

Safeguarding Policy 2024/25

Incorporating Child Protection

This policy is available on our website and is available on request. We inform parents and carers about this policy when their child(ren) join our setting.

The policy is provided to all staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) at induction alongside our Staff Code of Conduct. In addition, all staff are provided with Part One of the statutory guidance. **Keeping Children Safe 2024**

Date: 01/09/2024

Renewal Date: 01/09/2025

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Key Safeguarding Contacts

Role in school	Name	Date and Level of safeguarding training
Director	Karen Hale	Level 3 Designated Lead Training
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Jane Coleman	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Helen Wright	Deputy Safeguarding Lead
Designated teacher for Looked After Children	Karen Hale	Level 3 Designated Lead Training
Prevent Lead	Jane Coleman	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mental Health Lead	Jane Coleman	Designated Safeguarding Lead

1. Purpose and aims

The purpose of our Safeguarding policy at New Leaf is to ensure that we:

- **Are committed** to developing a robust safeguarding culture of vigilance and challenge.
- **Build resilience** by raising awareness of safeguarding and child protection issues, and equipping children with the language and skills to keep themselves safe.
- **Establish a safe environment** in which children can learn and develop within an ethos of openness and where children are taught to treat each other with respect, to feel safe, to have a voice and know that they will be listened to.
- **Support vulnerable pupils** who have been abused, have witnessed violence towards others or may be vulnerable to abuse.
- **Prevent unsuitable people** from working with children by ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of **all** school staff, supply staff and volunteers to work with our children and maintain an active, ongoing vigilance in line with the safeguarding culture.

Our aim is to follow the procedures set out by Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 by **knowing** and **understanding** that:

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility and the **voice of the child** is evident.
- **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play.
- **Everyone** should ensure that their approach is **child-centred** considering, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.
- By establishing a safe environment, we enable our children to learn and develop within an ethos of openness.
- **No single practitioner** can have the full picture of a child's needs and circumstances.
- If children and families are to receive the **right help at the right time, everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

- The importance of providing children with a balanced curriculum including PHSE, healthy relationship education, online safety, sexting, child-on-child abuse as well as 'abuse outside the home' (County Lines, Child Criminal Exploitation incl Child Sexual Exploitation and other contextualised safeguarding issues). Also supporting this with online activities, enabling children to enhance their safeguarding skills and knowledge whilst understanding the risks.
- Undertaking the role to enable children and young people at our school to have **best outcomes**.
- Ensuring that we have awareness of our staff's knowledge and understanding, as well as embedding safeguarding through clear systems of communication and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) so that safeguarding is a **robust element** of our practice.

At New Leaf our role is to:

- Provide help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- **Protect** children from maltreatment, inside or outside the home, including online.
- **Prevent** impairment of our children's mental and physical health or development.
- **Ensure** that our children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provisions of safe and effective care.
- **Take action** to enable **ALL** children to have the best outcomes.

This policy provides guidance to **all** adults working within the school, whether paid or voluntary or directly employed by the school or a third party and should be read in conjunction with the documents Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

- This policy is available on our website and is available on request from the main office. We will also inform parents/carers about this policy when their children join our setting/school/college.
- Our policy applies to **all** staff; paid and unpaid, working in the school, including Governors.
- The policy is provided to **all** staff (including temporary staff, supply staff and volunteers) at the point of induction, alongside our Staff code of conduct policy.
- Our Governing Body, working with the senior leadership team and especially our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), ensure that those staff who do not work directly with children will read at least Part 1 or Annex A (condensed version of Part 1) of the KCSiE 2024 guidance.

- All staff who work directly with children, are provided with, and have read at least Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.
- The school follows the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board policies and procedures. StaffsSCB

2. Our ethos and culture at New Leaf

At New Leaf, our children's welfare is of paramount importance to us, and we are a child centred setting. Our children are reassured that they have a voice, will be listened to and what they say will be taken seriously. They know that they will be supported and kept safe. They will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse.

Children are encouraged to talk freely with staff if they are worried or concerned about something and our staff understand that a victim of any type of abuse should never feel ashamed for making a report. Their views and wishes will inform any assessment and provision for them.

We make every effort to listen to and capture the voice of children to enable us to have a clear understanding of their daily lived experiences.

We are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful.

They may feel embarrassed, humiliated or are being threatened. This could be due to vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers.

This does not prevent ALL staff from having professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. Our staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children which facilitate this communication.

We understand our statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and we maintain a professional attitude of '**it could happen here**' where safeguarding is concerned. We expect **ALL** staff, governors, volunteers, and visitors to share our commitment, maintaining a safe environment and a culture of vigilance.

Everyone has a responsibility to **act without delay** to protect children by reporting anything that might suggest a child is being abused, neglected **or exploited**. It is our willingness to work safely and challenge inappropriate behaviours, that underpins this commitment. We work in partnership with families and other agencies to improve the outcomes for children who are vulnerable or in need.

We have a culture of vigilance and staff are confident and competent in the timely challenge of unacceptable behaviours and these are dealt with appropriately and robustly. Staff do not accept these behaviours as 'banter', 'having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'.

All staff are encouraged to report any concerns that they have and not to see these as insignificant. On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident, such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. However, concerns can accumulate over time and are evidenced by building a picture of harm, particularly true in cases of abuse or neglect.

We know that it is crucial that our staff record and pass on any concerns in a timely manner and in accordance with this policy, to allow the DSL/DDSL to build up a picture and access support at the earliest opportunity.

When dealing with safeguarding matters, we are conscious of the language and terminology that we use, especially in front of children. Sometimes reference is made to a child who has been subjected to abuse as a victim. However, not all children will consider themselves a victim nor will they want to be referred to in this way. We are conscious of this and when managing any incident, we will be prepared to use terminology that children are most comfortable with.

In guidance, we will at times, use the term 'alleged perpetrator' and where appropriate 'perpetrator' and we know that these are widely used terms. However, we know that in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well and again we will be mindful of appropriate language and will decide appropriateness on a case-by-case basis.

We work closely with safeguarding partners and share the same goals, learn with and from each other, have what we need to help families, acknowledge and appreciate difference as well as challenging each other.

We acknowledge the four principles that as professionals we should follow when working with parents and carers:

- effective partnership and the importance of building strong, positive, trusting and co-operative relationships
- respectful, non-blaming, clear and inclusive verbal and non-verbal communication that is adapted to the needs of parents and carers
- empowering parents and carers to participate in decision making by equipping them with information, keeping them updated and directing them to further resources
- involving parents and carers in the design of processes and services that affect them.

We recognise the stressful and traumatic nature of safeguarding and child protection work, and support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to signpost and seek further support as appropriate.

3. Legislation, guidance and links to other school policies

This policy has been devised with due regard for the statutory guidance from the DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (KCSiE). Please read this document alongside our Whistle-Blowing and Anti-bullying policy.

4. The role of all staff in keeping children safe

All staff have read and have a good understanding of **at least part 1** of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 and are aware of the safeguarding link to other policies relating to their daily practice as outlined in the Staff Handbook.

All staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring. This training takes place at induction and is regularly updated.

In addition, **all** staff receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates via a staff memo as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide our staff with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

All staff know who the DSL/DDSL is and understand that as well as being the expert in this field, they are there to support staff.

All staff are aware of their responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

All staff are aware of indicators of abuse and neglect and understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of **our school/setting**, inside and outside of home and online. Staff are confident in exercising **professional curiosity** and understand that knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse, neglect **and exploitation**, to identify cases of children who may need our help or protection. They are aware that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

All staff, but especially the DSL/DDSL, consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms, including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation.

All staff are aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues and that children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. They know that in many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online; this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic (hates women)/misandrist (hates men) messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.

All staff know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected. Staff know how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality by only involving those who need to be involved, such as the DSL/DDSL and local authority children's social care. Staff never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

All staff know how to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting **any** form of abuse and/or neglect. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

All staff are aware of the early help process and understand their role in it and are confident to identify and support children who may benefit from early help, effectively giving children and their families the right help at the right time.

All staff are aware of how to make a referral to children's social care, 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 their potential role in such assessments.

All staff understand their responsibility to report concerns about the behaviour of any adult in our school and know that they will be listened to and taken seriously.

All staff understand their responsibility to escalate 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.

SSCB Escalation Policy.

In all cases, if our staff are unsure, they know that they should always speak to the DSL/DDSL.

5. Roles and responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)(DDSL)

For full details of the DSL/DDSL roles and responsibilities please refer to Part 2 & Annex C of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.

Our DSL/DDSL(s) have received the appropriate safeguarding training to provide them with an understanding of their role and the knowledge and skills to carry it out. Our DDSL(s) are trained to the same level as the DSL. Training received also supports their knowledge of the processes, procedures, and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

This training is updated at least every 2 years and in addition to this they regularly (at least annually) refresh and update their knowledge and skills. We have 3 hours of non-contact time daily (one hour in the morning, two hours after hours in order to enable the DSL to have time to process and deal with any Safeguarding matters).

Our DSL takes the **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety as well as an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place).

Guidance: Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges

As part of online safety, we are aware of our responsibility for information security and access management, and we will ensure that we have the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place to safeguard our systems, staff and learners and review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies.

Guidance:

Cyber security standards for schools and colleges
Cyber Security Training for School staff

During term time, the DSL/DDSL is available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. The DSL can

delegate activities to the DDSL(s); however, the ultimate responsibility remains with them, and this lead responsibility is not delegated. In the absence of the DSL, the DDSL(s) will take a lead on safeguarding with clear direction from the Senior Leadership Team.

The DSL acts as a source of support, advice, and expertise for staff. Risk assessments/safety plans will be completed as required and should, where appropriate, involve other agencies, **these** are reviewed regularly and shared appropriately.

Our DSL maintains robust systems to monitor and record training of **all** staff and update and refresher time scales are evident within the training record. Training is delivered in-line with StaffsSCB and KCSIE 2024. This will include bulletins, briefings, and inset day training as well as external events attended.

The DSL ensures that **all** staff and regular visitors have appropriate safeguarding training to equip them for their role in school. This includes training on how to recognise indicators of concern, how to respond to a disclosure from a child and how to record and report this information accurately. The DSL ensures systems are in place to induct new staff/governors and that they are robust and monitored and any non-compliance shared with Senior Leadership Team/Governing body.

The DSL monitors student concerns files, ensuring that the quality of information is accurate, proportionate, timely and assessment/referrals are made appropriately. The recording and storing of information are kept in-line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection.

The safeguarding and child protection records are kept in a secure location and away from academic records. There is a robust process of the transfer, both in and out, of these records and the clear recording of this.

When a parent chooses to remove their child/ren from school to receive EHE (Elective Home Education), the DSL will pass on any safeguarding concerns and the safeguarding file, if there is one, to the EHE Team (electivehomeeducation@staffordshire.gov.uk) within Staffordshire County Council and inform other professionals who may be involved with that child.

The DSL/DDSL monitors the quality of safeguarding files through auditing case files regularly. Appropriate and regular case supervision takes place with the DSL and may be extended to other members of staff if we deem this appropriate.

The DSL/DDSL will refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care, as required, and support other staff to make these referrals.

The DSL/DDSL understand the importance and need for attendance at Child Protection Case Conferences (both Initial and Review) and core group meetings as well as Child in Need meetings. The DSL/DDSL will represent education at these meetings and prior to conference, whether attending or not, MUST complete the Education Report prior to the Conference.

Any staff member may be required to be part of strategy discussions with other interagency meetings and contribute to the assessment of child/ren.

The DSL/DDSL will notify children's social care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation.

The DSL/DDSL helps to promote educational outcomes by sharing appropriate information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children (including children with or who have previously had a Social Worker) are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school leadership staff. Their role could include ensuring that the schools 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.

6 The Designated Teacher

We have appointed a Designated Teacher (DT) who works with the local authority to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils in our setting, who are looked after. Our Designated Teacher works across the school to promote and improve educational outcomes for children in care using evidence-based interventions.

Our designated teacher also has responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship, or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care, outside of England and Wales. They are appropriately trained and have the relevant qualifications and experience.

The Designated Teacher works closely with the Virtual School to provide the most appropriate support, utilising Pupil Premium Plus funding, to ensure that they meet the needs identified in the child's personal

education plan (PEP). They work with the Virtual School Headteacher to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children.

The Designated Teacher has the details of the Local Authority Personal Advisor who has been appointed to guide and support the care leaver and liaises as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

At New Leaf we are attachment aware, and trauma informed and take a relational based approach to supporting our most vulnerable children and will work restoratively with children to improve their outcomes.

7. Working with parents/carers.

At New Leaf we are committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of their children, and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.

When new pupils join our setting, parents/carers will be informed that we have a safeguarding policy. A copy will be provided to parents on request and is available on the website. Parents/carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our safeguarding colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries and what happens should we have cause to make a referral to the relevant local authority or other agencies.

We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission, or if it is necessary to do so to safeguard a child from harm.

We will seek to share with parents/carers any concerns we may have about their child before making a referral, unless to do so may place a child at increased risk of harm. A lack of parental engagement or agreement regarding the concerns the school has about a child will not prevent the DSL from making a referral to the local authority in those circumstances and where it is appropriate to do so.

To keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them, the school requires parents to provide accurate and up to date information regarding:

- Full names and contact details of all adults with whom the child normally lives.
- Full names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above).

- Emergency contact details (if different from above) and **at least 2 contacts**.
- Full details of any other adult authorised by the parent to collect the child from school (if different from the above).
- Any legal or criminal changes which effects parental responsibility e.g., bail conditions, court orders, Special Guardianship orders, Child Arrangement Orders.

The school will retain this information on the pupil file. The school will only share information about pupils with adults who have parental responsibility for a pupil or where a parent has given permission, and the school has been supplied with the adult's full details in writing.

We recognise that we are likely to be in regular contact with parents and carers. We will use these communications to reinforce the importance of children being safe online and parents/carers are likely to find it helpful to understand what systems schools use to filter and monitor online use. It will be especially important for parents/carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will ask to access and be clear who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

At New Leaf we update parents about safeguarding through our text information service.

8. Staffordshire Earliest & Early Help

Any child may benefit from earliest or early help, but **all** staff are particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- has a mental health need;
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care.
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;

- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug or alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
- is misusing alcohol or other drugs themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- is a privately fostered child; and
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

The DSL ensures that **all** staff are aware of the early help process and understand their role in it. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL/DDSL, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the **lead professional** in undertaking an early help assessment.

The DSL/DDSL will consider how the needs of different family members impact each other. This includes needs relating to education, mental and physical health, financial stability, housing, substance use and crime. We will also consider specific needs such as disabilities, those whose first language is not English, fathers or male carers, and parents who identify as LGBTQ.

Guidance documents can be accessed at the following links:

- [Early Help - SSCB](#)
- [Threshold Framework 2023 - SSCB](#)

9. What happens if a referral is deemed necessary to escalate beyond early help.

Child in Need (Section 17)

If the DSL considers that the welfare concerns indicate that a Child in Need referral is appropriate, they will speak with parents/child and obtain their consent for a referral to Staffordshire Childrens Advice and Support Service (SCAS), or the appropriate social care team if a different authority, to request an assessment. If parents refuse to give consent, but the child's needs are not being met, the DSL will discuss these issues with SCAS. Appropriate school staff will attend Child in Need (CIN) meetings convened by Children's Social Care when children are deemed to require Section 17 services.

Child Protection (Section 47)

If the local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, they make enquires under Section 47 to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. This duty also applies if a child is subject to an emergency protection order (under S44 of the Children Act 1989) or in police protective custody (under S46 of the Children Act 1989).

Child protection conferences can be upsetting for parents. We recognise that we are likely to have more contact with parents than other professionals involved and will work in an open, honest, and transparent way with any parent whose child has been referred to SCAS or whose child is subject to a child protection plan. Our responsibility is to promote the protection and welfare of all children and our aim is to achieve this in partnership with our parents/carers wherever possible.

10. Escalation process

Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board expects staff working directly with families to share information appropriately and work to plans agreed in all relevant forums. Good practice includes the expectation that constructive challenge amongst colleagues within agencies, and between agencies, provides a healthy approach to the work.

This process will be kept as simple as possible, and the aim will be to resolve difficulties at a professional practitioner level, wherever possible and always in a restorative way. We recognise that differences in status and experience may affect the confidence of some workers to pursue this course of action, and support should be sought from the DSL/DDSL.

If we believe that concerns regarding a child are not being addressed and their outcomes are not improving, we will escalate our concerns in line with the SSCB Escalation Policy

11. A safer school culture

Safer Recruitment and Selection

At New Leaf we pay full regard to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024'. Our Safer Recruitment and selection practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity, checking academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history, and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and appropriate checks including criminal record checks (DBS checks), barred list checks, prohibition checks whether they are known to

the police and/or social care, if they have been disqualified from providing childcare and any relevant overseas information. Evidence of these checks is recorded on our Single Central Record, which is maintained, checked and updated by or director.

Staff who have lived or worked outside the UK **will** undergo the same checks as all other staff, even if they have never been to the UK. We will ensure that any other appropriate checks are carried out so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. These checks could include criminal records checks for overseas applicants 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.

Guidance

- Application process for criminal records checks overseas
- Regulated professions database
- UK Centre for Professional Qualifications

Separate barred list checks are only be carried out in the following circumstances:

- for newly appointed staff who are engaging in regulated activity, pending the receipt of an Enhanced Certificate with Barred List information from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) (and where all other relevant checks as per paragraph 213 have been carried out); or,
- where an individual has worked in a post in a school or college that brought them into regular contact with children or young persons which ended not more than three months prior to that person's appointment to the organisation (and where all other relevant checks as above have been carried out).

All recruitment materials will include reference to the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of pupils. Relevant staff have undertaken appropriate training in Safer Recruitment. (See training schedule at the front of this document)

One of the trained safer recruitment staff will be involved in **all** staff and volunteer recruitment processes and sit on the recruitment panel. A member(s) of the Governing Body has received Safer Recruitment training.

Induction

All staff will be made aware of the systems we have in place to support safeguarding. These are explained as part of staff induction, including:

- The Safeguarding policy;
- The Behaviour policy;
- Child on Child Abuse Policy;
- The staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct).
- The safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and
- The role of the DSL (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies).
- At least part one of KCSIE 2024.

If staff, supply staff, visitors, volunteers, or parent helpers are working with children alone they will, wherever possible, be visible to other members of staff. They will be expected to inform another member of staff of their whereabouts in school, who they are with and for how long. Doors should have a clear glass panel in them and where possible be left open. No visitors, volunteers or parent helpers will be left unsupervised with children or out of sight of the teacher or member of staff in charge. It is the responsibility of the member of staff to ensure this is the case.

Guidance about acceptable conduct and safe practice will be given to all staff and volunteers during induction. These are sensible steps that every adult should take in their daily professional conduct with children. All staff and volunteers are expected to carry out their work in accordance with this guidance and will be made aware that failure to do so could lead to disciplinary action.

Use of reasonable force

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in school to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involves a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.

'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom. Departmental advice for schools is available [DfE Advice Template](#)

When using reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving children, including any with SEN or disabilities, or with medical conditions, staff should consider the risks carefully.

By planning positive and proactive behaviour support, for instance by drawing up individual behaviour plans for more vulnerable children and agreeing them with parents and carers, we will reduce the occurrence of challenging behaviour and the need to use reasonable force.

12. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 - Specific Safeguarding issues.

All staff have an awareness of the following safeguarding issues through regular training and briefings. Staff are aware that these behaviours can make children vulnerable and put them in danger and that often these issues overlap. Please read and refer to Appendix 2 for additional information and guidance on the below topics.

- Abuse (incl. Physical/Emotional/Sexual/Neglect) Annex 1
- Behaviours linked to safeguarding issues
- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Child on child abuse (inc sexual violence and sexual harassment/sexting-sharing of nude/semi-nude images & upskirting)
- Children and the court system (5-11yrs & 12-17yrs)
- Children missing from education
- Children who are absent from education
- Child missing from home or care
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- County Lines
- Domestic abuse
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Homelessness
- Mental health
- Online safety
- Private fostering
- Preventing radicalisation
- Prevent Duty and Channel
- Serious violence
- Trafficking

For further information, advice and guidance on these issues please see Annex 2 of this document.

13. Children potentially at greater risk of harm

All children should be protected however our staff and Governing Body recognise that some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm than others. This list is not exhaustive but highlights some of these groups:

- Children who need a social worker (Child in Need & Child Protection)
- Children missing from education
- Elective Home Education (EHE)
- Children requiring mental health support
- Looked after children and previously looked after children
- Children with special educational needs & disabilities/health issues
- Children who are lesbian, gay, bi or (LGBTQ+) We support these groups by having:
 - **Vigilance:** to have adults notice when things are troubling them
 - **Understanding and action:** to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon.
 - **Stability:** to be able to develop an on-going stable relationship of trust with those helping them.
 - **Respect:** to be treated with the expectation that they are competent, rather than not.
 - **Information and engagement:** to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans.
 - **Explanation:** to be informed of the outcome of assessments, decisions and how they have been reached, positive or negative.
 - **Support:** to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family.
 - **Advocacy:** to be provided with advocacy, to assist them in putting forward their views.

At New Leaf we know that the cohort of pupils in our provision often have complex needs, our Governing bodies/proprietors are aware of this additional risk of harm that our pupils may be vulnerable to.

14. Educational visitors to school

For educational visitors who are attending our setting in a professional capacity we will check ID and assure ourselves, if appropriate, that the visitor has had the appropriate DBS check. (or the visitor's employers have confirmed that their staff have appropriate checks).

We recognise that external organisations can provide a varied and useful range of information, resources and speakers that can help schools and colleges enrich children's education, we will carefully consider the suitability of any external organisations.

We will ensure that where individuals come onto our premises that we consider the following: -

- assessing the education value,
- the age appropriateness of what is going to be delivered and
- whether relevant checks will be required.

This will form part of the risk assessment including our professional judgement and we will consider whether to seek an enhanced DBS for any volunteer not engaging in regulated activity. In doing so, we will consider:

- What we know about the individual/company, including formal and informal information offered by staff, parents, other establishments, or volunteers.
- Whether the individual/company has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where references can be advised, and suitability recorded.
- Whether the role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check.
- We will clearly have decided the level of supervision required through risk assessment – the supervision will be “reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children” as stated in KCSIE 2024.
- We have clear visitor's procedure that enables us to offer pupil experiences of meeting other professionals to extend knowledge and curriculum. This clearly states whether they are supervised or unsupervised within the school.

15. Allegations made against/concerns raised in relation to teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers, and contractors

Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment securing wellbeing and best possible outcomes for the children at our school. We take all possible steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that the adults who work at New Leaf are safe to work with children. However, we do recognise that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.

The Governing Body ensures that there are procedures in place for dealing with the two sections covering two levels (see below) of concern and/or allegations against staff members, supply staff, volunteers, and contractors:

- Allegations that **may** meet the harms threshold.

- Allegation/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold, referred to for the purposes of this guidance as '**low level concerns**'.

Allegations that **may** meet the harms threshold

We have an good understanding and give due regard to Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 guidance and Allegations of Abuse - SSCB where it is alleged that anyone working in our education setting providing education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors has:

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

This relates to members of staff, supply staff, volunteers, and contractors, who are currently working in any education setting, regardless of whether the school or college is where the alleged abuse took place.

If an allegation is made or information is received about an adult who works at our school which indicates that they may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of staff receiving the information should inform the Director immediately.

If it is about the sole proprietor of the independent school, then this needs to be raised with the Designated Officer. Should an allegation be made against the Director, the DSL will seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day. No member of staff or the governing body will undertake further investigations before receiving advice from the LADO.

Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching and/or historical allegations of abuse will be referred to the police. If we are not the employer of an individual, we still have responsibility to ensure allegations are dealt with appropriately. In no circumstances will we decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. Our Governing body/proprietor will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out their investigation.

Learning lessons

It is important that lessons are learnt when managing all levels and types of allegations.

The DSL at New Leaf will review the circumstances of all substantiated cases with Staffordshire's LADO to determine whether improvements can be made to the school's or college's procedures to help prevent similar events in the future. This will be done throughout the entirety of the process and at conclusion.

Lessons will also be learnt from the use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. The LADO and case manager will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual.

Where an allegation is concluded to be either unfounded, false, malicious or unsubstantiated the DSL or Director (and if they have been involved the LADO) will consider the facts of each case and determine whether any lessons can be learned, and improvements made.

Allegation/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold – referred to for the purposes of this guidance as 'low level concerns'

At New Leaf we promote an open and transparent culture in which **all** concerns about adults are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Creating this culture enables us to identify inappropriate, problematic, or concerning behaviour early, minimising the risk of abuse and ensuring that adults who work in or on behalf of our school are clear about professional boundaries and act within them in accordance with our ethos and values.

What is a low-level concern?

Low level does not mean that the concern is insignificant. It is any concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or nagging doubt that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that is:

- inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy;

- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or
- humiliating pupils.

All staff have a good understanding of what constitutes a low-level concern, and our governing body ensure that these low-level concerns are included as part of our staff code of conduct and safeguarding policies.

Sharing low-level concerns

We understand how crucial it is that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the right person and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively will also protect those working in or on behalf of our setting from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

If we are in any doubt as to whether information shared about a member of our staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harms threshold, we will consult with the LADO.

Any member of staff or volunteer who does not feel confident to raise their concerns with the Headteacher or Chair of Governors and contact knows to contact the LADO on 0300 111 8007.

New Leaf has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at our school, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the LADO and/or HR. The DSL has a responsibility to inform Barring service.

16. Information sharing

We work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers, and colleagues from other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 & Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Schools have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

As part of meeting a child's needs, our Governing body recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies. This includes ensuring arrangements are in place to set out clearly the processes and principles for sharing information within our setting and with children's social care, the safeguarding partners, other organisations, agencies, and practitioners as required.

We are proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to the local authority children's social care.

Our Governing body are aware that among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. Our Governing body/proprietors/management committees ensure that relevant staff have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share (and withhold) personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR.

Where children leave our school/academy/college, the DSL will ensure that any relevant Safeguarding file is transferred to the new setting as soon as possible, ensuring secure transit, with confirmation of receipt.

In addition to the safeguarding file, our DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school/college in advance of the child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new setting to continue supporting the victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

Guidance documents:

- [Data protection in schools-GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/data-protection-in-schools)

17) Managing complaints

In line with our school ethos and culture, we encourage children and parents/carers to talk to us if they are unhappy with anything to do with school. We have a robust internal investigation process.

Our complaints policy states clearly the various stages of complaint and where to escalate concerns following completion and outcome of our

complaints process. Our complaints policy is available on our school website for parents/carers and is also available on request.

Safeguarding concerns should be raised with school immediately. If a concern means a child is at immediate risk, then the individual needs to contact Staffordshire Childrens Advice and Support Team on (0300 111 8007). All visitors are given safeguarding information which outlines how to share concerns and code of conduct expected by visitors/contractors.

18. Site Security

At New Leaf we provide a secure site which is controlled by precise management directives, but the site is only as secure as the people who use it. All people on our site must adhere to the rules which govern it.

- Empty classrooms should have closed windows and doors.
- Children should never be allowed to leave school alone during school hours unless collected by an adult such as a parent who is doing so for a valid reason. They should report to the office to do this.
- At least two members of staff are always on duty at break times.
- A health and safety audit are completed annually with risk assessment/safety planning and forms part of the Governors annual report. This will include a fire evacuation and Prevent risk assessment.