



Safeguarding & Child Protection Policies and Procedures 2026

Edited from School Improvement Liverpool and KCSIE (2026)

September 2026 following updated guidance.

Introduction:

STAR-SLA and its governing body recognises its duty towards safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as set out in 'Working together to safeguard children 2023'.

STAR-SLA will prevent and respond to abuse, neglect and exploitation by ensuring that the ethos and atmosphere of the school is conducive to a safe environment. Pupils and parents/carers will feel supported and able to report safeguarding concerns to any member of staff. Staff will feel they are supported by colleagues and the senior management team, including the governing body, and are able to report and seek advice and guidance on any safeguarding concerns, including those regarding colleagues or themselves. We will protect children at risk of abuse or neglect by having procedures in place that reflect current legislation, guidance and best practice.

As part of our safeguarding ethos, we encourage children to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. We will ensure that partisan political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject in the school and where political issues are brought to the attention of the pupils, reasonably practicable steps will be taken to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views to pupils. We will ensure that reasonable steps are taken to ensure visitors to the school do not share messages with the school community which are contrary to our school ethos and beliefs.

Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and, as such, this policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school. An allegation, disclosure or suspicion of abuse, or an expression of concern about abuse, could be made to any member of staff, not just those with a teaching or welfare-related role. Similarly, any member of staff may observe or suspect an incident of abuse.

Safeguarding Statement:

STAR-SLA is committed to safeguarding children and promoting student's welfare and expects all staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment and maintain a vigilant and safe environment. Everyone has a responsibility to act without delay to protect

children by reporting anything that might suggest a child is being abused or neglected. It is our willingness to work safely and challenge inappropriate behaviours that underpins this commitment. STAR-SLA seeks to work in partnership with families and other agencies to improve the outcomes for children who are vulnerable or in need. Star-SLA will provide help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge and protect children from maltreatment, inside or outside the home, including online.

‘Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.’ (DfE 2026)

Definitions:

Child:

A child includes everyone under the age of 18. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.

Child Protection:

Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, action should be taken to protect that child.

Safeguarding Children (Family Help):

Action should be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support (Family Help), even if they are not suffering harm or are at immediate risk.

‘Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as 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; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.’ (DfE 2020)

Making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes:

Abuse:

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child, including children seeing, hearing or experiencing domestic abuse. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical Abuse:

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse:

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

Verbal abuse, which includes belittling, persistent criticism, and name-calling, is explicitly classified as a form of emotional abuse.

Neglect:

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

during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Sexual Abuse:

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Further information regarding the signs and indicators of abuse are set out in the DfE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2020) and can be found within the School Improvement Liverpool Schools Safeguarding Handbook. This includes amongst others, the definitions and indicators of Child Sexual Exploitation, Child Criminal Exploitation (including County Lines), Serious Violence, Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage, Honour Based Abuse, Peer on Peer abuse, Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment (including sexting), Vulnerabilities to Extremism and Children Missing Education.

Safeguarding issues

All staff have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk. Other safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of include: Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

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

Premises & Sex-Separated Spaces

Schools must explicitly prohibit pupils from entering toilets or changing rooms designated for the opposite biological sex, including for gender-questioning or transitioning pupils. Schools should consider providing enclosed, self-contained single-occupancy rooms for gender-questioning pupils, lockable from the inside. School sports should be played in single-sex groups based on biological sex to guarantee physical safety and competitive integrity.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation. Further information about CCE including definitions and indicators is included in Annex B.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship. Further information about CSE including definitions and indicators is included in Annex B.

Financial Exploitation & Sexploitation

This includes online scams, fraud, and financially motivated sexual extortion. There is also an increased focus on misogyny and misandry as factors that intersect with harmful sexual behaviour.

Criminal Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP)

Children who are criminally and/ or sexually exploited are recruited in a similar way online. Demonstrating the importance of recognising the interplay that exists. When exploitation happens online the same escalation procedures should be followed as in person abuse or exploitation. Signs of online CEOP can be found in the e-safety policy.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police. See Annex B for further details.

Mental Health

All staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse, neglect and exploitation, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

Schools and colleges can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies. More information can be found in the mental health and behaviour in schools guidance, colleges may also wish to follow this guidance as best practice. Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among children. See **Rise Above** for links to all materials and lesson plans.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy, and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Child on Child abuse - Zero Tolerance Approach

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). And that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of peer on peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding peer on peer abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case

scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Peer on peer abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and or videos; this includes self-generated, digitally altered, and AI-generated images (deepfakes).
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

All staff should be clear as to the school's or college's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

Serious violence

All staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children

have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

Domestic Abuse

All staff should be aware that domestic abuse can be psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

Additional information and support

Departmental advice What to Do if You Are Worried a Child is Being Abused - Advice for Practitioners provides more information on understanding and identifying abuse, neglect and exploitation. Examples of potential indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation are highlighted throughout the advice and will be particularly helpful for school and college staff. The NSPCC website also provides useful additional information on abuse, neglect and exploitation and what to look out for.

Annex B contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. School and college leaders and those staff who work directly with children should read the annex.

Record keeping

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child. Records should 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.

If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

Policy Aims:

To ensure STAR-SLA takes appropriate action, in a timely manner, to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

To ensure responsibilities and procedures are fully understood and that everyone can recognise signs and indicators of abuse or neglect and respond to them appropriately.

To ensure that STAR-SLA practice meets local and national guidance and all statutory requirements are in place.

Key Principles:

- The child's needs and welfare are paramount. All children have a right to be protected from abuse, neglect and exploitation and have their welfare safeguarded.
- Victims are taken seriously, kept safe and never made to feel like they are creating a problem for reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2020) reminds us that all staff should maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" where safeguarding is concerned.
- Children should be listened to and their views and wishes should inform any assessment and provision for them. Staff should always act in the interests of the child, in order to protect them.
- STAR-SLA recognises that scrutiny, challenge and supervision are key to safeguarding children.
- STAR-SLA is committed to working with other agencies to provide Family Help for children before they become at risk of harm or require a 'child in need' statutory assessment.
- All staff should be aware of the Family Help process and understand their role in it.
- All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.' (DFE 2020)
- All staff have responsibility to report their concerns about a child without delay to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Whilst the Designated Safeguarding Lead will normally make referrals to Children's Services, anyone can refer their concerns to children's social care directly in emergencies or if they feel they need to do so.

- Everyone has responsibility to escalate their concerns and 'press for reconsideration' if they believe a child's needs remain unmet or if the child is failing to thrive and in need or if the child is at risk of harm. Concerns about a child should always lead to help for a child at some point and the child's situation should improve.
- STAR-SLA will work in partnership with other agencies to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm, including the need to share information about a child in order to safeguard them. 'Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.' Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2023)
- STAR-SLA will work with other agencies to ensure any actions that are part of a multi-agency coordinated plan are completed in a timely way.
- STAR-SLA will follow the Local Authority and the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures and provide them with information as required.
- Staff, children and families will need support following child protection processes being followed.
- Children have a right to learn ways to keep themselves safe from harm and exploitation.
- Staff should be alert to the need for early help for a child who is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- Staff should be alert to the need for early help for a child who has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit
- Staff should be alert to the need for early help for a child who has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending.

Legislation and Guidance: Part 1

Schools and colleges (In the case Alternative Provision) must have regard for the DfE statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2026). This child protection policy should be read alongside this statutory guidance and all staff must read and understand Part 1: Safeguarding Information for all staff in full.

Local authorities have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. There may be a need for immediate protection whilst the assessment is carried out.

A 'child in need' is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. A social worker will lead and co-ordinate any assessment under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities (in relation to their education functions, and governing bodies of maintained schools and further education institutions, which include sixth-form colleges) to exercise their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at a school, or who are students under 18 years of age attending further education institutions. The same duty applies to independent schools (which include Academies and free schools) by virtue of regulations made under section 157 of the same Act.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2023) provides additional guidance which makes it clear that protecting children from harm and promoting their welfare depends upon a shared responsibility and effective joint working between different agencies:

Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

In addition, Working Together to Safeguard Children also reinforces the need to take action to provide Family Help before statutory services are required.

'Providing Family Help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later.'

STAR-SLA therefore understands its responsibility to engage with other professionals in Family Help Assessments when a child's needs sit below the requirement for a statutory assessment.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty upon local authorities and educational providers to 'have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. The DfE has provided statutory guidance for schools and child care providers:

'The Prevent Duty' (June 2015). The guidance summarises the requirements of schools and child care providers in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training and IT policies. Our school will ensure that staff are aware of the

indicators of extremism and radicalisation and know how to respond in keeping with local and national guidance. Staff will use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral via Children's Services to the Channel programme. Equally children will be made aware of the risks and support available to them. We will ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in schools. The Government has developed an 'educate against hate' website providing information and resources for schools and parents to support them to recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people. Given Liverpool is a priority area, schools can seek additional advice from the Local Authority's Prevent Coordinator or Local Authority's Prevent Education Officer (details in School Improvement Liverpool's Safeguarding Handbook).

'Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilationprocedural-information

Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also still consider and discuss any such case with the school or college's designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures. DFE 2020

STAR-SLA will also consult the government guidance Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation (revised 2016) and will have reference to guidance provided by the National FGM Centre FGM Schools Guidance - National FGM Centre.

In addition, the school recognises the important role schools have in safeguarding children from Forced Marriage. (The Forced Marriage Unit has published Multi-agency guidelines, with pages 32-36 focusing on the role of schools and colleges. School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information. Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email: fmufco.gov.uk.)

Early years providers have a duty under section 40 of the Childcare Act 2006 to comply with the welfare requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013) also requires all teachers to 'uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, including:

- treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
- having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others'

In addition, the Sexual Offences Act 2003 makes it clear that all members of staff are in a position of trust and would therefore be committing a criminal offence to have a sexual relationship with a young person below the age of 18, even if that pupil is over the age of consent. In addition, it would be a breach of trust to have a relationship with any school student over the age of 18.

The school and this policy also takes account of additional DfE guidance including:

- CSE Definition and guidance for practitioners DfE 2017
- Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines Guidance DfE 2017
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act DfE 2006
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services HMG 2018
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges DfE 2018
- The Prevent Duty - Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers DfE 2015
- How social media is used to encourage travel to Syria and Iraq DfE 2015 (Briefing note for schools)
- The Ofsted School Inspection Handbook and Ofsted guidance: Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners DfE 2015

- Other DFE statutory guidance including: attendance and children who go missing from home or care which is found here
<https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/safeguarding-children>

Additional DFE/Gov guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/safeguarding-children>

Communicating with parents and visitors:

STAR-SLA is committed to the principles of Working Together to Safeguard Children which states that a 'child centred approach is fundamental to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child. A child centred approach means keeping the child in focus when making decisions about their lives and working in partnership with them and their families.'

The following statement is provided to parents, so they are aware of STAR-SLA 's responsibilities:

STAR-SLA ensures children learn in a safe, caring and enriching environment. Children are taught how to keep themselves safe, to develop positive and healthy relationships, how to avoid situations where they might be at risk including by being exploited.

STAR-SLA also has a statutory responsibility to share any concerns it might have about a child in need of protection with other agencies in particular the police, health and children's services. Schools are not able to investigate child protection concerns but have a legal duty to refer them. In most instances STAR-SLA will be able to inform the parents/carer of its need to make a referral. However, sometimes STAR-SLA is advised by children's services or police that the parent/carer cannot be informed whilst they investigate the matter. We understand the anxiety parents/carers understandably feel when they are not told about any concerns from the outset. STAR-SLA follows legislation that aims to act in the interests of the child.

STAR-SLA will always seek to work in partnership with parents and other agencies to ensure the best possible outcomes for the child and family'

The following notice is made available to all visitors in reception. In addition, all visitors are provided with additional safeguarding guidance.

‘STAR-SLA is committed to safeguarding children and promoting children’s welfare and expects all staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment and maintain a vigilant and safe environment. Everyone has a responsibility to act without delay to protect children by reporting anything that might suggest a child is being abused or neglected. We would expect you to also report to the headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead any behaviours of any adults working in STAR-SLA that may concern you. By signing our visitors book you are agreeing to follow STAR-SLA 's safeguarding advice to visitors and where appropriate the code of conduct for staff and volunteers.’

The names and photographs of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and those who deputise for them are displayed in reception and the staffroom.

Roles and responsibilities:

The Head of Alternative Provision is: Matthew Elder

The Chair of Governors is: **Matthew Elder**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection is: **Matthew Elder**

Those trained to provide cover for the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead are: **Carl Bowden Davies**

The nominated Safeguarding / Child Protection Governor is: **Matthew Elder**

The nominated governor for dealing with allegations against the Head of Alternative Provision is: **Carl Bowden Davies**

Link Safeguarding Governor - **Jim Brown**

All staff (and volunteers) should:

- Contribute to ensuring students learn in a safe environment.
- Maintain the belief that ‘it could happen here’.

- Read and understand Part One: Safeguarding Information for all staff of the DFE (2026) guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education in full. This applies to all staff, including non-teaching staff.
- Have access to Part 1 of the Schools Safeguarding Handbook which will further support knowledge and understanding of key issues to enable them to identify and respond to children who need additional help. Staff will ensure that they have read and understood this document.
- Have access to training to understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.
- Recognise that any child may benefit from Family Help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for Family Help for certain children.
 - is disabled and has specific additional needs
 - has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan)
 - is a young carer
 - is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
 - is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
 - is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves - is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
 - is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health problems and domestic abuse
 - has returned home to their family from care
 - is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect or is part of a cohort that faces additional challenges (Family Help)
 - is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
 - is a privately fostered child
 - is pregnant or is a parent
 - is on a part-time timetable
 - is showing early signs of harmful or violent behaviours
- **Young Carers**
- Staff must maintain a reinforced understanding of the specific safeguarding vulnerabilities and hidden stresses faced by young carers.

- Be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside of the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside of their family home. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.
- Be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff are well placed to observe children day to day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- Understand that where children have suffered abuse or neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. All staff should be aware of how these experiences can impact on a child's mental health, behaviour and education.
- Report any concerns about a child's welfare without delay to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead or in their absence a senior member of staff.
- Ensure that they record their concerns using the STAR-SLA's agreed reporting procedure. All reporting should be done via the Google Forms reporting process and followed up in person to the DSL. Any record keeping done by safeguarding officers should be recorded in CPOMS in a contemporaneous fashion. Records will note the difference between fact and opinion. The child's voice will be made clearly evident.
- Ensure that concerns relating to children remain confidential and are only shared with the appropriate safeguarding staff.
- Understand that any member of staff can make a referral to children's services should that be required, informing the Designated Safeguarding Lead of any action taken.
- Report any concerns without delay about the behaviour of an adult towards a child to the Head Teacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Chair of Governors or if required the Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations against Staff.
- Understand their responsibility to escalate their concerns and 'press for reconsideration' if a child remains at risk or their needs are not met. This includes the

understanding that any member of staff can make a referral to Children's Services if required to do.

- Teachers and those providing teaching **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.
- Follow STAR-SLA's policies including this child protection policy and the school's code of conduct for adults and the Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults Working with Children (2019)
- Be aware safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse.
- Understand that it may be appropriate to discuss with the Head teacher matters outside of work, which may have implications for the safeguarding of children in the workplace. This includes information about themselves. Staff will ensure that they are aware of the circumstances where this would be applicable.
- Be aware that behaviour by themselves, those with whom they have a relationship or association, or others in their personal lives (in or out of school or online), may impact on their work with children.
- Be aware that if their role is within the scope of the Childcare Act 2006 and they commit a relevant offence that would appear on their DBS certificate or they become disqualified under the Childcare Act 2006, then they must inform their head teacher.
- Be aware that they should inform their head teacher of any cautions, convictions or relevant order accrued during their employment, and/or if they are charged with a criminal offence.
- Understand that some children, including those with Special Educational Needs or Looked After, may be more vulnerable to abuse. 'Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. This can include:
 - assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
 - children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs; and
 - communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.' (DFE 2012)

The DFE has provided additional practice guidance 'Safeguarding Disabled Children' DFE 2009.

- Have access to the school's managing allegations against adults procedures and whistle blowing policy. (The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.)
- Have access to What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015: Advice for practitioners DfE 2015
- Understand that any indication of failure to follow any of the procedures set out within this policy will lead to a formal investigation by the school.

The Governing body should ensure that:

- STAR-SLA meets the statutory responsibilities set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2026) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2023).
- STAR-SLA has a strategy for providing Family Help together with other agencies and supporting children and families by carrying out Family Help assessments.
- The Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually and available to parents, normally via STAR-SLA 's website.
- All adults working within STAR-SLA are aware of STAR-SLA 's code of conduct and this guidance is in keeping with the Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults Working with Children (Safer Recruitment Consortium, 2016)
- STAR-SLA 's practice is reviewed in line with Local Authority guidance, Liverpool Children's Safeguarding Board priorities and any actions identified in the Local Authority 175 Audit are completed.
- There is a named Designated Safeguarding Lead who is a member of STAR-SLA leadership team. There are colleagues trained to provide cover for the role.
- STAR-SLA has procedures in keeping with the LSCB for dealing with any allegations made against any adult working within STAR-SLA.
- There is a nominated governor, usually the chair, who is the case manager for managing any allegations against the Head of Alternative Provision.
- There is an additional nominated governor to liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and champion child protection/safeguarding on behalf of the safeguarding body.
- STAR-SLA follows safer recruitment procedures, including the statutory pre-employment checks on all staff working with young people. The Chair of Governors and safeguarding governor together with the headteacher review STAR-SLA 's single central record.
- STAR-SLA itself is a safe environment where the views of children and families are listened to and where children are taught about safeguarding and how to keep

themselves safe, including on the internet or when using modern technology. Any complaints about services lead to improvements in practice.

- STAR-SLA will ensure there are appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place in respect of internet use.
- STAR-SLA will ensure that staff undertake safeguarding and child protection training.
- It scrutinises the impact of STAR-SLA 's training strategy so that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, are aware of STAR-SLA 's child protection procedures. All staff must have child protection training which is regularly updated.
- There is effective analysis of safeguarding data including bullying, attendance, exclusions, behaviour logs, pupils taken off roll, views and the progress and participation of vulnerable students.
- All safeguarding practices are quality assured by the leadership team, including the auditing of safeguarding records and the supervision of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other members of the safeguarding team.
- The Governing body will appoint an appropriately trained designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after.

Governing bodies and proprietors are aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 21, the Equality Act 2010²², (including the Public Sector Equality Duty²³), and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

Governing bodies are accountable for ensuring STAR-SLA has effective policies and procedures in place in line with local and national guidance, and for monitoring STAR-SLA 's compliance with them. Neither the Governing Body nor individual governors have a role in dealing with individual child protection cases or the right to know the detail of cases (except when exercising their disciplinary functions in respect of allegations against a member of staff or investigating a complaint brought to their attention).

The Head of Alternative Provision will ensure that:

- The Single Central Record is maintained, and up-to-date and the safer recruitment practices set out in Keeping Children Safe 2016 are followed, including pre-employment checks. At least one member of every recruitment panel has attended safer recruitment training.
- Job descriptions and person specifications for all roles make specific reference to child protection and safeguarding. There is a listening culture within STAR-SLA where both staff and children can raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices.

- Referrals are made to the Disclosure and Barring Service and / or the National College of School Leadership as appropriate. They liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer where an allegation is made against a member of staff.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead has a job description in keeping with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 and that sufficient time, training and support are allocated to this role, including the appointment of colleagues able to deputise for the Designated Safeguarding Lead who have undertaken the same training.
- The curriculum provides opportunities to help students stay safe especially when on-line. Children should be aware of the support available to them.
- They quality assure STAR-SLA 's child protection practices including the auditing of safeguarding records and the supervision of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other members of the safeguarding team to ensure that actions and decisions are reviewed appropriately.
- The school meets its responsibilities under the Prevent Duty including ensuring there are reasonable checks are made on visiting speakers and monitoring and filtering is in place across the school's IT systems. All staff have had opportunity for Prevent training either through face to face training or access to online resources:
<https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/edu/screen1.html>

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE 2016 sets out the broad areas of responsibility for the Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Manage referrals

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- Refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as required;
- Support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care;
- Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required;
- Support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required; and
- Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.

Work with others

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- Act as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners;
- Liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- As required, liaise with the “case manager” (as per Part four) and the designated officer(s) at the local authority for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member;
- Liaise with staff (especially pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians, and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in a college and Senior Mental Health Leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies; and
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to assist and observe whether the police are acting properly and fairly to respect the learners rights and entitlements.
- Inform an officer of the rank of inspector or above if they consider that they are not

Undertake training

The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years. The designated safeguarding lead should undertake Prevent awareness training. Training should provide designated safeguarding leads with a good understanding of their own role, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children’s social care, so they:

The designated safeguarding lead should undertake Prevent awareness training.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing Family Help and statutory intervention.

- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school's or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;
- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;
- understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation.
- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the three safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners.
- are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;
- understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college;
- can recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online; •
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.
- Ensure the importance of online safety training for staff is present to ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety.
-

All staff, including non-teaching staff, are expected to read 'Part One: Safeguarding Information for all staff' in full. This ensures everyone follows the same safeguarding expectations.

Raise Awareness

The designated safeguarding lead should

- ensure STAR-SLA child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately;

- Ensure STAR-SLA or college's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this;
- Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents know referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of STAR-SLA or college in this; and
- Link with the local LSCB to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school and college leadership staff. Their role could include ensuring that STAR-SLA, and their staff, know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children

Child protection file

Where children leave STAR-SLA or college ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in colleges, are aware as required.

In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Availability

During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff at STAR-SLA to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools and colleges, working with the designated safeguarding lead, to define what "available" means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Skype or other such mediums is acceptable.'

According to Local Guidance it is expected that the Head of Alternative Provision will be the case manager for any allegations against staff and make referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service or National College of School Leadership.

In addition to the role outlined in Keeping Children Safe the Designated Safeguarding Lead is also expected to ensure that:

- The social worker is notified if a child subject to a child protection plan is absent without explanation.
- The social worker is informed when a child subject to a child protection plan or a child in need plan moves to a new setting. Updated September 2020 Ratified at the meeting of the Full Governing Body on 16th September 2020
- A training log is kept of all child protection training including the names of those attending. All staff must have regular training and updates.
- Child protection records are kept securely and separately from the child's normal file. Records will be transferred and/or retained in keeping with the Local Authority's and NSPCC guidance.
- STAR-SLA attends and contributes to child protection case conferences and child in need meetings, ensuring actions are completed in a timely manner.
- STAR-SLA will complete the LSCP agency report ahead of each child protection conference.
- STAR-SLA escalates its concerns with other agencies when a child's needs are not being met following the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership Escalation and Resolution Policy.
- All members of the safeguarding team have received appropriate training; that all referrals made are quality assured and that regular safeguarding supervision is provided to the safeguarding team to monitor all decisions and action taken and the well-being of each team member.
- All staff read and understand part 1 and annexe A of the DfE (2020) guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education and make available to them other key documents and guidance.
- STAR-SLA has an appropriately trained member of staff to in order to fulfil its obligations under Operation Encompass, and that the school's commitment to Operation Encompass is known throughout the school community via the means of staff training, parental letters, posters and the school website.

Training and Induction

All staff and volunteers working in the school must be given a copy of the Child Protection policy immediately upon starting work at STAR-SLA as part of their induction. All staff and volunteers working at STAR-SLA must complete safeguarding training appropriate to their role as part of their induction and at a minimum of annually thereafter. STAR-SLA draws upon School Improvement Liverpool's induction template and Safeguarding Induction Booklet (Schools' Safeguarding Handbook) to ensure all appropriate policies and guidance are shared. Whole school safeguarding training will be undertaken during INSET in September and at appropriate points throughout the school year.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies must complete safeguarding training relevant to their role. This level of training must be refreshed at least every two years, with further safeguarding training to be accessed on a minimum of an annual basis as best practice. This is to ensure designated staff have appropriate, up to date knowledge and skills which will enable them to identify concerns and make decisions that support the safety of the school community.

The Governing Body should undergo Safeguarding and child protection training including online safety training. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training should be regularly updated.

The Link Governor for Safeguarding should attend appropriate training to enable them to fulfil the expectations of the role by challenging the leaders effectively and with confidence.

All staff have had opportunity for Prevent training either through face to face training or access to online resources:

<https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/edu/screen1.html>.

STAR-SLA will keep a safeguarding training log evidencing the training attended by the different groups of staff/governors.

Procedures for reporting Child Protection or Child Welfare Concerns:

Procedures for reporting child protection or child welfare concerns:

- All members of the STAR-SLA community have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. Staff and governors should not investigate possible abuse or neglect themselves.

- School Improvement Liverpool provide an online resource 'Safeguarding-Mate' to support colleagues decision making:
<https://www.schoolimprovementliverpool.co.uk/safeguardingmate/>
- All concerns should be reported without delay directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Designated Safeguarding Deputies, Head Teacher or any member of the School Leadership Team. This should be followed by a written account of the concerns completed on the school's agreed Child Protection/Child Welfare Incident Google Form. A record should be made via IOP / CPOMS.
- Consideration will need to be given to immediately protecting the child and contacting the police and/or ringing for an ambulance if the child is injured.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will take immediate action delay and will make a referral to children's services by telephone if a child is believed to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This referral will always be followed up in writing.
- Children's Services contact details are as follows:
 - Liverpool Careline Hub 0151 233 3700
 - Halton Social Care Contact Centre 0151 907 8305 (Out of hours 0345 050 0148)
 - Knowsley MASH 0151 443 2600
 - Sefton 0345 140 0845 (Out of hours 0151 934 3555) - Sefton - CiN (LAC)
Natasha Sandland - natasha.sandland@sefton.gov.uk -
<https://www.sefton.gov.uk/childrens-services/cared-for-children/sefton-virtual-school/sefton-virtual-school/meet-our-team/>
 - St Helens Contact Centre 01744 676 600
 - Warrington 01925 443322 (Out of hours 01925 444400)
 - Wigan Duty Team 01942 828300 (Emergency out of hours duty 0161 834 2436)
 - Wirral Integrated Front Door 0151 606 2008 (Out of hours 0151 677 6557)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will follow the LSCP and Local Authority multi-agency procedures and consider the child's needs alongside the Family Help framework and consider whether a Family Help assessment or referral to children's services is needed.

- Liverpool www.liverpoolscb.proceduresonline.com/
- Halton www.proceduresonline.com/pancheshire/halton/index.html
- Knowsley www.knowsleyscb.org.uk/professionals/multi-agency-procedures/
- Sefton
www.seftonlscb.safeguardingpolicies.org.uk/may-2017/procedures-manual/1-introductionlevel-of-need

- St Helens www.sthelensscb.proceduresonline.com/index.htm
 - Warrington www.proceduresonline.com/pancheshire/warrington/index.html
 - Wigan www.wigan.gov.uk/WSCB/index.aspx
 - Wirral www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/procedures/
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy is able to refer to an online tool which helps professionals assess a child's level of need and decide which method of referral they should complete (EHAT or MARF). The online 'Levels of Need Slider' tool can be accessed here:
<https://liverpool.gov.uk/referrals/childrens-social-care-referrals/assess-a-child-s-levels-of-need/>
 - Concerns about a child should always lead to help for a child. The school may need to escalate its concerns with Children's Services to ensure a referral is accepted or work with other agencies to ensure a Family Help Assessment is completed.
 - STAR-SLA will always seek to follow the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures which can be found on their website:
 - If STAR-SLA does not receive feedback within one working day regarding the outcome of a referral made to Children's Services, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact Children's Services immediately to determine the outcome of the referral.

'School Improvement Liverpool Schools' Safeguarding Handbook' and Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DFE 2020) provides key flowcharts and guidance to support staff and volunteers' understanding and decision making. This will support staff to make a referral themselves should that become necessary. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed, as soon as possible, following the need for another member of staff to make a referral.

If a staff member in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 the teacher must report this to the police. Keeping Children Safe in Education provides additional guidance.

Concerns that a child is being radicalised should follow the normal safeguarding referral mechanism with an additional Channel or Prevent referral being made to the Local Authority's Family Help and Prevent teams.

Additional Child Protection Guidance provided to all adults working with young people which will include:

- Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2022)

- STAR-SLA 's Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers
- Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults Working with Children (Safer Recruitment Consortium 2015)
- A flowchart summarising the child protection procedures
- Definitions of abuse or neglect and possible indicators
- Identified groups of children more vulnerable to abuse
- Specific guidance related to Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage, Child Sexual Exploitation, Extremism and Radicalisation, Neglect and online-safety
- Dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers procedures
- Whistleblowing procedures
- 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015- Advice for practitioners DFE 2015'

Process to follow if a child makes a disclosure

If a child makes a disclosure of abuse, staff should:

- Listen and keep calm.
- Do not interrupt
- Not promise the child that they will keep the matter confidential. Explain to the child who they will need to tell and why
- Observe visible bruises and marks, but should not ask a child to remove or adjust their clothing to view them
- Keep questions to a minimum as their role is not to investigate. If staff need to ask questions in order to ascertain whether this is a safeguarding concern, they should ensure they are open questions
- Use the "TED" model for asking open ended questions: "Tell me about that", "Explain that to me", "Describe that"
- Make a record of what has been said immediately afterwards in words used by the child and the member of staff to the best of their memory.
- Use capital letters for the child's words to help distinguish between the two.
- Note anything about the child which is connected i.e. any visible injuries including the position and description, the demeanour of the child i.e. crying, withdrawn etc.
- Clearly indicate whether fact, opinion or third party information
- Report the matter immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead if in doubt

Staff should not:

- Ask leading questions, put words into the child's mouth or press for details
- Rush the child
- Examine the child

- Investigate
- Promise confidentiality
- Summarise or use your own words to describe events
- Delay sharing the information with the

Designated Safeguarding Lead Further information can be found in part 1 of the School Improvement Liverpool Schools Safeguarding Handbook.

Confidentiality, Sharing, Transferring and Retention of Information

STAR-SLA recognises that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Deputy will disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a 'need to know basis' only. Guidance about sharing information can be found in the 2018 document *Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2018* and the *Data protection: toolkit for schools*. STAR-SLA understands the need to keep child protection and safeguarding records securely. All records are kept securely on MStore and CPOMS in line with GDPR regulations.

Staff cannot promise children confidentiality but must always act in the best interests of the child and share disclosures made by the child or others with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. All staff are aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

STAR-SLA will aim to seek consent of parents before sharing information with other agencies, however legislation states that schools and other agencies can share information without the consent of a parent/carer in particular circumstances.

STAR-SLA pays due regard to the relevant data protection principles which allow us to share personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). STAR-SLA is aware of the processing conditions under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR which allow STAR-SLA to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal, and this is treated as 'special category personal data'. Where STAR-SLA would need to share special category personal data, we are aware that the Data Protection Act 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows us to share information. This includes allowing STAR-SLA to share information without

consent, if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that we can gain consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

STAR-SLA will transfer records securely to the next setting and discuss the child's needs before the child starts at the next setting. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will speak to their counterpart in the school to which the child is transferring in order to ensure that they are aware that the file is to be transferred. Upon confirmation of the child starting on roll the file should be transferred as soon as possible (within 5 school days of an in year transfer or starting a new term) to ensure the child's support is in place. This will be sent separately to the main school file. The file should be signed upon receipt, and delivered by hand wherever possible.

STAR-SLA will retain records in keeping with Local Authority guidance and NSPCC guidelines: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/information-service/child-protection-recordsretention-and-storage.pdf>. This in turn references the Information and Records Management Society (IRMS) Information management toolkit for schools 2019.

School Improvement Liverpool's Safeguarding Handbook provides further key guidance for transferring records including a 'Transfer of CP records Template'.

Managing allegations against adults (including all staff, supply teachers and volunteers) working at STAR-SLA

All staff and other adults working at STAR-SLA will be aware of and work within the Code of Conduct and other relevant policies and procedures. The Staff Code of Conduct includes guidance for staff regarding the school expectations of the use of mobile phones, electronic equipment and social media.

All staff and volunteers must report any concerns about a member of staff's behaviour towards children (including supply staff and volunteers) to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Concerns about the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be reported to the Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

Local Safeguarding Children Partnership multi-agency procedures will be followed in all cases where it is alleged that a member of staff 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 they 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

Managing allegations against staff and volunteers policy and procedures will support everyone to take appropriate action. This includes a flowchart to guide colleagues thinking.

In some circumstances, STAR-SLA will have to consider an allegation against an individual who is not directly employed by the organisation and where our disciplinary procedures do not fully apply (for example supply teachers). Whilst STAR-SLA is not the employer of the individual, we still have responsibility to ensure allegations are dealt with properly and will liaise where appropriate with relevant parties. STAR-SLA will not cease to use the services of a supply teacher as a result of safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome.

In addition, School Improvement Liverpool provide an online resource 'Safeguarding-Mate' to support colleagues decision making:

<https://www.schoolimprovementliverpool.co.uk/safeguarding-mate/>

Concerns can also be taken directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (L.A.D.O.), if needed, via Children's Services.

Section 4 of the DFE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education provides further guidance. In addition to the school's own procedures, multi-agency procedures can be found on the school's website.

There are occasions when a person who works with children behaves in a way that is concerning and raises questions about their ability to recognise and take steps to safeguard children in their care that may not always meet the threshold of LADO. As an employer STAR-SLA has a duty to consider whether the issue indicates that they are unsuitable to continue in their role for the immediate future or indefinitely. These are known as issues of suitability and if not being dealt with under the managing allegations procedures, would be dealt with via the disciplinary procedures. Issues of suitability can include:

- Where an employee is being investigated for an offence against an adult, or
- Their behaviour in their personal lives brings into question their suitability to work with children

However if an adult who works with children has involvement from Children's Services in respect of their own child, or a child that they live with or have contact with, it is the

responsibility of Children's Services to assess the immediate concern and inform the LADO of whether the adult poses a risk to children. Examples of this may include:

- Allegations of assault,
- physical or emotional, on their own child or on a child they live with or have contact with
- Domestic abuse
- Substance misuse
- Lives with or is in a relationship with a person who is identified as a risk to children

The situation would meet the threshold of LADO should the child in question be made subject to a Child Protection plan. This is because Children's Services has determined that the adult presents a risk to the associated child either directly or due to a failure to protect.

All staff should ensure that they disclose information about themselves relating to the above to the Head teacher as soon as possible. STAR-SLA will create an environment and culture where staff are supported and empowered to be able to do this.

Allegations of abuse against another student (peer on peer / child on child abuse)

STAR-SLA must be a safe, supportive, caring place for all its pupils.

We can only achieve this if we all work together and share information. The preventative approach adopted gives greater scope to proactively gather intelligence about issues between pupils, which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. This might involve talking to pupils about issues of difference through the curriculum including having dedicated events or projects, or through assemblies. STAR-SLA has created an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. This culture extends to all areas of the Learners lives.

Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole environment and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest. If pupils are witness to or experience any form of bullying, it is imperative that they pass this on to a member of staff. STAR-SLA will take action.

All concerns must be reported and discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead or senior member. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), serious violence, gender-based violence/sexual assaults and sexting (youth produced sexual imagery). Staff should recognise that children

are capable of abusing their peers. Staff must challenge any form of derogatory and sexualised language or behaviour. Staff should be vigilant to sexualised/aggressive touching/grabbing particularly towards girls. Behaviours by children should never be passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities are more vulnerable to sexual violence and harassment and staff should be aware that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse in these children. Children who are LGBT+ or perceived to be, may also be targeted by their peers and harassed or assaulted.

Victims of peer on peer harm will be supported by the school's pastoral system and referred to specialist agencies including, as examples, 'CAMHS', 'Brook' and 'Barnardo's'. A risk assessment may need to be in place. STAR-SLA's curriculum will support young people to become more resilient to inappropriate behaviours towards them, risk taking behaviours and behaviours that children may be coerced into including 'sexting' or 'initiation/hazing' behaviours. Additional guidance is available on the NSPCC website:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/online-abuse/legislation-policy-practice/>

On-line safety, data protection and the use of digital photographic equipment

STAR-SLA's on-line/E-safety/ Acceptable User policy clearly outlines the way in which STAR-SLA uses technology and the measures in place to ensure safe and responsible use by all. There is a clear code of conduct for staff and volunteers for using new technologies, **mobile phones** and personal photographic equipment around children. STAR-SLA will consider, in particular, Looked After Children (Children in Care) who might be put at risk by being included in publicity materials or photographs.

The DfE highlights the risks of new technologies:

'The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues.

Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation- technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes'.

- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- commerce - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

Staff should bring immediately to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and senior leadership team any behaviours by adults or children themselves that may be risky or harmful.

Remote learning - COVID-19

In respect to remote learning and the COVID-19 pandemic the following are steps that are required to be taken during a lockdown of individuals or the whole centre and follows on from the Risk Assessment of Symptomatic Staff and Learners.

- Staff and Learners will be removed from the site if they possess any symptoms
- Staff / Learners will be asked to self isolate for the required 14 days
- The centre will be cleaned and disinfected straightaway.
- advise Learners and Staff to get tested for COVID-19
- Masks to be worn in closed spaces even if 2m can be maintained.
- Learners and staff must have 14 days symptom free before returning.
- Share the class bubble with Families of those sent home to isolate.

Processes when remote Learning is required.

- Individuals to be assigned a Point of Contact Tutor - See Contact Log / Contact Details
- Contact Log to be completed prior to 10am - Contact with Parents/Learners via telephone
- Contact log on G-drive and shared with Tutors.
- Voicemail and text to be left if no contact is made. This is captured on the Daily contact document
- Contact to be reported to APT and Schools prior to 10 am - if no contact is made for 3 consecutive days a homevisit must be undertaken.

- Learners work is to be set inline with the Weekly Schedule. Tutors to provide online support on each of the days their subject is to be taught.
- Progress tracker to be updated daily and included in the daily contact document
- Risks to be reported daily on the contact log
- Laptops and WiFi to be provided to those Learners who do not have those facilities at home.

Filters and monitoring

Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, governing bodies and proprietors should be doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's or college's IT system. As part of this process, governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their school or college has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place. Governing bodies and proprietors should consider the age range of their children, the number of children, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs vs risks.

The appropriateness of any filters and monitoring systems are a matter for individual schools and colleges and will be informed in part, by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty.

The UK Safer Internet Centre has published guidance as to what "appropriate" filtering and monitoring might look like: UK Safer Internet Centre: appropriate filtering and monitoring.

The school must review the effectiveness of its filtering and monitoring systems at least once every academic year. A written record of this review, including the technical checks undertaken, must be retained.

Support for schools when considering what to buy and how to buy it is available

via the: schools' buying strategy with specific advice on procurement here: buying for schools.

Monitoring attendance - Child Missing Education

A child missing from an education setting is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect including exploitation. Local Authority guidance and procedures will be followed for dealing with a child who is missing from education, particularly on repeated occasions.

Unauthorised attendance will be closely monitored. The attendance children with known welfare and attendance concerns will be monitored closely, particularly those with chronic poor attendance or persistent absentees. Schools should also scrutinise the attendance of off-site provision to ensure children are attending and are safe. Similarly, the attendance of children who are vulnerable or with known welfare and safeguarding concerns such as children who have a Child Protection Plan, a Child in Need, are Children Looked After and/or SEN will be monitored on a daily and weekly basis. Social care will be informed immediately when there are unexplained absences or attendance concerns. It is important that STAR-SLA's attendance team, including the EWO, First Aid and Safer Recruitment Officer, are aware of any safeguarding concerns.

It is critical that when a child is not attending school their welfare is confirmed and best practice would be for an appropriate professional to visit the home and speak to the child away from their parents/carers, particularly if there are any safeguarding concerns.

It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage.

Private Fostering

The Children Act 1989, 2004 and Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005 set out that Private Fostering occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home. A child is not privately fostered if the person caring for and accommodating them has done so for less than 28 days and does not intend to do so for longer.

STAR-SLA has a mandatory duty to report to the local authority if they believe a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. (This does not include close family relatives e.g. grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or auntie.) This means making a referral to children's services. A private fostering arrangement is made without the knowledge of the local authority for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18 for children with disabilities) whereby the child is in the care of someone other than their parent or close relative. Further guidance is available in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE, 2019) and in Children Act 1989 private fostering. When a child is privately fostered a social worker must carry out an assessment to ensure the placement is appropriate and consider any support needed.

Safer Recruitment

STAR-SLA will ensure that all appointments follow its recruitment policy and the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2026). Note: The supervision exemption for volunteers in regulated activity has been removed. Anyone who volunteers in a role involving teaching, training, or supervising children is now in regulated activity regardless of supervision.

STAR-SLA is required to inform relevant staff who fall within the scope of Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 and establish they are not disqualified. The criteria for disqualification under the 2006 Act and the 2019 Regulations includes inclusion on the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Children's Barred List or committing a relevant offence.

Complaints and Whistleblowing

Complaints about safeguarding should follow STAR-SLA 's complaints policy.

STAR-SLA and Local Authority also have whistle blowing procedures.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. STAR-SLA's Whistleblowing Policy is there to support and aid them in these circumstances. The Local Authority also has whistle blowing procedures.

Allegations of third party organisations, community groups or associations should be reported to Star-SLA DSL and will be reported to the Local Authority Designated Safeguarding Officer.

The Local Authority Officer for dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers can be contacted through Careline on 0151 233 3700.

Escalation

If any member of staff is unhappy with the response they have received in relation to a safeguarding concern they have raised, it is their responsibility to ensure they escalate their concern within the organisation. All members of staff are aware of their responsibility to escalate and refer concerns on to Children's Services when it is appropriate to do so.

Where professional disagreement occurs and the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Deputy are unhappy with the actions or decisions of another agency, they will escalate their concern in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership's formal escalation policy to ensure a timely resolution.

The first step of any escalation process with another agency is to raise any concerns directly with the other professional and their line manager. A professionals meeting is always a positive way of resolving differences and remaining focussed on the outcomes for the child.

Proactive Safeguarding

STAR-SLA recognises that education plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing them with opportunities to learn, good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive peers and an ethos of protection.

STAR-SLA recognises that we may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm. STAR-SLA recognises that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside of education or can occur between children outside of STAR-SLA. All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy should consider the context within which such incidents or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

Safer recruitment

STAR-SLA is committed to promoting the welfare of all children, young people and adults who use and interact with the organisation's services and for keeping them safe. In line with the Equal Opportunities Policy, STAR-SLA is committed to equality, valuing diversity and working inclusively across all of its activities - and this applies also to the selection, recruitment and induction of new staff. To this end, STAR-SLA aims to have a workforce that reflects a variety of backgrounds and cultures and who can provide the relevant knowledge, abilities and skills that are required for the organisation. All elements of these safer

recruitment policies, procedures and processes applies to any person responsible for the recruitment, selection and induction of staff at STAR-SLA - as well as those who may participate in shortlisting and interview panels.

Purpose

The purpose of this Safer Recruitment Policy is to ensure that STAR-SLA:

Recruits and selects the best possible people available to join the organisation

Takes all reasonable steps to prevent unsuitable people joining the organisation

Recruits, selects and manages all staff in a way that complies with legislation designed to combat inequality and discrimination

Does all it can to achieve and maintain a diverse workforce

Has recruitment and selection processes that are consistent and transparent

Assesses and judges applicants as competent before an offer of employment/volunteering is made

Inducts properly and fully all new staff

STAR-SLA recognises: Its workforce is its greatest asset Unsuitable individuals sometimes seek out opportunities via employment and volunteering to have contact with children, young people and adults in order to harm them Some groups face unfair discrimination in the workplace All participants, as well as their parents, families and carers, will benefit from the organisation's efforts to recruit and select a skilled and committed workforce that has been drawn from a diverse range of backgrounds that reflect our community Newly recruited staff cannot possibly perform their roles effectively unless they are inducted properly and receive on-going support, supervision and training as appropriate.

The Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021 extended safeguarding provisions to providers of post 16 Education; 16-19 Academies, Special Post-16 institutions and Independent Training Providers. Some safer recruitment regulations do not apply to these providers and as such some of the "musts" for colleges do not apply to them. These checks are an essential part of safeguarding, carried out to help employers check the suitability of

candidates. Therefore, the providers set out above should carry out these pre appointment checks.

All offers of appointment should be conditional until satisfactory completion of the mandatory pre-employment checks. All Schools and colleges must:

- verify a candidate's identity, it is important to be sure that the person is who they claim to be, this includes being aware of the potential for individuals changing their name. Best practice is checking the name on their birth certificate, where this is available. Further identification checking guidelines can be found on the GOV.UK website.
- obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity with children). Note that when using the DBS update service you still need to obtain the original physical certificate (see para 232)
- obtain a separate children's barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity with children before the DBS certificate is available; See paragraph 242 on how to obtain a separate barred list check. This does not apply to 16-19 Academies, Special Post-16 institutions and Independent Training Providers, see footnote.
- verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. 60 A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role;
- verify the person's right to work in the UK, including EU nationals. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, then schools and colleges should follow advice on the GOV.UK website;
- if the person has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the school or college consider appropriate (see 262-267); and,
- verify professional qualifications, as appropriate. The DfE "Check a teacher's record" portal should be used to verify any award of qualified teacher status (QTS), and the completion of teacher induction or probation.

In order to be able to implement safer recruitment procedures, STAR-SLA will commit to undertake each elements of the following steps whenever it undertakes any recruit activity to fill a vacancy following the pre interview online search of all potential interviewees.

1 Job description: For every vacancy - prior to commencing advertising - a clear job description will be produced, outlining the tasks that the successful applicant will be required to undertake.

2 Role profile: For every vacancy - prior to commencing advertising - a clear role profile will be produced which will detail the skills that the successful applicant will be expected to have.

3 Application form: STAR-SLA does not believe that CV's are the best way to accurately assess applicants, as a consequence of the varying nature of the information provided on them. Therefore, every applicant will be required to complete the organisation's standard application form to enable them to be considered for the role. The completed application form will be used to initially assess the applicant's suitability for the role advertised. The use of a standard application form will enable STAR-SLA to more easily compare the experience and skills of job applicants, while ensuring that all the important and relevant information is collected consistently.

4 Safeguarding awareness: Every advertisement will make it clear that STAR-SLA has a commitment to safeguarding and protecting of all children and adults. To this end, every job applicant will receive STAR-SLA's Safeguarding Policy Statement as part of the organisation's job application pack.

5 Applicant shortlisting for interview:

5a. All shortlisting for interviews will be carried out by at least two people and shortlisting will always be against the job description, the role profile and STAR-SLA's standard application form.

5b. As part of the shortlisting process, schools and colleges should consider carrying out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school or college might want to explore with the applicant at interview.

6 Face to face interviews: All short-listed applicants will be required to undergo a face-to-face interview with at least two interviewers present. At the interview, pre-prepared and clear questions will be asked in pursuit of selecting the most suitable person for the vacancy.

7 Questioning: Every applicant that is interviewed will be asked specifically whether they have any criminal convictions, cautions, other legal restrictions and/or pending cases that might affect their suitability to work within regulated activity.

8 Identity checks: Every applicant that is invited to an interview will be required to bring original photographic identification - as well as one other form of identification - which will be from the prescribed list of acceptable documents required for a DBS check.

9 Verification of qualifications & training certificates: Where qualifications and/or certificates are a condition of employment, applicants will be required to demonstrate (prior to being

made a conditional offer of employment) that they actually hold any relevant qualifications/certificates that they say they have. This will be achieved by requiring applicants to produce the original documents, or through providing the required information to enable verification checks to be undertaken with the awarding body, or the training provider.

10 Disclosure & Barring Service check: Every applicant - who is made a conditional offer of employment/volunteering (and where the post requires them to possess one) - will be required to undergo an enhanced DBS check which proves satisfactory to STAR-SLA. If the job role involves regulated activity, the DBS check will also include a check against the barred list. All new staff and volunteers in posts requiring any level of DBS check will be required to subscribe to the DBS update service. Where there is a positive disclosure, STAR-SLA will follow its Managing Positive Disclosure Policy and Flowchart.

10a DBS Update Window: A 30-calendar-day window is required for updating status checks on new DBS certificates.

11 Employment references: Every applicant who is made a conditional offer of employment/volunteering will have a minimum of two references (covering the last five years of employment) taken up. The reference will specifically enquire from each referee whether the applicant is considered suitable to work with children and adults at risk.

12 Safeguarding policies and procedures: Every new recruit will receive a copy of STAR-SLA's Safeguarding Handbook and will be required to sign their statement of terms and conditions of employment/volunteers agreement agreeing to abide by all policies and procedures contained within this document.

13 Induction training: All new recruits will be given an induction plan - appropriate to the role they have been recruited for - to enable them to effectively undertake their responsibilities. Part of this induction training will include training and awareness on how to keep all children and adults at risk - that use the organisation's services - safe from harm.

13a Trainee Teachers: Trainee teachers are grouped into 'Part 4' protocols when managing safeguarding concerns or allegations.

14 Probationary period: All job offers will be conditional on the successful completion of a probationary period being completed. No new recruit will be confirmed in to post until they have completed their probationary period (and any extension of that period) and have been formally reviewed through the completion of a post-induction review form.

When undertaking any recruitment process on behalf of STAR-SLA, line managers must ensure that the steps - set out in this process flow overview - are followed at all times. No part of this process is optional and all steps must be adhered to.

Step 1: Identify the vacancy.

Step 2: Review these Safer Recruitment Policies & Procedures.

Step 3: Analyse the job role and produce the role profile using the Role Profile Template available from STAR-SLA's DSO.

Step 4: Using the completed role profile, produce or update the job description using the Job Description Template available from STAR-SLA's DSO.

Step 5: Plan the recruitment & selection process taking into account where the role will be advertised, and who will be responsible for each stage of the recruitment, selection and induction process - with reference to the minimum standards outlined in these Safer Recruitment Policies & Procedures.

Step 6: Advertise the vacancy ensuring that the advert refers to STAR-SLA's commitment to safeguarding and protecting of all children and adults at risk.

Step 7: Ensure every interested applicant receives a copy of STAR-SLA's Standard Application Form as well as a copy of STAR-SLA's Safeguarding Policy Statement.

Step 8: Review all applications forms that are returned against the criteria in the job description and the role profile.

Step 9: Create a shortlist of suitable applicants ensuring that at least two people are involved in ratifying the short-list.

Step 10: With reference to the role profile and the assessments methods identified on it, prepare and agree on the interview questions with the other members of the interview panel.

Step 11: Invite the short-listed applicant to a face to face interview (ensuring that all applicants are informed to bring original photographic ID and originals of certificates with them) and where at least two people will conduct the interviews.

Step 12: Conduct the interviews against the prepared questions and assessments - and verify each candidate's identity and qualifications.

Step 13: Consider any confidential information that the candidate has submitted along with their application, and discuss this with the candidate.

Step 14: Make a decision on suitable appointment of candidate/s.

Step 15: Make a conditional offer of employment/volunteering subject to return of a signed copy of the statement and terms and conditions of employment/volunteers agreement; satisfactory completion of a probationary period; receipt of a DBS that proves satisfactory; receipt of references that prove satisfactory; as well as satisfactory validation and verification of all information provided on the application form, CV and discussed at interview.

Step 16: Plan the induction and prepare the Induction Checklist available from STAR-SLA's DSO.

Step 17: Complete the take up of references and all other verification checks required.

Yes - Confirm the offer of employment/ volunteering on a probationary period, or continue the probationary period.

No - Withdraw the offer of employment/ volunteering or terminate employment/ volunteering.

Step 19: New staff member or volunteer starts. Follow through the induction programme.

Step 20: Conduct the scheduled reviews using the relevant Induction Review Forms available from STAR-SLA's DSO.

Step 21: At the end of the probationary period carry out a review using the Post Induction Review Form available from STAR-SLA's DSO. Has the employee/volunteer satisfactorily completed their probationary period?

Yes - Confirm the appointment and continue with regular supervision and appraisals.

No - Either extend the probationary period or terminate employment/volunteering.

Step 22: If - at the end of the probationary period extension - the employee/volunteer has still not reached the required standards, then terminate employment/volunteering following HR guidance and the correct HR procedures. If the employee/volunteer has now reached the required standards, then confirm their appointment and continue with regular supervision and reviews.

A section 128 direction prohibits or restricts an unsuitable individual from participating in the management of an independent school, including academies and free schools. An individual who is subject to a section 128 direction is unable to:

- take up a management position in an independent school, academy, or in a free school as an employee;

- be a trustee of an academy or free school trust; a governor or member of a proprietor body of an independent school; or,
- be a governor on any governing body in an independent school, academy or free school that retains or has been delegated any management responsibilities.

Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK must undergo the same checks as all other staff in schools or colleges (set out in paragraphs 213). This includes obtaining (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity) even if the individual has never been to the UK. In addition, schools and colleges must make any further checks they think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. Following the UK's exit from the EU, schools and colleges should apply the same approach for any individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK regardless of whether or not it was in an EEA country or the rest of the world.

These checks could include, where available:

- criminal records checks for overseas applicants - Home Office guidance can be found on GOV.UK; and for teaching positions
- obtaining a letter (via the applicant) from the professional regulating authority in the country (or countries) in which the applicant has worked confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions, and or that they are aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach. Applicants can find contact details of regulatory bodies in the EU/EEA and Switzerland on the Regulated Professions database.

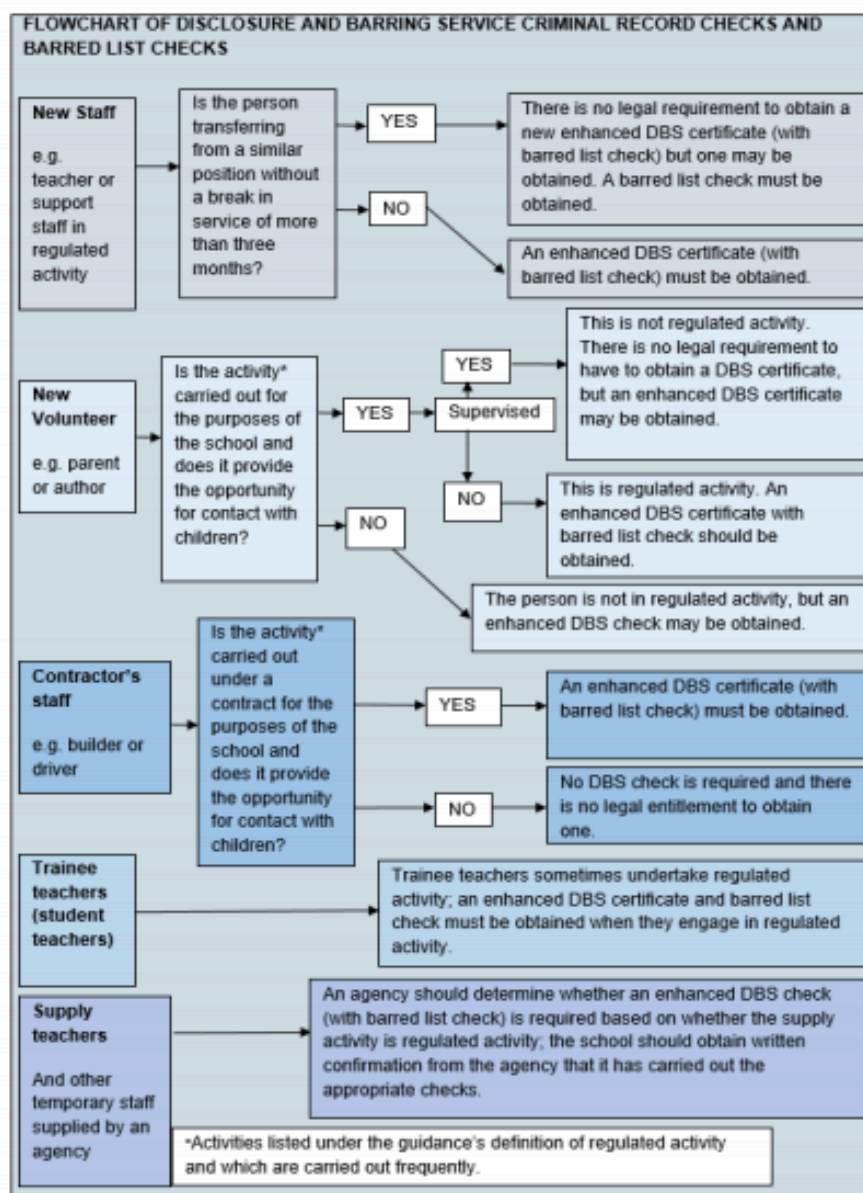
Applicants can also contact the UK Centre for Professional Qualifications who will signpost them to the appropriate EEA regulatory body.

Name: Matthew Elder

Sign: M.Elder

Date: 22nd July 2026

Appendix



Receipt of Child Protection File

IMPORTANT: The receiving school must return this section to the issuing school.

Name of Receiving
School:

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**Issuing
Organisation:**

Child's Name:

DOB:

I confirm receipt of the child protection files on the above named pupil:

Name:

Job Title:

Signature:

Date: