeated bruising
- burns
- fractures
- sudden fearfulness
- reluctance to attend school
- injuries inconsistent with explanation

Emotional abuse:

...persistent emotional maltreatment causing adverse effects on emotional development.

Possible Indicators

- low self-esteem
- excessive anxiety
- withdrawal
- fearfulness
- over-compliance
- extreme emotional responses
- developmental delay

Sexual Abuse:

...forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. Activities may include physical contact, watching others engaging in sexual acts in-person or online

Possible Indicators

- age-inappropriate sexualised behaviour
- sexual knowledge beyond age expectations
- self-harm
- reluctance to be alone with certain people
- sudden behavioural change
- emotional distress

Neglect:

...the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or emotional needs.

Possible Indicators

- hunger
- poor hygiene
- inappropriate clothing
- poor attendance
- lack of supervision
- untreated medical needs
- developmental concerns

Child-on-child abuse:

...where the abuse of a child is caused by another child.

Child-on-child abuse can occur:

- in school
- outside school
- online

Examples include:

- bullying
- discriminatory behaviour
- physical abuse
- sexual harassment
- sexual violence
- abuse within intimate relationships
- sharing of nude or semi-nude images
- Use of AI to intimidate/embarrass, for example, by manipulating photos using AI tools

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE):

...sexual abuse of children and young people under the age of 18. It includes exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where an individual or group receives something wanted or needed (such as gifts, money, drugs, accommodation, alcohol, status and affection) in exchange for giving or receiving sexual activities.

Indicators may include:

- unexplained gifts
- older associates
- missing episodes
- secrecy

- inappropriate relationships
- emotional wellbeing concerns

Child criminal exploitation (CCE):

...where a power imbalance is used to coerce, manipulate, or force children into criminal activities

Indicators may include:

- unexplained money
- regular absences
- known gang associations
- possession of multiple phones
- changes in behaviour

Radicalisation and extremism:

... the step-by-step process where a vulnerable person is groomed or manipulated into adopting extreme political, social, or religious views that support terrorism or violent extremism.

Indicators may include:

- extremist views
- intolerance
- inappropriate online activity
- concerning language
- sudden behavioural changes

Female genital mutilation (FGM):

... a procedure that involves the partial or total removal of external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs, for non-medical reasons

It is mandatory to report any known cases to police. Suspected cases should be reported via the IFD.

Domestic abuse:

...any incident, or pattern of incidents, of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

Children can be victims of domestic abuse through:

- direct exposure
- witnessing abuse
- experiencing the effects of abuse

Pennthorpe participates in Operation Encompass.

Mental health as a safeguarding indicator:

....mental health concerns can be an indicator of underlying abuse, neglect or exploitation, or may itself escalate to a critical safeguarding threshold. Staff must be vigilant to changes in behaviour and emotional state.

Indicators may include:

- suicidal ideation
- explicit self-harm
- severe anxiety/depression
- unexplainable changes in eating habits

- sudden social withdrawal
- persistent school refusal/absence
- eviudence of self-injurious behaviour
- online activity related to mental health concerns

If mental health concerns indicate an immediate risk of harm or risk to life, staff must raise emergency concerns including considering calling 999.

15. APPENDIX C: Responding to a disclosure

Remember it *could* happen here.

Staff Must:

Listen

- remain calm
- listen carefully
- allow the child to speak

Reassure

- tell the child they did the right thing
- explain they are being taken seriously

Record

- write an accurate account
- use the child's own words whenever possible
- record date and time

Report

- inform the DSL immediately
- upload to MyConcern

Staff Must Not

- investigate
- ask leading questions
- promise confidentiality
- contact parents
- confront alleged perpetrators
- delay reporting

16. APPENDIX D: Child-on-child abuse procedure

Pennthorpe adopts a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse and therefore child-on-child abuse will never be dismissed as:

- banter
- horseplay
- part of growing up
- boys being boys
- Staff Response

Where concerns arise, we will:

- Ensure immediate safety.
- Listen.
- Record.
- Report to DSL immediately.
- Preserve evidence where appropriate.
- Initial DSL Considerations

The DSL will consider:

- wishes of the victim
- ongoing risk
- wider safeguarding concerns
- age and developmental stage
- contextual factors
- Management Options

The school may:

- manage internally
- provide Early Help
- refer to Children's Social Care
- refer to Police

Victims will:

- be listened to
- be believed
- be protected
- receive appropriate support

The school will also support alleged perpetrators, for example, through education and emotional support. All responses will be proportionate and child-centred.

17. APPENDIX E: Allegations against adults

This procedure applies to:

- staff
- volunteers
- governors
- contractors
- supply staff
- visitors working regularly with children

An allegation may meet the harm threshold if an adult has:

- harmed a child
- possibly harmed a child
- committed an offence against a child
- behaved in a way indicating a risk to children
- behaved in a way indicating unsuitability to work with children

If an allegation is made:

- Against Staff - Inform the Head immediately.
- Against the Head - Inform the Chair of Governors immediately.
- Against the DSL - Inform the Head immediately.

Where the threshold is met:

- the LADO will be contacted within one working day
- advice will be followed
- appropriate investigations will commence

Low-Level Concerns

Low-level concerns include behaviour that:

- falls below professional standards
- contravenes an element of the staff code-of-conduct
- causes concern or unease
- may indicate emerging risk

All low-level concerns must be reported and recorded using the MS form.

Whistleblowing

Staff should raise concerns without fear of victimisation. The school promotes an open and transparent safeguarding culture.

18. APPENDIX F: DSL job description

Strategic Responsibilities
The DSL:

- leads safeguarding practice
- promotes safeguarding culture
- advises staff
- develops policy
- monitors safeguarding systems

Managing Referrals
The DSL:

- manages referrals
- liaises with external agencies
- attends safeguarding meetings
- participates in multi-agency processes

Record Keeping
The DSL:

- oversees safeguarding records
- ensures secure storage
- reviews concerns
- transfers records appropriately

Staff Support and Training
The DSL:

- supports staff
- delivers safeguarding training
- provides updates
- promotes professional curiosity

Raising Awareness
The DSL:

- ensures policies are understood
- promotes safeguarding throughout school life
- works with governors
- supports parent understanding of safeguarding

Availability
During term time, the DSL or a DDSL will always be available during school hours to discuss safeguarding concerns.