



Ercall Wood Academy



Child Protection & Safeguarding in School Policy

2021-2022

Previous Policy Approved by Local Governing Body	November 2021
Review Date – 2021 -2022	April 2022

Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Policy 2021-22 - Document Status			
Date published by Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership:	25 August 2021	Authors:	Telford & Wrekin Council, Education Safeguarding Team
Date of policy creation:	22 September 2021	Person responsible for creation:	Darren Andrews
Date of policy inception:	DATE: October 2021		
Date of policy adoption by Governing Body/Board/Proprietor:	DATE: October 2021		
Date of policy review for 2021/22:	DATE: May 2022	Person responsible for review:	Darren Andrews

Ercall Wood Academy

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING IN SCHOOLS POLICIES

Contents

Aims	6
Part one: Safeguarding information	7
Our approach to safeguarding	7
The role of Ercall Wood staff	8
Staff training and induction	9
Early Help	10
Abuse and Neglect	10
Indicators of abuse and neglect	11
Abuse	11
Physical abuse:	11
Fabrication of illness:	11
Emotional abuse:	11
Sexual abuse:	12
Neglect:	12
Peer on peer abuse	12
Children and the court system	15
Children missing from education	15
Children with family members in prison	16
Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)	16
Child criminal exploitation: county lines	19
Modern slavery and child human trafficking	20
Cybercrime	20
Domestic abuse	21
Homelessness	22
So-called ‘honour-based’ abuse violence (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)	23
FGM	23
FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers	23
Forced marriage	25
Preventing radicalisation	25

The Prevent duty	26
Recognising Extremism	26
Channel	27
What to do if you have concerns about a child?	27
Immediate response to a child or parent	29
Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children	30
Sexual violence	31
Sexual harassment	32
Upskirting	33
Harmful sexual behaviour	33
The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment	34
The immediate response to a report	37
Child abduction and community safety incidents	38
Mental Health	39
Elective Home Education (EHE)	39
Contextual safeguarding	40
What to do if you have a concern over a child	40
Immediate response to a child or parent	41
Confidentiality	43
The role of the local authority	44
Record Keeping	44
Retention of Children’s records	46
What to do if you have or are concerned about other safeguarding practices in the Ercall Wood Academy?	46
Part two: The management of safeguarding	47
The Designated Safeguarding lead	48
Staff	48
Multi-agency working	49
Information Sharing	49
Training	51
Parents	51
Online safety	52
Safe use of electronic devices	54
Hiring out our facilities and premises	54
Opportunities to teach safeguarding	55

Teaching Safeguarding	56
Staff	56
Safer Recruitment	57
Children’s Wishes	57
Children requiring Mental Health support	57
Looked after children and previously looked after children	58
The Designated Teacher for looked after children	58
Virtual school heads	59
Care leavers	59
The use of reasonable force	59
Poor or irregular attendance	60
Children leaving school without permission	61
Drug and substance misuse	61
Suicide intervention	61
Changing in school	62
Part three: Safer Recruitment	63
Recruitment and selection process.....	63
Visitors	64
Alternative provision.....	64
Private fostering.....	66
Part four: Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff	68
Annex A: Roles of the designated safeguarding lead	72
Training	73
Acronyms	76

At Ercall Wood Academy we are committed to safeguarding children and young people and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment.

Adults in our school take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them. We will always act in the best interest of the child.

Ercall Wood Academy have regard for the statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015 and the Education and training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021. This policy has been developed in line with legal obligations, including, where applicable, the Human Rights Act 1998, the European Convention on Human Rights, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Ercall Wood Academy will adhere to the statutory guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#) and [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021](#) (KCSIE). We will follow the DfE of [What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused - Advice for Practitioners](#) and have regard to [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#) (September 2021).. We recognise the [NSPCC](#) website also provides use additional information on abuse and neglect and what to look out for.

Ercall Wood Academy will follow non-statutory interim guidance on [COVID-19 safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#) during the coronavirus outbreak. Please refer to our addendum child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures for COVID-19.

This policy replaces the previous policy of October 2021.

Aims

The aim of the school policy is to make all within the school feel safe and have clear roles and responsibilities in place for that to happen. This policy replaces the previous policy of November 1st 2021.

Ercall Wood Academy understands our duties under Section 11 of the [Children Act 2004](#) and Section 175 and 157 of the [Education Act 2002](#)

We adhere to [Working together to safeguard children 2018](#) and (KCSIE).

This policy has been developed in line with legal obligations, including the [Human Rights Act 1998](#), the [Equality Act 2010](#) and the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#).

All child protection matters will be dealt with in line with Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership (TWSP) [West Midlands Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures Manual](#).

This school recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding within the remit of Ofsted “The common inspection framework: education, skills and early years”
[Inspecting safeguarding in early years education and skills settings](#).

The school’s duty of care will be in line with Government Legislation and [Local Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board \(TWSCB\) Procedures](#)

The protection of children is the responsibility of everyone. Primary responsibility for the care and protection of children rests with parents, but a range of services is available to help them in this task. Many referrals to agencies are made by parents seeking help for themselves. Relatives, friends and neighbours may also directly, or encourage families to, seek help or alert statutory authorities to children about whom they are concerned. All agencies with staff that are in direct contact with children and families must be involved.

The safety and protection of all children is of paramount importance to all those involved in Education. For avoidance of doubt the role of governing bodies, boards and proprietors of all schools and colleges is set out in KCSIE, effective from 1st September 2021. This guidance coupled with Working Together to Safeguard Children, is the blueprint for all inter agency working and should be available and accessible to all those responsible for children's welfare. The governing body will ensure that all staff have read at least part one of KCSIE and also Annexe B. We will maintain a record of all those who have read part one\ Annexe A of KCSIE. The school recognises that best practice would be for all staff to be acquainted with all parts of KCSIE.

All members of the governing body/academy trust and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and their deputies will read all parts of KCSIE, relevant parts of Working Together to Safeguard Children and Part three: safeguarding and welfare of the EYFS. We will maintain a record of this. We recognise that best practice would be for all staff to be acquainted with all parts of KCSIE. The governing body/academy trust will ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part one (or Annex A if appropriate) of KCSIE.

Our policy and all supplementary policies are procedures are published on our website for all to view.

Part one: Safeguarding information

Our approach to safeguarding

The staff at Erccall Wood Academy are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for its pupils.

Children can develop a special and close relationship with the school/college community and view them as significant and trustworthy adults. For the purpose of these policies and for avoidance of doubt, the school community shall include all those that work at the setting. Those being teachers, whole school staff, governors, children, parents that play an active role regularly at the setting and volunteers.

All in the school community believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child. As a school we will follow the Department for Education advice What to do if you're worried a child is being abused.

It is not surprising therefore that a child, if they have been abused, may confide or disclose to a teacher or another member of staff. For staff to interpret any concerns this school will assess each incident as it appears. In respect of assessing any bruising to a child this school will refer to the

[“Bruising of Children” guidance produced by the TWSCB](#) to assist their decision making. It is important to note that the four defined categories of abuse being;

- **Physical**
- **Sexual**
- **Emotional**
- **Neglect**

Primary responsibility for the care and protection of children rests with parents, but a range of services is available to help them in this task.

At Ercall Wood Academy it is everyone’s responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, this includes everyone who comes into contact with children and their families. Everyone should consider, at all times, what is in the best interest for the child ensure their practice is child-centred.

For the purpose of this policy 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;
- preventing impairment of children’s 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.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

No one will manage concerns about a child in isolation. Everyone will identify concerns, share information and take prompt action to help children and families receive the right help at the right time.

The role of Ercall Wood staff

Our staff will identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating. They will provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

Children can develop a special and close relationship with individuals in the school community and view them as significant and trustworthy adults. For the purpose of this policy and for avoidance of doubt, the school community, includes, parents, children and all those that work or volunteer at the education setting.

Parents need to be in no doubt that this policy is our commitment towards the statement above and we expect that they embrace everything that is documented in our policy. In principle parents sign up to our school ethos, the law and the legislation that sits behind it.

Ercall Wood Academy is committed to identifying children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child’s life.

At Ercall Wood Academy staff maintain the attitude 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. Staff must always act in children's interest where they are concerned about a child's welfare.

At Ercall Wood Academy we agree that the safety, welfare and protection of all children is paramount and any delay in reporting concerns is unacceptable. All staff will adhere to this principle and the child protection procedures established by the TWSP and the underlying principles that lie within it.

Our policy will be published on our school/college website for all to view.

- **The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) for school/college is: Darren Andrews**
- **The deputies are: Lynn Kelly, Karen Athawes, Linda Moore and Jane Leese**
- **The governor with responsibility for safeguarding is: Mrs Judith Mills**

The designated safeguarding lead and their deputy's role is to advise on safeguarding concerns, support others to carry out their safeguarding duties and liaise with other agencies.

All staff (paid or voluntary) will receive a robust induction to help them fully understand the systems for safeguarding, in addition to this policy staff will be familiar with our school behaviour policy, staff code of conduct, how to respond to children going missing and the role of the DSL. They will receive appropriate child protection and safeguarding training for their role.

At Ercall Wood Academy staff will 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 teachers, including the Principal in accordance with the Teachers' Standards 2012 will safeguard children's well-being and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

Staff training and induction

All staff will receive an induction so they are aware of our safeguarding systems. This will include the child protection policy, behaviour policy, staff behaviour policy, safeguarding response to children who go missing and role of the DSL (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies). We will provide copies of policies and a copy of Part one (or Annex A, if appropriate) or KCSIE to all staff at induction.

Staff will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction. This training will be updated regularly (as a minimum every three years). All staff will also receive at least annual child protection and safeguarding updates, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

All staff will be made aware of the following:

- Telford & Wrekin early help process and their role within it;

- the process for making referrals to children’s social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 and the role they might be expected to play in such assessments, and
- what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused, exploited or neglected.

Staff know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the DSL (or a deputy) and children’s social care. Staff will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child. All staff will reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor will a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Early Help

Ercall Wood Academy believe that any child may benefit from early help and we ensure that all staff are 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;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- is at risk of ‘honour’-based such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care, and
- is a privately fostered child.

Abuse and Neglect

At Ercall Wood Academy all staff are trained on the indicators of abuse and neglect to help them identify children who may need help or protection. We believe that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events. All staff are aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the Ercall Wood Academy and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the DSL and deputies will consider whether

children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Staff will be vigilant and always raise any concerns with their DSL (or deputy), even if they are unsure.

All staff are aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. We understand children are at risk of abuse online as well as face-to-face. In many cases, abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse their peers online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic 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.

Indicators of abuse and neglect

Abuse: A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. 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 by 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.

Fabrication of illness: The fabrication or induction of illness in children is a relatively rare form of child abuse. Where concerns exist about fabricated or induced illness, it requires professionals to work together, evaluating all the available evidence, in order to reach an understanding of the reasons for the child's signs and symptoms of illness. At all times professionals need to keep an open mind to ensure that they have not missed a vital piece of information'. We will adopt the guidance [Safeguarding children in whom illness is fabricated or induced](#) and TWSP FII Best Practice Guidance.

Emotional abuse: The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and 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 from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), 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, although it may occur alone.

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 non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff are aware of the settings policy and procedures of dealing with this.

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, for example, 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); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Peer on peer abuse

At Ercall Wood Academy all staff are trained to understand that children can abuse other children we refer to this as peer on peer abuse. Peer on peer abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying); prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; (this may include an element of online 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 stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
- 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;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery), 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).

Ercall Wood Academy actively seeks to raise awareness of and prevent all forms of peer on peer abuse by:

- educating all governors, its senior leadership team, staff, students, and parents about this issue;
- educating children about the nature and prevalence of peer on peer abuse, positive, responsible and safe use of social media, and the unequivocal facts about consent, via the curriculum;
- engaging parents on these issues;
- supporting the on-going welfare of the student body by drawing on multiple resources that prioritise student mental health, and by providing in-school counselling and therapy to address underlying mental health needs;
- working with governors, senior leadership team, and all staff, students and parents to address equality issues, to promote positive values, and to encourage a culture of tolerance and respect amongst all members of the Academy community;
- creating conditions in which our students can aspire to, and realise, safe and healthy relationships fostering a whole-academy culture;
- responding to cases of peer on peer abuse promptly and appropriately, and
- ensuring that all peer on peer abuse issues are fed back to the DSL and deputies so that they can spot and address any concerning trends and identify students who may be in need of additional support.
- Actively sharing and promoting the dedicated NSPCC helpline number (0500 136 663) which provides advice and support to children and adults who are victims of abuse in schools.

Ercall Wood Academy actively engages with TWSP in relation to peer on peer abuse, and works closely with, for example, children’s social care, the police and other schools. The relationships the Academy has built with these partners are essential to ensuring that the Academy is able to prevent, identify early, and appropriately handle cases of peer on peer abuse. The DSL (or deputy) will regularly review behaviour incident logs which can help to identify any changes in behaviour and/or concerning patterns or trends at an early stage.

Ercall Wood Academy recognises that any child can be vulnerable to peer on peer abuse due to the strength of peer influence, especially during adolescence, and staff should be alert to signs of such abuse amongst all children. Individual and situational factors can increase a child’s vulnerability to abuse by their peers. We know that research suggests:

- peer on peer abuse may affect boys differently from girls (i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators). However, all peer on peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously;
- children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) are three times more likely to be abused than their peers without SEND, and

- some children may be more likely to experience peer on peer abuse than others as a result of certain characteristics such as sexual orientation, ethnicity, race or religious beliefs.

Ercall Wood Academy follows and is guided by Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education and the DfE guidance on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence in relation to this. Contained in this are the key stages of process as summarised below.

- Stage 1:

Pre-planned risk assessments in place

Training for staff on how to report incidents

Training on how to manage reports

Peer on peer policy in place

- Stage 2:

Victims are reassured, supported and kept safe

Record the concern

Inform the DSL if not involved in the initial report.

- Stage 3:

Risk assessment for victim

Risk assessment for alleged perpetrator

Risk assessment for all other children involved

- Stage 4:

DSL considers wishes of victim, nature of the incidents, ages of the children, development stages of the children, any power imbalance of the children, any history of incidents, any ongoing risks and any wider context

- Stage 5:

Initial consideration of children sharing a classroom and/or having direct contact in school

Initial consideration of contact between children travelling to and from school

- Stage 6:

Consider the options to manage the report, including manage internally, early help, referral to children's social care and report to police

Stage 7:

Consider bail conditions

Manage delays in the criminal process

Stage 8:

Safeguarding and support the victim and perpetrator as part of the ongoing response

Children and the court system

The school recognises that sometimes children are required to give evidence in criminal courts, for crimes committed against them or for other crimes they have witnessed. We will follow the age appropriate guides to support children 5-11 year-olds and 12-17 year-olds. We will follow these guides to ensure the correct process is followed and support and special measures are made available.

We understand that when child arrangements via the family courts are made following separation this can be a stressful and entrenched conflict in families, this can be stressful for children. We will follow the guidance of the Ministry of Justice in managing these situations.

Children missing from education

Where children have gone missing we will follow the [Local Missing Children Process](#).

At Ercall Wood Academy staff are aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. We will use early help strategies if necessary, to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. As part of induction staff will be made aware of their Ercall Wood Academy unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of Safeguarding. Missing school can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns about other safeguarding issues, including the criminal exploitation of children.

We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay.

We will always follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not at school. This means we need to have a least two up to date contacts numbers for parents/carers. Parents should remember to update the school as soon as possible if the numbers change.

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) the school has:

- Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly
- Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for pupils who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions).
- Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

Procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take pupils off-roll when they:

- leave school to be home educated
- move away from the school's location
- remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
- are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards); or
- are permanently excluded

We will ensure that pupils who are expected to attend the academy but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority.

When a pupil leaves the academy, we will record the name of the pupil's new school and their expected start date.

Children with family members in prison

At Ercall Wood Academy we recognise that children who have a parent in prison are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. We will use the information from [NICCO](#), to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

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

The Academy recognises that both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse. They both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual, and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country, forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late, and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

The above CCE indicators can also be indicators of CSE, as can:

- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends, and
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.
- We will follow the DfE [Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#).

Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact: it can also occur through the use of technology. Like all forms of child sex abuse, child sexual exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16- and 17-year olds who can legally consent to have sex;
- can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;
- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity;
- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media);
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Potential vulnerabilities include:

Although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited. Child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these issues.

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse;
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic violence or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example);
- Recent bereavement or loss;
- Social isolation or social difficulties;
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality;
- Economic vulnerability;
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status;
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited;
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work;
- Having a physical or learning disability;
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories); and
- Sexual identity.

If we feel that children may be being abused through exploitation we will consult in the normal way with the relevant local authority social care team to seek advice as to whether the incident follows a [CSE Care Support Pathway](#). The concerns will be followed through sensitively and appropriately with fellow professionals and the [CATE Referral Form](#) will be completed. In relation to the fortnightly CATE Risk Panels, where concerns are expressed around a child attending our school, we will ensure attendance whenever possible as part of the established multi-agency process. Alongside this we have taken the same steps and made all staff aware of the TWSP [CSE Warning Signs Checklist](#). Due to the high number of reports in our borough, we will be particularly alert to the CSE.

Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Staff understand that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, they are 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.

Child criminal exploitation: county lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children’s homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

We recognise one of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs. In these circumstances the DSL will consider a referral to the [National Referral Mechanism](#). If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral will also be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation, such as [CLIMB](#).

Some potential indicators of county lines involvement and exploitation are listed below, with those at the top of particular concern:

- persistently going missing from school or home and/or being found out-of-area;
- unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones;
- excessive receipt of texts/phone calls and/or having multiple handsets;
- relationships with controlling/older individuals or groups;
- leaving home/care without explanation;
- suspicion of physical assault/unexplained injuries;
- parental concerns;
- carrying weapons;
- significant decline in school results/performance;
- gang association or isolation from peers or social networks, and
- self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

We will consider the [County Lines guidance](#) published by the Home Office.

In respect of the above we will ensure staff and students must:

- feel safe at our setting all the time;
- understand very clearly what safe situations are;

- be highly aware of how to keep themselves and others safe;
- monitor thoroughly missing episodes;
- aware that any child of any age and gender may be vulnerable to grooming activity by others of any age and gender;
- aware a child of any age may be susceptible;
- aware that it is exploitation even if consensual; and,
- aware that it may be typified by a form of power imbalance.

We will make the [Home Office](#) guidance on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines available to staff.

Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism (NRM)

Staff understand that Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

We know that information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in the [Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance](#).

We recognise that child criminal exploitation can take a number of forms.

Modern slavery and child human trafficking

Recall Wood Academy recognise modern slavery, including child trafficking as abuse. If we become aware or have suspicions that a child may have or is being exploited or trafficked, we will contact Family Connect in the normal manner to seek advice and support. All children, irrespective of their immigration status, are entitled to safeguarding and protection under the law. We recognise this as any normal child protection referral and potential victims of trafficking and modern slavery can be of any nationality and may include British children.

Cybercrime

We understand cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). Cyber-dependent crimes include;

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded;
- denial of Service (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources; and,

- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the DSL (or a deputy), will consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme.

Domestic abuse

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, children may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of peer on peer abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child-safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

Recall Wood Academy recognises domestic violence and abuse as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological;
- physical;
- sexual;
- financial; and
- emotional.

We understand exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for

the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

Ercall Wood Academy will always liaise with agencies in a two-way process where domestic abuse and/or violence is a factor in a household. Children within our care will be supported where needed. We are part of the Operation ENCOMPASS process where domestic incidents are shared directly with us, so that we have an initial awareness. To this end, we will be part of any agency referral, in a two-way process, such as the Domestic Violence Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) or any other named agencies where these specific issues are a factor that may impair and impact on children's development.

Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a safe time from the team for a call can be booked.

We will use the following additional advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped:

- NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects
- Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children
- SafeLives: young people and domestic abuse.

Homelessness

Ercall Wood Academy understands that being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are aware of contact details and referral routes to the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. As appropriate, we will make referrals and/or hold discussions with the Local Housing Authority. However, this does not, and will not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

Ercall Wood Academy staff will consider homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. We recognise in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances. In these cases will follow the department and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/ or require accommodation.

So-called 'honour-based' abuse violence (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

Ercall Wood Academy recognise that so-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices, such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. We are aware of this dynamic and will consider additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. Ercall Wood Academy sees all forms of HBA as abuse (regardless of the motivation) and will handle and escalate as such. We will ensure the Ercall Wood Academy community are alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate the local safeguarding procedures by contacting Family Connect and if necessary, the police. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers that requires a different approach (see following section).

FGM

Ercall Wood Academy understand that FGM comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

As a Ercall Wood Academy we will follow the National FGM Centre [Female Genital Mutilation: Guidance for schools](#).

FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers

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 or students, 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 [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#).

Female genital mutilation refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK.

FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old; however, it is believed that the majority of cases happen between the ages of 5 and 8.

Symptoms of FGM

FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out-of-school to visit an 'at-risk' country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM. Staff should not assume that FGM only happens outside the UK.

- Indications that FGM may have already taken place may include:
- difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable.
- spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- spending long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
- frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
- prolonged or repeated absences from school or college, especially with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return
- reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations.
- confiding in a professional without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.
- talking about pain or discomfort

Risk factors for FGM include:

- low level of integration into UK society
- mother or a sister who has undergone FGM
- girls who are withdrawn from PSHE
- visiting female elder from the country of origin
- being taken on a long holiday to the country of origin
- talk about a 'special' procedure to become a woman

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 good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with our designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to those 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 will follow our local safeguarding procedures and report to Family Connect or the local social care team for the child. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: [FGM Fact Sheet](#).

In respect of FGM we will adopt the local [TWSP FGM Practice Guidelines and Resource Pack](#) as part of safeguarding responsibilities and inform/educate our staff in this particular area.

Forced marriage

Ercall Wood Academy understand that forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. We know that a forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example).

Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. We play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

We will follow the [Forced Marriage guidance](#). Our staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information, contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fm@fco.gov.uk

Preventing radicalisation

As an Academy we understand children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to our role in protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, we will also protect children from this risk as part of our safeguarding approach.

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

- **Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- **Terrorism** is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

We accept that there is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media) and settings (such as the internet).

Ercall Wood Academy understand it is where possible our role to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, through appropriate training staff will be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Staff will use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which must include reporting their concerns to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) who will consider making a referral to the Prevent referral.

The Prevent duty

Ercall Wood Academy is subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of our functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

We see The Prevent duty as part of our wider safeguarding obligation. All designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders are familiar with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 57-76.

We will follow the published advice for schools on the [Prevent duty](#).

We aim to ensure all staff have completed the Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent.

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

Where staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalized, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism and is able to support staff with any concerns they may have.

We use the curriculum to ensure that children and young people understand how people with extreme views share these with others, especially using the internet.

We are committed to ensuring that our pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the school’s core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

Recognising Extremism

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages like illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent.)
- secretive behaviour
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- graffiti, artwork or writing that displays extremist themes

- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- advocating violence towards others

Channel

Ercall Wood Academy recognise Channel is voluntary and a confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. We will refer to the relevant Channel programme if we are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. We will always seek the individual's consent to do so.

We will follow the [Channel guidance](#).

At Ercall Wood Academy we have procedures in place to monitor IT usage and have a duty to seek advice and explore by filtering suspicious content being viewed. Those within and outside the Ercall Wood Academy community should be left in no doubt of our duty to cooperate with the law.

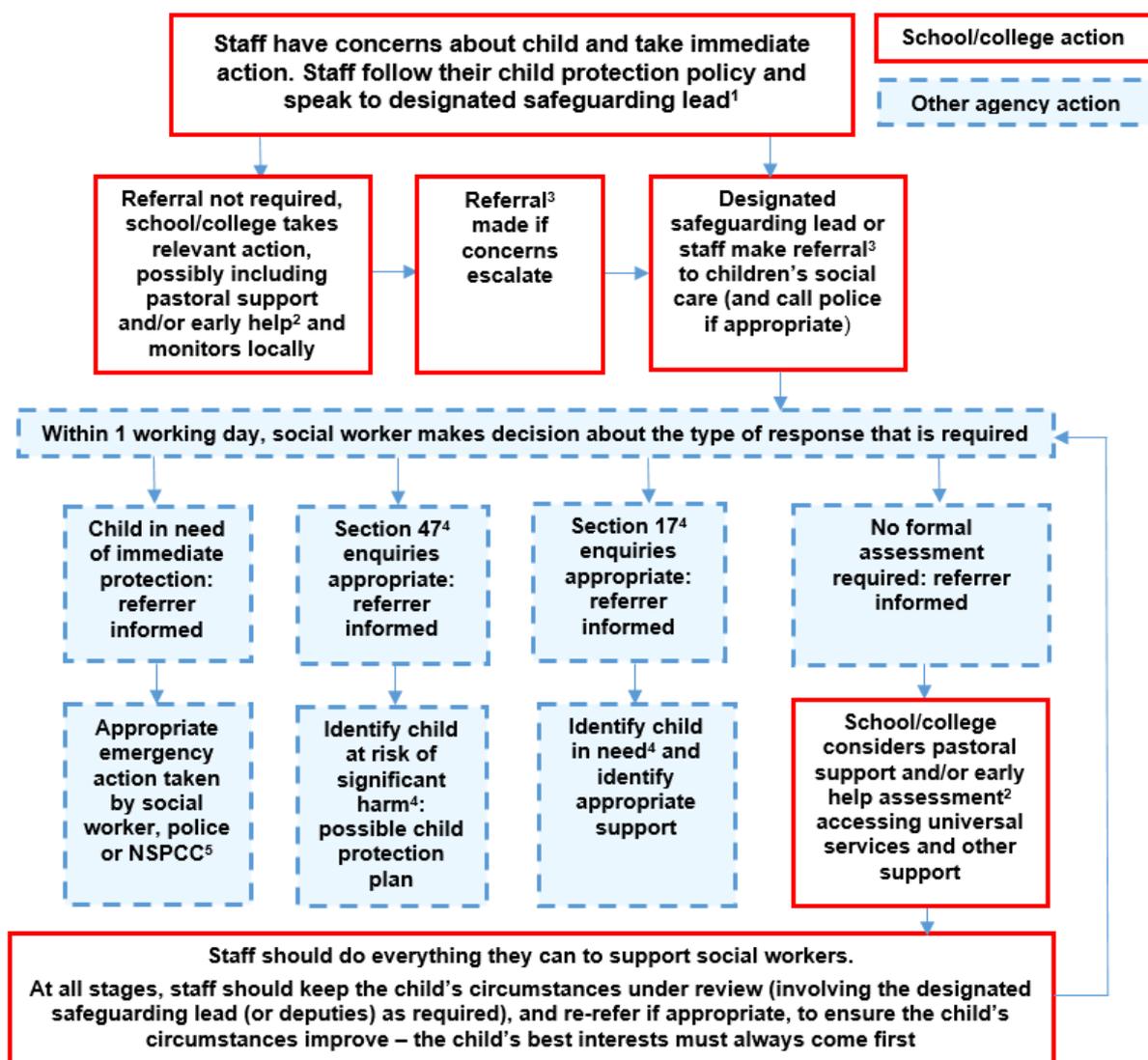
If we feel children are being abused through extremism or being radicalised, we will consult directly with Family Connect and the police PREVENT team and seek advice. This is done with a [PREVENT referral form](#) (please see [the flowchart](#)).

The PREVENT referral will be sent to Family Connect and the police. As with all referrals this referral will be dealt with appropriately with professionals. If it is deemed from the PREVENT team that the intervention is not criminal and does not warrant a Channel Panel, but needs local support, we will work with those professional leads for Telford & Wrekin Council. Presently Presently that is Jas Bedesha, jas.bedesha@telford.gov.uk. The education lead for Telford & Wrekin Council is **Scott Thomas-White**, scott.thomaswhite@telford.gov.uk. Where necessary, the DSL (or deputy) will consult with the Telford and Wrekin professional lead, education lead or CTU officer: Alison Potts, a.potts@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk, 07391019552, to seek advice on making prevent referrals.. Our policy also recognises that the local police can be contacted in imminent circumstances on 01386 591835/591825 or 591816 and at prevent@warwickshireandwestmercia.pnn.police.uk.

What to do if you have concerns about a child?

Staff working at Ercall Wood Academy maintain the attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned and will always act in the best interests of the child.

If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they must act on them immediately. The following flow chart sets out the process for staff when they have concerns about a child.



- Where someone has a concern about the welfare of a child, they should speak to the DSL (or deputy). Options will then include;
- managing any support for the child internally via the Academy's own pastoral processes;
- an early help assessment; or
- a referral for statutory services, for example, as the child is in need or suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This will involve contacting Family Connect or the local social care team for the child.

[NPCC- When to call the police](#) will be considered by the DSL to help them understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do.

All referrals to the local social team must be followed up in writing using the social care team's relevant referral/request forms. For referrals in Telford & Wrekin we will use the [Request for service form](#).

If in exceptional circumstances, the DSL or a deputy is not available, the person who has the concern should speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from Family Connect or the local social care team for the child. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the DSL (or deputy) as soon as is practically possible.

Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. [Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers](#) supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the DSL or a deputy. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

Referral agencies

Telford & Wrekin social care team	Shropshire social care team	Staffordshire social care team	Wolverhampton social care team
Family Connect 01952 385385 Out of Hours 01952 676500	First Point of Contact 0345 678 9021 Out of Hours 0345 6789040	First Response 0800 1313 126 Out of Hours 0345 604 2886 or 07815 492613	Safeguarding Service 01902 555392 Out of Hours 01902 552999
If you think a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999			
Childline 0800 1111	NSPCC 0800 800 5000	Protecting Vulnerable People (West Mercia Police): 0300 333 3000	

Immediate response to a child or parent

Staff will follow effective safeguarding practice which includes:

- not promising confidentiality at this initial stage as it is very likely a concern will have to be shared further (for example, with the DSL or children’s social care) to discuss next steps. Staff will only share the report with those people who are necessary in order to progress it. It is important that the victim understands what the next steps will be and who the report will be passed to;
- recognising a child is likely to disclose to someone they trust: this could be anyone on the Academy staff. It is important that the person to whom the child discloses recognises that the child has placed them in a position of trust. They should be supportive and respectful of the child;
- recognising a child is likely to disclose to someone they trust: this could be anyone staff in our setting. It is important that the person to whom the child discloses recognises that the child has placed them in a position of trust. They should be supportive and respectful of the child;

- keeping in mind that certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation;
- listening carefully to the child, reflecting back, using the child's language, being non-judgmental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the child where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc or TED 'tell me', 'explain to me' and 'describe'. It is important to note that whilst leading questions should be avoided, staff can ask children if they have been harmed and what the nature of that harm was;
- considering the best way to make a record of the report. Best practice is to wait until the end of the report and immediately write up a thorough summary. This allows the staff member to devote their full attention to the child and to listen to what they are saying. It may be appropriate to make notes during the report (especially if a second member of staff is present). However, if making notes, staff should be conscious of the need to remain engaged with the child and not appear distracted by the note taking. Either way, it is essential a written record is made;
- only recording the facts as the child presents them. The notes should not reflect the personal opinion of the note taker. We are aware that notes of such reports could become part of a statutory assessment by children's social care and/or part of a criminal investigation;
- where the report includes an online element, we will be aware of searching, screening and confiscation advice (for schools) and UKCCIS sexting advice (for schools and colleges). The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child. The highlighted advice provides more details on what to do when viewing an image is unavoidable. In some cases, it may be more appropriate to confiscate any devices to preserve any evidence and hand them to the police for inspection;
- if possible, managing reports with two members of staff present, (preferably one of them being the DSL or a deputy). However, this might not always be possible, and
- informing the DSL (or deputy), as soon as practically possible, if the DSL (or deputy) is not involved in the initial report.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children

Ercall Wood Academy understands that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can occur online. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

We recognise that children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, likely, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. We will ensure that **all** victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff are aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. We know that evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

We will ensure that staff are aware of the importance of:

- challenging inappropriate behaviours;
- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment; and,
- challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

For the purpose of this policy, we use the term ‘victim’, ‘alleged perpetrator(s)’ or where appropriate ‘perpetrator(s)’. Ultimately, the use of appropriate terminology will be determined, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis.

Along with providing support to children who are victims of sexual violence or sexual harassment, we will provide the alleged perpetrator(s) with an education, safeguarding support as appropriate and implement any disciplinary sanctions. We recognise that a child abusing another child may be a sign they have been abused themselves or a sign of wider issues that require addressing within the culture of our setting. Taking disciplinary action and providing appropriate support, can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary.

We understand that reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are extremely complex to manage. We know it is essential that victims are protected, offered appropriate support and every effort is made to ensure their education is not disrupted. We also know it is also important that other children and our staff are supported and protected as appropriate.

We will try to be aware of, and respond appropriately to all reports and concerns, including those outside of our setting, and or online.

Ercall Wood Academy will ensure that staff are aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting-up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Sexual violence

Our staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way both inside and outside of our setting. We refer to sexual violence as sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003¹⁰⁵ as described below:

Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Causing someone to engage in sexual activity with consent: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.)

Ercall Wood Academy believe that consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

Sexual consent

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity;
- the age of consent is 16;
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

Sexual harassment

All those part of the Academy community, believe that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

When referring to sexual harassment at Ercall Wood Academy we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline both inside and outside of our setting.. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual

- harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
- non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
- sexualised online bullying;
- unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media;
- sexual exploitation; coercion and threats; and “upskirting”.
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos.
-

Upskirting

Ercall Wood Academy understands that ‘upskirting’ typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. We accept that this is now a criminal offence.

Please refer to our policy and procedures regarding peer on peer abuse.

Harmful sexual behaviour

Children’s sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. We use the term “harmful sexual behaviour” (HSB). HSB can occur online and/or face to face and can also occur simultaneously between the two. We will consider HSB in a child protection context.

We will follow the specialist support and advice on HSB available from the specialist sexual violence sector. Our DSL will undertake training in HSB and incorporate this into our approach to managing sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Addressing inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. Children displaying HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. We understand it is important that they are offered appropriate support.

Our approach to preventing peer on peer on abuse, including child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment

We will undertake pre-planning, training for staff and implement an effective peer on peer abuse policy to help us develop the foundation for a calm, considered and appropriate response to any reports.

We understand the best responses to peer on peer abuse are based on a whole setting approach to safeguarding and child protection and we will involve our whole community in this.

Systems are in place, well promoted throughout our setting, and understandable and accessible for our pupils to confidently report abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback.

All staff in our setting will undertake training in how to respond to peer on peer abuse, including reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment. Our DSL will undertake training to manage a report.

We accept the most effective preventative education programme will be through a whole setting approach that prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. Our setting will have a clear set of values and standards, and these will be upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of Erccall Wood Academy life. This is underpinned by our behaviour policy and pastoral support system, and by our planned programme of evidence-based content delivered through the whole curriculum. Our programme is developed to be age and stage of development appropriate. The DSL will support teachers in their delivery of this part of our curriculum. We recognise good practice allows children an open forum to talk through things. Such discussions can lead to increased safeguarding reports. Children will be made aware of the processes to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. This will include processes when they have a concern about a friend or peer. All staff are aware of how to support children and how to manage a safeguarding report from a child.

The DSL will consider if external support or intervention is necessary as part of our approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. We recognise specialist organisations can offer a different perspective and expert knowledge.

The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment

We will always reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. We will never give a victim the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor will we make a victim feel ashamed for making a report.

If a member of staff thinks for whatever reason that a child may be at risk of or experiencing abuse by their peer(s), or that a child may be at risk of abusing or may be abusing their peer(s), they should discuss their concern with the DSL (or deputy) without delay.

The DSL will discuss the concern(s) or allegation(s) with the member of staff who has reported it/them and will, where necessary, take any immediate steps to ensure the safety of the child/all children affected.

All staff, especially the DSL (or deputy) will give immediate consideration as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator (and any other children involved/impacted). If any of the children involved has SEND the DSL will liaise with the SENCO to assist in the management of the report.

Where any concern(s) or allegation(s) indicate(s) that indecent images of a child or children may have been shared online, the DSL will consider what urgent action can be taken, this may include

seeking specialist help, such as advice from [The Internet Watch Foundation](#) and the police in preventing the images spreading further and removing the images from the internet.

The DSL (or deputy) will use their professional judgement to: (a) assess the nature and seriousness of the alleged behaviour, and (b) determine whether it is appropriate for the alleged behaviour to be dealt with internally and, if so, whether any external specialist support is required.

In borderline cases the DSL (or deputy) may consult with Family Connect, and/or other relevant agencies on a no-names basis (where possible) to determine the most appropriate response.

Where the DSL (or deputy) considers or suspects that the alleged behaviour in question might be abusive or violent on a spectrum or where the needs and circumstances of the individual child/children in question might otherwise require it, the DSL (or deputy) will contact Family Connect or the local social care team for the child and/or the police immediately and, in any event, within 24 hours of the DSL (or deputy) becoming aware of the alleged behaviour. The DSL (or deputy) will discuss the concern(s) or allegation(s) with the agency and agree on a course of action, which may include:

1. manage internally;
2. early help;
3. referral to children's social care; and
4. reporting to the police.

All concerns, discussions, decisions, and reasons for decisions will be recorded (written or electronic).

If bail conditions are in place, we will consider what additional measures may be necessary to manage any assessed risk of harm that may arise within our setting.

There may be delays in any case that is being progressed through the criminal justice system. We will not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a police investigation before protecting the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and other children and adult students in the school or college. The DSL (or a deputy) will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required), to ensure any actions we take do not jeopardise the police investigation.

If a child is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence, we will update our risk assessment. We understand it is important that we ensure both the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) remain protected. Where cases are classified as "no further action" (NFA'd) by the police or Crown Prosecution Service, or where there is a not guilty verdict, we will continue to offer support to the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s).

If a report is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to Family Connect or the relevant children's social care team may be appropriate. If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, we will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it as per our own behaviour policy.

Ongoing response to peer on peer abuse, including sexual violence or sexual harassment

We will consider the principles based on effective safeguarding practice and to help shape any decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s).

Victims may not talk about the whole picture immediately. It is essential that dialogue is kept open and encouraged. We will offer victims a designated trusted adult in our setting to talk about their needs.

A victim of sexual violence is likely to be traumatised and, in some cases, may struggle in a normal classroom environment. We will avoid any action that would have the effect of isolating the victim, in particular from supportive peer groups, there may be times when the victim finds it difficult to maintain a full-time timetable and may express a wish to withdraw from lessons and activities. This will be because the victim wants to, not because it makes it easier to manage the situation. If required, we will provide a physical space for victims to withdraw.

Whilst we will give all the necessary support to victims to remain in our setting, if the trauma results in the victim being unable to do this, alternative provision or a move to another setting will be considered to enable them to continue to receive suitable education. This will only be at the request of the victim (and following discussion with their parents or carers).

The Academy will always carry out a written safety plan/risk assessment in respect of:

- any child who is alleged to have behaved in a way that is considered to be abusive or violent;
- any child who has reportedly been abused or affected by the alleged abusive or violent behaviour by another child, or
- any child who may be at risk due to the alleged abusive or violent behaviour by another child as deemed appropriate by the DSL.

It may be appropriate to contact children's social care and/or police to assist in carrying out a safety plan. The DSL may use and consider the [TWSP Sexually harmful behaviour - risk assessment tool](#).

Where other children have been identified as witnesses to alleged abuse or violence, consideration will also be given by the DSL (or deputy) to whether there might be any risks to those children, and whether a safety plan would be appropriate in relation to any risks presenting to them.

When responding to concern(s) or allegation(s) of peer on peer abuse, the school will:

- always consider carefully, in consultation with children's social care, the police and other relevant agencies (where they are involved), how to share information about the concern(s) or allegation(s) with the student(s) affected, their parents, staff, and other students and individuals;
- record the information that is necessary for the school and other relevant agencies (where they are involved) to respond to the concern(s) or allegation(s) and safeguard everyone involved;

- keep a record of the legal purpose for sharing the information with any third party, including relevant authorities, and ensure that the third party has agreed to handle the information securely and to only use it for the agreed legal purpose, and
- be mindful of and act in accordance with its safeguarding and data protection duties.

Ercall Wood Academy will use the following guidance to assist in the managing of reports [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges: advice for governing bodies, proprietors, Principals, principals, senior leadership teams and designated safeguarding leads.](#)

- It is our aim to always recognise, acknowledge and understand the scale of harassment and abuse. We aim to never downplay some behaviours related to abuse that can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.
- Where necessary we will work with other professionals, agencies and partners in our response. This may include the TWSP partners, the relevant local authority children's social care departments, the police, the NSPCC, the Anti-Bullying Alliance and online services, such as The UK Safer Internet Centre, Internet Watch Foundation and Thinkuknow.
- We recognise that children may not find it easy to tell staff about their abuse verbally. Children can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react. In some cases, the victim may not make a direct report.

The immediate response to a report

Where necessary for effective safeguarding we will utilise/seek resources and seek support from established sources. We will consider and in some cases access the toolkit [Peer on peer abuse toolkit](#) to assist in our decision making and will also consider the [Brook traffic light tool](#). For an initial scoping we may consider the TWSP Sexually harmful behaviour - risk assessment tool. We will, as necessary, seek advice on harmful sexual behaviours from the specialist sexual violence sector for a whole Ercall Wood Academy approach. We will consult in the first instance with Family Connect for advice and support and seek advice around how best to deal with any issues.

In relation to sexting, also known as youth produced sexual imagery, this Ercall Wood Academy will where necessary consult with guidance produced by [The UK Council for Child Internet Safety \(UKCCIS\) Education Group Sexting in Schools and Colleges](#) and Department for Education guidance [Searching, screening and confiscation](#). The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) will take the lead on these issues.

At Ercall Wood Academy all staff are aware of indicators, which may signal that 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. Staff will be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in

place to manage these. We will follow the advice provided in the Home Office's [Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](#) and its [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines](#) guidance.

We recognise to help prevent violence in our setting this can require a mix of universal, targeted or specialist interventions. Our setting leaders will aim to:

- develop skills and knowledge to resolve conflict as part of the curriculum;
- challenge aggressive behaviour in ways that prevent the recurrence of such behaviour;
- understand risks for specific groups, including those that are gender-based, and target interventions;
- safeguard, and specifically organise child protection, when needed;
- carefully manage individual transitions between educational establishments, especially into Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) or alternative provision; and
- work with local partners to prevent anti-social behaviour or crime.

In order to tackle violence affecting our setting and the community, we know it is important to:

- understand the problems that young people are facing both in our setting and in their local community;
- consider possible avenues of support; and
- work with local partners (who may have valuable information, resources or expertise).

Working with the local community safety partnership, the youth offending team and the neighbourhood police team will help us to achieve a full understanding of the context we are working in. As part of our emergency management planning, we have in place systems for targeting and responding to individual or group violence. Even if violent incidents themselves do not appear to be an immediate concern, there may be a need to build resilience to such problems for the future.

Evidence shows that early-stage intervention is an effective strategy for preventing children becoming involved in violence, crime or antisocial behaviour later in life. We will assess what will work best in preventing violence in our setting to decide who to involve in providing intervention.

Child abduction and community safety incidents

We recognise child abduction as the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.

We know that other community safety incidents in the vicinity of our setting can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) we will give them practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. This may include outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or other professionals. We will aim to build on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers.

Mental Health

At Ercall Wood Academy 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.

We recognise only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. 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 and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Staff will be made aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, by speaking to the DSL or a deputy and recording their concern.

We will follow the DfE and guidance on [Preventing and Tackling Bullying](#), and [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#).

Please refer to our Mental Health & Well-being policy.

Elective Home Education (EHE)

We understand that many home educated children have an overwhelmingly positive learning experience. We would expect that any parents' decision to home educate to be made with their child's best education at the heart of the decision. However, we know this is not the case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

From September 2016 the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 were amended. This means we inform Telford & Wrekin Council of all deletions from our admission register when a child is taken off roll.

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, we will facilitate a meeting with the local authority education team, ourselves and other relevant schools, other key professionals and where possible parents/carers. Ideally, this will be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child. This is particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker. The school will invite the local authority education team by emailing accessandinclusion@telford.gov.uk.

We understand it is our responsibility to identify parents or carers who we need to meet with to discuss EHE before they make their final decision. We will record if parents refuse to attend this meeting.

We will follow the Telford & Wrekin Council, EHE policy.

Contextual safeguarding

Ercall Wood Academy recognises that incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside Ercall Wood Academy. All staff, but especially our designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) will consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. We refer to this as contextual safeguarding, which simply 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.

What to do if you have a concern over a child

Where someone has a concern about the welfare of a children, wherever possible, there should be a conversation with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputies), who will help staff to decide what to do next. Options include;

- managing any support for the child internally via our school's own pastoral processes;
- an early help assessment;
- a referral for statutory services, for example, as the child is in need or suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This will involve contacting Family Connect.

All referrals to Family Connect must be followed up in writing by completing a [request for service form](#) within 24 hours.

Telford & Wrekin	Shropshire	Staffordshire
Family Connect	First Point of Contact	First Response

01952 385385 Out of Hours 01952 676500	0345 678 9021 Out of Hours 0345 6789040	0800 1313 126 Out of Hours 0345 604 2886 or 07815 492613
If you think a child is in immediate danger, call the emergency services on 999		
Childline 0800 1111	NSPCC 0800 800 5000	Protecting Vulnerable People (West Mercia Police): 0300 333 3000

Immediate response to a child or parent

It is vital that our actions do not put a child at further risk of harm or prejudice an investigation, for example:

- listen to the child or parent, if you are shocked by what is being said, try not to show it,
- it is okay to observe injuries or bruises but not to ask a child or parent to remove their clothing to observe them,
- if a disclosure is made, the pace should be dictated by the child or parent, without them then being pressed for detail or by asking leading questions such as ‘what did he/she do next?’ or ‘where did he/she touch you?’. It is our role to listen not to investigate;
- we will use open questions, such as the ‘TED’ model of questioning; ‘tell’; ‘explain’ and ‘describe’,
- we will accept what the child or parent says. We will be careful not to burden them with guilt by asking ‘why didn’t you tell me before?’ or ‘why did you let it happen?’;
- we will acknowledge how hard it was for them to disclose and reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling someone;
- we will never criticise the alleged perpetrator, the child or parent may have warm feelings for them, but merely wish any abuse to stop;
- we will not promise confidentiality, staff will explain who they have to tell, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or deputies) and why; and, depending on the child’s age, what the next stage will be. It is important that you don’t make promises that you cannot keep such as ‘I’ll stay with you all the time’ or ‘it will be all right now’; and,
- if staff are not able to understand the communication method or language used by the child or parent, they should seek support from an appropriate person to support them in receiving the disclosure.

If a child confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, staff will tell the child sensitively that they have a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies for the welfare of that child. Within that context, the child should, however, be reassured

that this will be shared on a 'need to know' basis. If conversations need to take place and confidentiality is paramount to welfare, then these conversations will be held in appropriate settings and away from any general areas, where that confidentiality may be compromised.

In exceptional circumstances where the designated safeguarding leads (or deputies) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Any action taken should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputies) as soon as is reasonably practicable. Staff must never assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

We will never allow fears about sharing information to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. We expect concerns that arise in a morning will be reported to the designated safeguarding leads (or deputies) by lunchtime that day. Concerns that arise in an afternoon should be reported by or as close to the end of the school day. Any concerns arising outside of the normal school day should be reported as quickly as possible. If in doubt concerned parties should talk with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). In the unlikely event of the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) being unavailable, concerns for children's welfare must be reported to Family Connect. **Delay is unacceptable and may result in disciplinary action.**

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, we will make a referral to children's social care (and if appropriate the police) immediately. If we are unsure which local authority the child, lives in with use the online tool [Report Child Abuse to Your Local Council](#) to direct us to the relevant local children's social care contact number.

Children's social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside the home. Therefore, we will provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm.

Where safeguarding concerns are raised during an educational visit the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) must be notified without delay, even if they are not physically present at the site of the educational visit. They will liaise with the person responsible for the education visit to manage the concern and refer to the relevant agencies.

Where there are visible injuries all staff should record these on a body map diagram and describe them the best they can. We will assume good evidential practice to get two persons involved who have seen the injury and can account for it on the body map, then immediately follow up with a referral as described above.

For staff to interpret any concerns this Ercall Wood Academy will assess each incident as it appears. In respect of assessing any bruising to a child we will refer to the [Bruising of Children guidance produced by the TWSP](#) to assist their decision making.

We will work appropriately with each child, their family and other agencies to protect in all cases the welfare of the child. We will work in partnership and fulfil the ethos and abide by the principles of the [Telford and Wrekin threshold guidance](#). All Ercall Wood Academy staff must be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. For avoidance of doubt, early help means the

school will provide support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life from the foundation years up to adulthood.

Staff within the Academy may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead professional. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care assessment for statutory services if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

Staff within this Academy will also be made aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care (Family Connect) and 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. Also, staff will be made aware of the flowchart from KCSIE 2021 page 16 'Actions where there are concerns about a child'.

A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, 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. Such enquiries enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment, including all forms of abuse and neglect, female genital mutilation or other so-called honour based violence, and extra-familial threats like radicalisation and sexual exploitation.

The Academy's role is to refer with the information received and **under no circumstances** become the investigator.

Prior to any education visit, a risk assessment will be completed to consider if the DSL (or a deputy) needs to be present. We will always consider how quickly a DSL can respond to a safeguarding issue if they are not present.

Confidentiality

The personal information about all families is regarded by those who work in the Academy as confidential. All staff are aware of the confidential nature of personal information and will aim to maintain this confidentiality in all areas of the Ercall Wood Academy.

Staff understand they need know only enough to prepare them to act with sensitivity to a child and to refer concerns appropriately. It is inappropriate to provide all staff with detailed information about the child, the incident, the family and the consequent actions.

The role of the local authority

Within one working day of a referral being made, a local authority social worker should acknowledge receipt to Ercall Wood Academy as the referrer and decide about the next steps and the type of response that is required. This will include determining whether:

- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required
- the child is in need, and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989
- there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989
- any services are required by the child and family and what type of services
- further specialist assessments are required to help the local authority to decide what further action to take
- to see the child as soon as possible if the decision is taken that the referral requires further assessment.

The referrer will, even if they are not the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), follow up if this information is not forthcoming.

If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, Ercall Wood Academy will consider following local escalation procedures to ensure our concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

The Telford & Wrekin Council Director of Children's Services is Jo Britton.

Record Keeping

Anyone who has a concern or received a disclosure should follow these recording principles:

- make some brief handwritten notes at the time or immediately afterwards; record the date, time, place and context of disclosure or concern, recording facts, who you shared them with and not assumption, supposition and interpretation;
- record where you spoke with the child or parent and personal safety details, such as 'I discussed the incident with the child in the Principal's office with the door open' or justify if it were closed, but naming those who you told this to be the case. If alone, reason that rationale stating 'the child stated they would only confide in me if I was alone';
- if it is observation of bruising or an injury try to record detail, e.g. 'right arm, above elbow', 'bruise approximately 5cm in diameter noticed on back of lower right leg';
- note the non-verbal behaviour and the key words in the language used by the child or parent (try not to translate into 'proper terms' ensuring that you use the child or parent's own words). Body language should be noted and support any record of disclosure; and,
- it is important to retain on file signed original handwritten notes and pass them on to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) who may ask you to complete a Family Connect Request for Service Form.

- Our policy for record keeping is to chronologically record concerns in a confidential file, including details of dates, times, staff involved, and action taken. These should be handwritten but can be typed up to sit alongside handwritten notes. Never discard handwritten notes.
- Copies of email streams are also useful additions which can clearly document sequential action. Again, these should be used alongside handwritten notes and by no means be regarded as a substitute action. It is preferable not to name children or parents in an email, but if they are, then it should be password protected.

We have adopted guidance from TWSP [Workbook Guidelines for Child Protection Records, Transfer, Retention & Archiving](#) keep our systems robust with the current advice.

We note down concerns in a specific file/book, we ensure that it is not loose-leaf or ring binder style. Any books used shall be bound and in line with the guidance above or a suitable system will be employed which ensures security and the style of our school management of records, if books are not used. By using a specific school process, the concerns can then be noted sequentially to match the child's journey with us, with each entry noted for that child alone. It is our intention to tell a child's story during the time of their education with us.

This school has adopted an electronically maintained recording system called Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS). The CPOMS system is a totally secure system of record keeping which enables us to quickly encapsulate a child journey with us. We will ensure that a restricted number of staff will have full access to this system as named key holders. If concerns have been logged by staff via this process it should not be presumed that this is an instant notification that has been seen immediately. If appropriate the issue should not assume anything and a verbal conversation should also take place if needed for clarification.

All child protection records are reviewed annually in the summer term by the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and checked to be chronological, tidy, legible and factual in content. This should be undertaken each year, as records may sometimes be immediately required by professionals. Where reports are needed for child protection and safeguarding meetings these should include attendance figures where the child is of compulsory school age.

All child protection records are clearly marked as such and are kept securely locked on the premises and/or within CPOMS, the nominated persons are responsible, accountable, documented and are identifiable within our Ercall Wood Academy for total security at the setting. Also, procedures are in place when a member of staff leaves the setting or is on long term sick leave for their access to cease. Withdrawal of child protection records from the Ercall Wood Academy by staff will be noted and signed for, as will files released to professionals. We will follow the Workbook Guidelines guidance on release and return.

No named statistics in relation to child protection are an important part of performance information. Since 1st September 2017 each designated safeguarding lead and governor with responsibility for safeguarding has access to a section 175/157 workbook. This information can be collated in the workbooks and will inform the Principal and the governing body of how our Academy is managing child protection issues. These will be entered and updated on a regular basis either in the workbook or within the CPOMS process.

Retention of Children's records

All schools/colleges must keep educational records on their children. These should include:

- copies of the reports which have been sent to parents/carers on the children's achievements, as well as other records about those achievements.
- exchanges of correspondence between parents/carers and the school.
- any information the school has on the child's education from the local authority.
- any Education Health Care Plan or less commonly statement of special educational needs; and
- any personal educational plan.

There may be other records kept, like details of attendance, exclusions, behaviour and family background. This is not compulsory but would be viewed as 'best practice'. The educational record does not include the notes that a teacher makes for his or her own use only.

The child protection file is a separate file to the educational records. It must be noted that if files are asked to be secured, both files are key elements in any processes for which they are needed. It is important that on releasing files they are signed for on release and on return.

Pupil record files must be kept until the individual reaches the age of 25 years or in certain circumstances later. At this point the file should be disposed of confidently. We will refer to the [Data Protection: toolkit for schools](#).

What to do if you have or are concerned about other safeguarding practices in the Ercall Wood Academy?

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in Ercall Wood Academy's safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by our senior leadership team. As a non-maintained school any concerns should be raised in accordance with our Whistleblowing policy.

Where staff feel that they cannot report a concern through the above channels general guidance can be found at [Advice on whistleblowing](#). 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 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

Part two: The management of safeguarding

The **designated governor** with responsibility for safeguarding is Mrs Judith Mills. She has access to a workbook of their roles and responsibilities which will ensure the completion of the safeguarding section 175/157 audit, on a yearly basis. These will be supplied by the Telford & Wrekin Council Education Safeguarding Team. They have a strategic leadership responsibility for our safeguarding arrangements and must ensure that we comply with their duties under legislation. They must have regard to KCSIE, ensuring our policies, procedures and training in our setting are effective and comply with the law at all times.

Ercall Wood Academy Local Governing Body are committed to working together to create and maintain a safe learning environment for the children and young people attending this setting. We will follow the specific guidance as set out in paragraphs [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#) and [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021](#) and will ensure that the procedures set in the policy are implemented to help ensure appropriate safeguarding responses, including:

- a staff and code of conduct;
- children who go missing from education;
- child protection and safeguarding;
- suicide intervention;
- bullying, harassment and discrimination;
- use of reasonable force and restraint and behaviour management;
- health and safety including use of equipment and provision of first aid;
- use of the internet, electronic devices and social networking sites;
- school trips, placements, outdoor activities;
- extended services provision;
- drugs and substance misuse;
- meeting the needs of pupils with special medical conditions;
- meeting the need of pupils in disseminating prescribed medications;
- intimate care;
- school security;
- whistleblowing policy; and,
- issues which may be specific to our local area or population, for example serious violence and child sexual exploitation.

All staff and governor meetings will have child protection and safeguarding as an agenda item on them; this is testament to Ercall Wood Academy making these priority areas and at the forefront of our minds.

This governing body will ensure that we facilitate a whole setting approach to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and our policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies will operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, our governing body/proprietor and our senior leaders will ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems are in place, and they will be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.

The Ercall Wood Academy premises are safe, and the grounds are not open to unwanted intruders. We do have a public right of way "Shortwood Path" on our Ercall Wood Academy grounds and appropriate risk assessments have been undertaken.

We will ensure that suitable arrangements are in place to provide access for staff to access safeguarding supervision.

Policies and procedures

We aim to ensure there are appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

The Designated Safeguarding lead

Ercall Wood Academy's Local Governing Body has appointed Mr Darren Andrews to be the designated safeguarding lead of this school and Mrs Karen Athawes, Mrs Lynn Kelly, Miss Linda Moore and Mrs Jane Leese to be his deputies. We will set out these responsibilities in their job description and expect these people to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.

Mr Darren Andrews will take ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and child protection at Ercall Wood Academy as the designated safeguarding lead.

During term time, the designated safeguarding lead and/or a deputy will always be available (during our normal Ercall Wood Academy hours) for the staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns with.

During out of hours/out of term activities we will provide appropriate cover by ensuring the designated safeguarding lead and/or a deputy is available.

The designated safeguarding lead and any deputies will undergo two-day 'newly appointed designated safeguarding lead' training as recognised by TWSP to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. They will attend one day designated safeguarding lead refresher training as recognised by TWSP every two years. In addition to their formal training as set out above, their knowledge and skills will be updated, for example, via Telford & Wrekin Council's Education Safeguarding e-bulletin, attending termly designated safeguarding lead refreshers and taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments, at regular intervals, and at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role. We aim to ensure at least one designated safeguarding and any deputies attend each termly update. All designated safeguarding leads and any deputies will disseminate training to all relevant staff and governors.

Staff

All staff, including supply teachers, visiting professionals working with children in the Academy (e.g. counsellors), those who support sex education (e.g. school nurse), external providers of Ercall Wood Academy activities and those supporting school visits, are informed of the name of the designated

safeguarding lead and deputies and the schools procedures for protecting children, for example, how to report their concerns, suspicions and how to receive, record and report disclosures.

Staff should not accept personal invitation visits to the homes of children unless permission or instruction has been sought from the Principal and it is viewed as a professional appointment, for example, supporting education welfare issues etc. This should be viewed on a case by case basis. To support this, guidance from the Department of Education (September 2010) states 'Meetings with pupils away from the school premises should only be arranged with the specified approval of the Principal and the prior permission of the pupil in question'. We accept this guidance from the Department of Education (September 2010) stating that in the case of private meetings; 'Staff and volunteers should be aware that private meetings with individual pupils could give cause for concern. There will be occasions when a confidential interview or a one-to-one meeting is necessary. Such interviews should be conducted in a room with visual access or an area which is likely to be frequented by other people. Another pupil or adult should be present or nearby. Where conditions cannot apply, staff should ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place'.

Multi-agency working

The Local Governing Body and the designated safeguarding lead are familiar with the TWSP arrangements. They will engage with the TWSP as required. They will follow the Telford & Wrekin Threshold Guidance or the appropriate threshold guidance for where the child resides to follow the local protocol for assessments. The governing body of Ercall Wood Academy expect the staff to work with social care, the police, health service and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes us providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs are identified by us or another agency. We will always contribute to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans. We will never restrict access for children's social care to conduct a section 17 or section 47 assessment.

Information Sharing

Ercall Wood Academy recognise that information is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Schools and colleges have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes. The governing body expect all staff to share information with practitioners and local agencies. In respect of files being released when requested by the Police under [Section 29 of the Data Protection Act 2018 a form entitled 'Request to external organisation for the disclosure of personal data to the police-Under Schedule 2 Part 1 Paragraph 2 of the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR Article 6\(1\)d'](#) should accompany that release and a copy will be retained for our records. Also we will consider the [7 Golden Rules for Information Sharing](#). This school will also seek advice and adopt the [Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#). If in any doubt we will seek advice from our **Data Protection Officer**. Upon releasing records the Academy will request ID Badges for release. If the Police are only after minimal data e.g. address or phone number, we will ensure we check the police ID and we will record what information was asked for and the name of the police officer requesting it. A form may not be required on these occasions.

No named statistics in relation to child protection are an important part of performance information. These may be shared by the DSL with staff, other agencies or the governing body/proprietor/management committee.

In our management of information sharing we will use the following:

- Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#), which includes a myth-busting guide to information sharing;
- [Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers](#). The seven golden rules for sharing information will be especially useful;
- The [Information Commissioner's Office \(ICO\)](#), which includes ICO GDPR FAQs and guidance from the department, and
- [Data protection: toolkit for schools](#) - Guidance to support schools with data protection activity, including compliance with the GDPR.

When a child leaves the Academy the DSL will ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible (ideally within five working days of the child starting at their new school or college), ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt will be obtained. As a school we will transfer the child protection file separately from the main pupil file. As a receiving Academy we will ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and SENCOs, are aware as required. In addition to the child protection file, the DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. The current host school in this process should not photocopy and retain child protection records as this is deemed from the Information Commissioners Office that this would contravene The Data Protection Act 2018, but rather produce a chronology to pass on with the child protection records and retain a copy of this chronology for themselves for audit purposes, this would be deemed as best practice.

We are committed to 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 already known to the local authority children's social care.

When a child changes school within or outside the authority, all child protection records will be passed or securely sent on to the DSL of the next educational setting by the current designated safeguarding lead or Principal. The designated safeguarding lead, if thought appropriate, may wish to share relevant safeguarding information in advance of new children arriving if they need continuing support e.g. in response to sexual abuse. If the child is transferring/leaving to attend another school within term time, best practice would be for a signed record/or hard copy acknowledgement that the transfer of files has taken place.

The current host school in this process should **not** photocopy and retain child protection records as this is deemed from the Information Commissioners Office that this would contravene The Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 18), but rather produce a chronology to pass on with the child protection records and retain a copy of this chronology for themselves for audit purposes, this would be deemed as best practice. We will follow the Workbook Guidance in all circumstances.

Training

The governing body will ensure that all staff undergo face-to-face safeguarding and child protection training and online safety training at induction. We will update staff safeguarding and child protection training at a minimum every three years. All staff will receive training in managing sexual violence and sexual harassment. They will receive regular safeguarding and child protection and updates as required, and at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children. The governing body will be provided for staff to contribute to and shape our safeguarding arrangements and child protection policy.

Parents

Parents play an important role in protecting their children from abuse. Ercall Wood Academy is required to consider the safety of the child and should a concern arise, professional advice will be sought prior to contacting parents. If deemed appropriate parents will be contacted, and the Academy will continue to work with them to support the needs of their child. Consent from the parents will be sought, although in exceptional circumstances and with the best interests of the child being considered, this may be overridden.

Ercall Wood Academy aims to help parents understand their responsibility for the welfare of all children, which includes their duty to refer cases to social care services and/or police in the interests of the child. The governing body will include a child protection statement in the Ercall Wood Academy prospectus and all parents can view a copy of this policy.

Parents that have concerns regarding a member of staff can in the first instance raise those with the Headteacher/principal. This may involve sharing those concerns with the relevant agencies. Where the parent has concerns regarding the Headteacher/principal, the chair of governors/board/proprietor should be consulted in the first instance.

Parents can liaise with Ofsted on such conduct issues or regulatory concerns, advice can be found on its website www.ofsted.gov.uk.

On occasions Ofsted may forward complaints that may raise a safeguarding concern about our school via Family Connect. In such instances, we will work with all agencies within Family Connect to clearly respond to Ofsted on a case by case basis.

Parents/Carers can also access Ofsted [Parent View](#) which is an online survey questionnaire where parents can give their views. Where possible, this will be monitored regularly by the school/college to quickly address any concerns.

Parents can liaise with the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) on such conduct issues or regulatory concerns, advice can be found on its website <https://www.isi.net/parents-and-pupils/concerns-about-a-school> or contact can be made direct to ISI, you can email concerns@isi.net or call 020 7600 0100 and ask to talk to an appropriate member of staff.

Parents can liaise with Ofsted on such conduct issues or regulatory concerns, advice can be found on its website www.ofsted.gov.uk or contact can be made direct to Ofsted on; Helpline (08456 40445) or a Whistle-blowing line (08456 404046).

On occasions Ofsted may forward complaints that may raise a safeguarding concern about our school via Family Connect. In such instances we will work with all agencies within Family Connect to clearly respond to Ofsted on a case by case basis.

Parents/Carers can also access Ofsted **Parent View** which is an online survey questionnaire where parents can give their views. Where possible this will be monitored regularly by the school to quickly address any concerns.

All complaints should be made via our Erccall Wood Academy complaints procedures.

We will keep parents informed of all areas of safeguarding and child protection through the regular methods of communication.

Erccall Wood Academy wish to make it clear to parents the standards, behaviour and respect we expect from them and conversely from us. If a parent's behaviour is a cause for concern, then we will ask them to leave the school premises. We wish to make it clear that in serious cases, the Principal will notify parents in writing that their implied licence to be on the Erccall Wood Academy premises is temporarily revoked, subject to any representations that the parent may wish to make. This Academy will give parents the opportunity to formally express their views on the decision to bar in writing and this will be reviewed via the complaints policy.

Schools are private places. We will therefore act to ensure they remain a safe place for all. The public has no automatic right of entry.

Erccall Wood Academy expect parents to talk to us about any concerns they have about care and education provided by us in the first instance. We urge all parents not to express these concerns on social media platforms, at least not before sharing these concerns with us first.

Online safety

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. An effective approach to online safety empowers the Academy to protect and educate the whole of the Erccall Wood Academy community in our use of technology and we will work with our information technology partners to identify, intervene in and escalate any incident where appropriate.

We believe it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. We will take an effective whole setting approach to online safety to empower us to protect and educate our pupils, students, and staff in their use of technology.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four 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 we feel our pupils, students or staff are at risk, we will report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

We will ensure online safety is a running and interrelated theme whilst devising and implementing policies and procedures. This will include considering how online safety is reflected as required in all relevant policies and considering online safety whilst planning the curriculum, any teacher training, the role and responsibilities of the DSL and any parental engagement.

The Local Governing Body will carry out a risk assessment to determine what level of filtering and monitoring is required. We will ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place through our appointed information technology (IT) services provider. This addresses and includes all online risk of harm, including risks posed by the online activity of extremist and terrorist groups. On occasions, unacceptable websites might be accessed inadvertently; if this occurs then this should be closed down immediately and logged and reported to Principal/principal, DSL and to the IT services provider.

Please see our policy on the safe use of mobile technology in the Academy

Ercall Wood Academy recognises online safety is a major concern for all professionals’. For information and support staff will refer to the ‘information and support’ section of Annex C: Online safety KCSIE.

We will carry out regular reviews of online safety because technology in this area evolves and changes rapidly. This will help assure us that our online safety arrangements are effective.

If we ask children to learn online at home we will consider DfE guidance to ensure they do so safely: [safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers](#) and [safeguarding-and-remote-education](#).

Ercall Wood Academy takes seriously its duties to assist parents and help them with online safeguarding resources. As such, we will make them aware of relevant support services, including those listed on page 106 of KCSIE.

We take seriously our duties to assist parents and help them with on line safeguarding resources. As such, we will make them aware of relevant support services, including those listed on pages 151-152 of KCSIE 2021.

We accept that many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks. This access means some children, whilst in our setting, sexually harass their peers via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images: consensually and non-consensually, view, share pornography, and other harmful content. Our management of this is included in our mobile and smart technology policy. These incidents will be managed in line with our peer on peer procedures.

Where children are being asked to learn online at home we will follow the advice to support schools and colleges do so safely: safeguarding in schools colleges and other providers and safeguarding and remote education. We recognise the NSPCC and PSHE Association also provide helpful advice.

Whilst considering our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, we will do all that we reasonably can to limit children's exposure to risks from our IT system. We will ensure we have appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place. We will do this by considering the age range of our children, the number of children, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs versus risks.

The appropriateness of our filters and monitoring systems have been informed in part, by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty.

We have the appropriate level of security protection in place, in order to safeguard our systems, staff and learners and we will review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies.

We will carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks their children face.

Our governing body/proprietor will question school leaders to gain a basic understanding of our approach to keeping children safe online; learn how to improve this approach where appropriate; and find out about tools, which can be used to improve the approach.

Mentors of trainee teachers and newly qualified teachers induct mentees and provide ongoing support, development and monitoring on online safety.

Safe use of electronic devices

Ercall Wood Academy name ensure the safety and welfare of our children in our care. All personal electronic devices are not permitted within this setting, when in the presence of children.

Please see our policy on the use of electronic devices.

Hiring out our facilities and premises

Where we hire or rent out our facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) we will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

When services or activities are provided by us, under our own direct supervision or management, our own arrangements for child protection will apply. However, where services or activities are provided separately by another body this is not necessarily the case. We will therefore seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place including inspecting these; and ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with us on these matters where appropriate. We will also ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this may lead to termination of the agreement.

Opportunities to teach safeguarding

Ercall Wood Academy will teach safeguarding, including online safety. We will do this through our Relationships Education/Relationships and Sex Education and assembly rota.

Ercall Wood Academy will teach safeguarding, including online safety. We will use the [Teaching online safety in school](#) guidance to ensure our pupils understand how to stay safe and behave online as part of our curriculum.

At Ercall Wood Academy we adhere to [The Corporate Information Security Policy](#) (CISP) including [Acceptable Use of Equipment](#) and the [Social Media Policy-Acceptable Use for Employees](#). We will make all aware of its existence and importance. Where appropriate, intervention will take place when anyone uses e-technology in an unacceptable fashion.

Our information technology (IT) services provider use monitoring software in our school and it will be reviewed, updated and checked regularly. This addresses and includes all online risk of harm, including risks posed by the online activity of extremist and terrorist groups. On occasions, unacceptable websites might be accessed inadvertently; if this occurs then this should be closed down immediately and logged and reported to Principal, designated safeguarding lead and to the IT services technician.

Ercall Wood Academy recognises that many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via 3G, 4G and 5G. We will manage this by:

- teaching children about online safety;
- not allowing children to use personal electronic devices in Ercall Wood Academy;
- not allowing children to take images of other children or staff; and,
- only allowing children to access their personal electronic devices off the school premises.
- we recognise at Ercall Wood Academy that all Information Technology, whether personal or work based, is a whole Academy issue and all staff have a duty to be vigilant.

Ercall Wood Academy recognises online safety is a major concern for all “professionals” For information and support staff will refer to the ‘information and support’ section of Annex C: Online safety KCSIE.

Ercall Wood Academy takes seriously its duties to assist parents and help them with online safeguarding resources. As such, we will make them aware of the webpage Parent Info which is a comprehensive, free resource for schools and parents covering a range of safeguarding topics and

information about apps and when they are updated etc. The content can be found at <http://parentinfo.org/>

Ercall Wood Academy will follow the good practice guidance from the Information Commissioners Office, on [taking photographs in educational institutions](#). In the interests of safeguarding a common sense approach on a case by case basis will be taken in this area.

Under **no** circumstances will staff photograph injuries seen on children. School staff are not expert witnesses. If the concern is around non-accidental injury, then that is a matter that requires immediate attention on the day resulting in an appropriate referral to Family Connect. Those professionals will control the process of photographic evidence gathering underway and assessment.

Teaching Safeguarding

Ercall Wood Academy will teach children about safeguarding, including online safety. We will do so as part of our curriculum and cover all relevant issues through:

- Relationships and Sex Education (secondary);
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic education;

Staff

All staff, supply staff, contractors and visitors, are informed of the name of the DSL and deputies and the Academy procedures for protecting children, for example, how to report their concerns, suspicions and how to receive, record and report disclosures.

- Staff should not accept personal invitation visits to the homes of children unless permission or instruction has been sought from the Principal/Principal and it is viewed as a professional appointment, for example, supporting education welfare issues etc. This should be viewed on a case by case basis. To support this, guidance from the Department of Education (September 2010) states 'Meetings with pupils away from the school premises should only be arranged with the specified approval of the head teacher and the prior permission of the pupil in question'. We accept this guidance from the Department of Education (September 2010) stating that in the case of private meetings; 'Staff and volunteers should be aware that private meetings with individual pupils could give cause for concern. There will be occasions when a confidential interview or a one-to-one meeting is necessary. Such interviews should be conducted in a room with visual access or an area which is likely to be frequented by other people. Another pupil or adult should be present or nearby. Where conditions cannot apply, staff should ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place'.

Inspection

Ercall Wood Academy recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding within the remit of Ofsted.

Safer Recruitment

The Local Governing Body is committed to preventing people who pose a risk of harm from working with children. We will adhere to all statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children. We will ensure volunteers are appropriately supervised.

The Local Governing Body ensures that at least one of the persons who conducts an interview has completed safer recruitment training. These persons will complete the TWSP recommended Safer Recruitment Consortium training delivered by Telford & Wrekin Council.

The following persons have completed safer recruitment training for Ercall Wood Academy:

- **Mrs Pauline Roden**
- **Mrs Rachel Moore**
- **Mr Gummery**
- **Mrs Athawes**

Children's Wishes

The Local Governing Body and leaders of the Academy will ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account, when determining what action to take and what services to provide. The Principal and designated safeguarding lead will put systems in place for children to express their views and give feedback. We will always operate with the best interests of the child at heart.

Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the DSL will hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes.

Where children need a social worker, this information will be used by the DSL (or deputies) to inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

Children requiring Mental Health support

Ercall Wood Academy recognises that we have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils.

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. The governing body have put clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.

We will help prevent mental health problems by promoting resilience as part of our integrated, whole setting approach to social and emotional wellbeing, which is tailored to the needs of our pupils. Our senior mental health lead is Karen Athawes . They are a member of our senior leadership team.

Please see our mental health and well-being policy.

Looked after children and previously looked after children

Ercall Wood Academy recognises that the most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. All staff at our Academy have the knowledge and skills to keep looked after children safe. The designated safeguarding deputy Miss Linda Moore will hold the details of each child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child. They are responsible for ensuring all staff have the information they need in relations to a child's looked after status and the child's contact arrangements with birth parents of those with parental responsibility. They will also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegate to the carer by the authority looking after him/her.

Ercall Wood Academy recognises a previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable.

When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children we will work with all agencies to take prompt action where necessary to safeguard these children.

The Designated Teacher for looked after children

The governing body appoint Miss Linda Moore as the designated teacher to work with the local authorities to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked after. With the commencement of sections 4 to 6 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, designated teachers have 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 England and Wales. The designated teacher has appropriate training and relevant qualifications and experiences to fulfil this role.

As a non-maintained Academy we have a trained teacher who takes the lead for looked after children. This is Miss Linda Moore.

Ercall Wood Academy will follow the statutory guidance on [The Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher](#).

Virtual school heads

As a non-maintained Academy we have an appropriately trained teacher who will take the lead in working with the virtual school head. Virtual school heads manage pupil premium plus for looked after children. They receive this funding based on the latest published number of children looked after by the local authority. The teacher will work with the virtual school head to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan.

The teacher should also work with the virtual school head to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children.

We will follow the statutory guidance on [Promoting the Education of Looked After Children](#).

Care leavers

The designated safeguarding lead understands the ongoing responsibilities of local authorities to the young people who cease to be looked after and become care leavers. The designated safeguarding lead will hold detail of the local authority Personal Advisor appointed to guide and support the care leaver and will liaise with them as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)

Ercall Wood Academy recognises that children who have SEND can face additional safeguarding challenges. We accept the additional barriers that can exist when recognising abuse and neglect of children in the group. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- being more prone to peer group isolation than other children;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

To help address these additional challenges we will provide extra pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities.

The use of reasonable force

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in Ercall Wood Academy to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve 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 us 'using no more than is needed'. Our 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.

We will always follow the advice for schools on the Use of [Reasonable Force in Schools](#).

Ercall Wood Academy believe that the adoption of a 'no contact' policy at our Academy could leave staff unable to fully support and protect our pupils and students. We will adopt a sensible approach allowing staff to make appropriate physical contact. The decision on whether to or not to use reasonable force to control or restrain a child is down to the professional judgement of the staff concerned and should always depend on individual circumstances.

When using reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving children with SEN or disabilities or with medical conditions, we will consider the risks carefully because we recognise the additional vulnerability of these groups. We will consider our duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to making reasonable adjustments, non-discrimination and our Public Sector Equality Duty.

Ercall Wood Academy will plan positive and proactive behaviour support, for instance through drawing up individual behaviour plans for more vulnerable children, and agreeing them with parents and carers, we aim to reduce the occurrence of challenging behaviour and the need to use reasonable force. We will only use reasonable force where de-escalation processes have failed.

Poor or irregular attendance

The Academy recognised figure for persistence absence is being less than 90%, although concerns may still be raised if above this. We will comply with the statutory guidance [Children Missing Education](#).

In respect of this and at a local Telford & Wrekin Council level, we will require the behaviour and attendance lead to refer to use the established protocol document of notification to the Local Authority, filling out the appropriate paperwork, policies and procedures for identifying pupils who are missing out on education and policies and procedures for pupils on a modified timetable (available from Telford & Wrekin Council Access & Inclusion Team).

In addition to the above and where reasonably possible Ercall Wood Academy will endeavour to hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. This goes beyond the legal minimum and is good practice to give us additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a child is missing education and poses a potential welfare/safeguarding concern.

Where a child is on a Child Protection Plan has been missing from school for two consecutive days we will notify the child's allocated social worker.

Children leaving school without permission

Where children leave the classroom or leave Ercall Wood Academy grounds without permission, this is covered within our behaviour management policy and is also set against the backdrop of the legal framework of the Children Act 1989 s3 (5); 'Anyone who has care of a child without parental responsibility may do what is "reasonable" in all the circumstances to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. It is likely to be "reasonable" to inform the police, or children's services departments, and, if appropriate, their parents, of the child/young person's safety and whereabouts'.

However, in principle, if a pupil runs out of class we will establish where he or she has gone. For avoidance of doubt and for all within and outside of the Ercall Wood Academy, staff will not run after them but will seek additional support. It is advisable to keep a watchful eye on any child who has taken themselves out of the Ercall Wood Academy building and possibly out of the Ercall Wood Academy grounds, unless this watchful eye provokes the child to run further. It is and will be a judgement call for staff to take what they feel is **reasonable** action in line with the advice above. If a child is no longer on the Ercall Wood Academy premises, we will contact parents in the first instance. If they are not contactable, we will inform the police that a pupil has left Ercall Wood Academy and is at risk.

Drug and substance misuse

Where issues come to our attention in relation to drugs and substance misuse we will follow the non-statutory advice contained within [DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools](#). This document clearly sets out issues around broader behaviour and pastoral support, as well as managing drugs and drug related incidents within our Academy. The document clearly sets out our powers and what we can do. Coupled with this preventative and supportive approach this will sit hand in hand with our statutory functions of child protection and the alerting to established referral procedures and the law.

Suicide intervention

Ercall Wood Academy accepts and understands that thoughts of suicide are common and the leading cause of death in young people. As such suicide intervention is our business too. We to work with our pupils and work in partnership to support anyone in our Academy community that may have thoughts of suicide. We will follow our [Suicide Intervention Policy](#) to assist wherever we can in making those in our care as safe as is possible. We will also make staff aware of the following useful link in raising awareness of the subject <http://zerosuicidealliance.com/>

Ercall Wood Academy recognises that suicide bereavement has been described as 'grief with the volume turned up'. The effects on families, communities and society as a whole are devastating and tragic. We will support in any way we can and the link below will be signposted as appropriate http://www.petesdragons.org.uk/Bereavement_Support_2369.aspx.

Changing in school

Ercall Wood Academy considers arrangements for safe changing of children for physical education (PE). We will be guided by the NSPCC guidance Best Practice for PE Changing Rooms. This consideration will come under our duty and remit of health & safety and in the context of children's welfare. We follow the guidance and do what we need to do as an Academy in relation to organising changing facilities for children; staff supervision; changing areas for children with additional needs; changing considerations for drama productions and using off-site changing rooms. [NSPCC factsheet](#)

Part three: Safer Recruitment

Ercall Wood Academy is committed to creating a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of this, we will adopt recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. The governing body will act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of the prospective employee based on checks and evidence, including criminal record checks (Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, barred list checks and prohibition checks, together with references and interview information.

Ercall Wood Academy commission human resources team to assist in the management of safer recruitment procedures, including for the following:

- recruitment, selection and pre-employment vetting;
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks;
- DBS update service;
- prohibitions, directions, sanctions and restrictions;
- pre-appointment checks;
- employment history and references;
- single central record;
- individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK;
- agency and third-party staff (supply staff);
- trainee/student teachers;
- existing staff;
- volunteers;
- contractors;
- visitors;
- alternative provision; and
- adults who supervise children on work experience.

Ercall Wood Academy will maintain a single central record of pre-appointment checks. As we are part of a Multi Academy Trust they will maintain the single central record detailing checks carried out in each academy within the MAT.

Ercall Wood Academy will meet all requirements as set out in Part three: Safer recruitment KCISE.

Recruitment and selection process

We aim to create a culture that safeguards and promotes the welfare of all children. As part of this culture, we will adopt robust recruitment procedures that help to deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment, or volunteering opportunities in our setting.

We will ensure that those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training. At least one person on each interview panel have completed safer recruitment training. These persons will complete the TWSP recommended Safer Recruitment Consortium training.

Pre-appointment vetting checks, regulated activity and recording information

We will abide by the legal requirements when appointing individuals to engage in regulated activity relating to children. We understand the importance of ensuring the correct pre-appointment checks are carried out. These checks will help us to identify whether a person may be unsuitable to work with children (and in some cases is legally prohibited from working with children and/or working as a teacher). We see this as part of our wider safeguarding regime which will carry on following appointment.

Other checks that may be necessary for staff, volunteers and others

We will carry out the checks that are necessary for individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK; agency and third-party staff; contractors; trainee teachers; volunteers; governors and proprietors. We will fulfil our responsibilities in relation to other settings, including alternative provision, work experience and host families.

Visitors

Ercall Wood Academy understand we do not have the power to request DBS checks and barred list checks or ask to see DBS certificates for visitors. We will always request to see appropriate identification for visitors. The Principal will use their professional judgement to determine the need escort or supervise visitors. A record of visitors will be made and all they will be suitably identified/badged. We have different types of visitors, those with a professional role, those connected with the building, grounds maintenance, children's relatives or other visitors attending an activity.

For visitors who attend our setting in a professional capacity we will check their ID and seek assurance that the visitor has had the appropriate DBS check (or the visitor's employers have confirmed that their staff have appropriate checks).

Whilst external organisations can provide a varied and useful range of information, resources and speakers that can help us enrich children's education; careful consideration will be given to the suitability of any external organisations.

Alternative provision

For any children placed in external alternative provision provider, Ercall Wood Academy continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil, and we will satisfy that the provider meets the needs of the pupil. We will obtain written confirmation from the alternative provider that

appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff.

Please see our use of alternative provision policy.

Adults who supervise children on work experience

Ercall Wood Academy, when organising work experience placements will ensure that the placement provider has policies and procedures in place to protect children from harm. We will ensure that relevant checks, including barred list checks have been obtained for in relevant circumstances for people who supervise any children under the age of 16 on a work experience placement.

Children staying with host families (homestay)

If Ercall Wood Academy arrange a homestay, we will consider the suitability of the adults in the respective families who will be responsible for the visiting child during the stay.

We will always consider what intelligence/information will best inform our assessment of the suitability of the adults in those families who will be responsible for the visiting child during the stay. We will use our professional judgement to decide what will be relevant. To help inform our assessment, we will obtain a DBS enhanced certificate with barred list information. This check will not only establish whether the adults are barred from engaging in regulated activity relating to children, but where criminal record information is disclosed it will also allow us to consider, alongside all other intelligence that we have obtained, whether the adults would be a suitable host for a child. We will also decide whether it is necessary to obtain a DBS enhanced certificate in respect of anyone aged 16 or over in the household where the child will be staying.

Homestay – suitability of adults in host families abroad

Ercall Wood Academy recognises it is not possible for us to obtain criminality information from the DBS about adults who provide homestays abroad. We will liaise with partner schools abroad, to establish a shared understanding of, and agreement to the arrangements in place for the visit. We will use our professional judgement to satisfy ourselves that the arrangements are appropriate and sufficient to safeguard effectively every child who will take part in the exchange. We will always inform parents of the agreed arrangement.

We will decide on a case by cases whether it is necessary to contact the relevant foreign embassy or High Commission of the country in question to discuss what checks may be possible in respect of those providing homestay outside of the UK.

We will follow the guidance set out in Annex E of KCSIE with regarding to arrange homestay – suitability of adults in UK host families, homestay – suitability of adults in host families abroad and the additional action for extended homestays.

Private fostering

Ercall Wood Academy recognise that a private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16, or under the age of 18 if the child is disabled, this extends to children who are within homestay arrangements. Children who are looked after by the local authority or who are placed in a residential school, children's home or hospital are not considered to be privately fostered. Most privately fostered children remain safe and well, but safeguarding concerns have been raised in some cases where so called "sofa surfing" has been evident.

By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's social care as soon as possible. If we become aware of a private fostering arrangement for a student that has not been notified to children's social care, we will encourage parents and private foster carers to notify them and will share information with children's social care as appropriate.

Our ongoing safeguarding of children and the legal reporting duties on us

We understand the importance of safeguarding vigilance beyond the recruitment process.

We believe safer recruitment is not just about carrying out the right DBS checks. Similarly safeguarding should not be limited to recruitment procedures. Good safeguarding requires a continuing commitment from our whole community to ensure the safety and welfare of children is embedded in all of our processes and procedures, and consequentially enshrined in our ethos.

We aim to promote continuous vigilance, maintaining an environment that deters and prevents abuse and challenges inappropriate behaviour.

We aim to create the right culture and environment so that our staff feel comfortable to discuss matters both within, and where it is appropriate, outside of the workplace, which may have implications for the safeguarding of children. This can help assist us as employers to support staff, where there is a need, and help them manage children's safety and welfare, potentially providing them with information that will help them consider whether there are further measures or changes to procedures that need to be put in place to safeguard children in our care.

We will undertake our duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service and to the Teaching Regulation Agency where required.

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and stepparents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.

Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases, privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or be involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

Schools have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although schools have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the school. However, it should be clear to the school who has parental responsibility.

School staff should notify the designated safeguarding lead when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The designated safeguarding lead will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The school itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

On admission to the school, we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered.

Part four: Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff

What to do if you have safeguarding concerns about another staff member who may pose a risk of harm to children?

If staff have safeguarding concerns, or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including supply staff and volunteers) posing a risk of harm to children, then:

- this should be referred to the Principal; or where there are concerns/allegations about the Principal, this should be referred to the chair of governors.

Any concerns including allegations that may meet the harms test will be addressed as set out in Part four of KCSIE. We will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned.

Any allegations that may meet the harms threshold will be addressed as set out in Part four, Section one of KCSIE. Any concerns that do not meet the harm threshold, referred to, as 'low level concerns' will be addressed as in Part four, Section two of KCSIE. When an allegation is made, the DSL will be responsible for ensuring that a child is not at risk and refer cases of suspected abuse to Family Connect or the child's local social care team.

We will only undertake basic enquiries to help determine whether is any foundation to the allegation.

The LADO for Telford & Wrekin Council **Tutsi Selvey** will be informed of all allegations that come to our attention and appear to meet the criteria set out in Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018 and part four of KCSIE, so he can consult police and children's social care services as appropriate.

The process of managing allegations against those who work with children can be viewed on <http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/> Section 1.14 'Allegations against Staff or Volunteers'.

Ercall Wood Academy has internal procedures and processes in place for dealing with allegations and will follow TWSP policy & procedure.

We will adhere to Part four: Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff KCSIE.

This Academy believes that those who work within our community are in positions of trust and as such codes of conduct are based on the underlying principle that the highest standards are expected from all. In line with KCSIE a separate code of conduct policy will be adapted by this setting for staff and governors.

[Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in educational settings](#) produced by the Safer Recruitment Consortium, provides excellent guidance on the expected standards of all those that work with children. We will make all those in the Ercall Wood Academy community aware of its existence and this will work alongside the separate code of conduct mentioned above and any established human resources processes currently in place.

Ercall Wood Academy will liaise with our commissioned human resources team to provide support to staff going through a disciplinary and/or allegations process. This will support referrers, investigators and those affected in any such dealings and gravity.

Ercall Wood Academy will manage all cases of allegations that might indicate a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children in their present position, or in any capacity. We will act on all if a teacher or member of staff (including volunteers) in our Academy 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; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children.

If we receive allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching in our school or at all we will refer this to the police. Historical allegations of abuse will also be referred to the police.

Ercall Wood Academy has a duty of care to their employees. We will ensure anyone facing an allegation receives effective support and we will provide the employee with a named contact if they are suspended. We are committed to dealing with any allegation of abuse made against a teacher or other member of staff or volunteer very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and, at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

Staff will be advised to seek support from their Professional Association or Trade Union if it is needed.

The designated officer for the local authority **Tutsi Selvey** will be informed of all allegations that come to our attention and appear to meet the criteria set out above so they can consult police and children's social care services as appropriate.

The Principal or (where the Principal is the subject of an allegation) the chair of governors (the 'case manager', will discuss the allegation immediately with the designated officer by contacting Family Connect. The case manager will provide or obtain relevant information as requested by the designated officer. In some situations, the case manager may consider it appropriate to involve the police immediately, for example if the person is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. Where there is no such evidence, the case manager will discuss the allegations with the designated officer in order to help determine whether police involvement is necessary.

The initial sharing of information and evaluation may lead to a decision that no further action is to be taken in regard to the individual facing the allegation or concern, in which case this decision and a justification for it will, be recorded by the case manager. The case manager will reach an agreement with the designated officer, on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom. The case manager will then consider with the designated officer what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation.

The case manager will inform the accused person about the allegation as soon as possible after consulting the designated officer. The case manager will provide them with as much information as possible at that time. However, where a strategy discussion is needed, or police or children's social care services need to be involved, the case manager will not do this until those agencies have been consulted and have agreed what information can be disclosed to the accused. We will consider carefully whether the circumstances of a case warrant a person being suspended from contact with children at the Academy or whether alternative arrangements can be put in place until the allegation or concern is resolved. We will explore all options to avoid suspension prior to taking that step.

Recall Wood Academy will consider options where an investigation by the police or children's social care services is unnecessary, or the strategy discussion or initial evaluation decides that is the case. We will discuss with the designated officer the next steps. In those circumstances, the options open to us depend on the nature and circumstances of the allegation and the evidence and information available. This will range from taking no further action to dismissal or a decision not to use the person's services in future. Suspension is not to be the default position: an individual should be suspended only if there is no reasonable alternative.

Where further enquiries are needed to enable a decision about how to proceed the case manager will discuss with designated officer how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken. In straightforward cases, the investigation will normally be undertaken by a senior member of the school's/college's staff.

The case manager will appoint a named representative to keep the person who is the subject of the allegation informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate for the individual. We will offer appropriate support from other services.

We will tell parents or carers of the child or children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. However, where a strategy discussion is required, or police or children's social care services need to be involved, the case manager will not do so until those agencies have been consulted and have agreed what information can be disclosed to the parents or carers. Parents or carers will be kept informed about the progress of the case and told the outcome where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process. The deliberations of a disciplinary hearing, and the information taken into account in reaching a decision, will not normally be disclosed but the parents or carers of the child will be told the outcome in confidence.

Parents and carers will be made aware of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers whilst investigations are ongoing. If parents or carers wish to apply to the court to have reporting restrictions removed, we will advise them to seek legal advice.

In cases where a child may have suffered significant harm, or there may be a criminal prosecution, we will work with children's social care services, or the police as appropriate, to consider what support the child or children involved may need.

The case manager will take advice from the designated officer, police and children's social care services to agree the following:

- who needs to know and, importantly, exactly what information can be shared;

- how to manage speculation, leaks and gossip;
- what, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation; and
- how to manage press interest if, and when, it should arise.

A referral to the DBS must be made, if the criteria are met. We will consider whether a referral to the Secretary of State is appropriate.

To avoid potential allegations and for the safety and welfare of pupils and the protection of staff, we will make classrooms highly visible places whereby easy viewing is possible. The masking of windows is forbidden and as such treated as a safeguarding issue for the protection of all. There may be exceptional circumstances where masking of classrooms is needed and justified, for example, for the teaching of drama, in these cases the Principal will make a judgement on a case by case basis being appropriate, balanced and proportionate.

Annex A: Roles of the designated safeguarding lead

The Local Governing Body has appointed Mr Darren Andrews as an appropriate senior member of staff, from Ercall Wood Academy leadership team, to the role of designated safeguarding lead.

The designated safeguarding lead will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). We will make this explicit in the role holder's job description.

We give this person the authority they need to carry out the duties of their post. We give them time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or to support other staff to do so, and to contribute to the assessment of children.

The designated safeguarding lead will form part of a borough wide network, where information is shared, in a two-way process, with the Telford & Wrekin Council Education Safeguarding Team.

They will complete the section 175/157 audit each year and submit to TWSP. The section 175/157 audit will be supplied by the Telford & Wrekin Council Education Safeguarding Team.

Deputy designated safeguarding leads

Ercall Wood Academy have appointed Karen Athawes (DH), Lynn Kelly (HoY), Linda Moore (HOY, CiC) and Jane Leese (Asst. SENCO)) as the deputy designated safeguarding leads.

These deputies are trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead and the role is explicit in their job description. Some of the activities of the designated safeguarding lead may be delegated to these appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead, this lead responsibility will not be delegated.

Manage referrals

The designated safeguarding lead will:

- 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.

The designated safeguarding lead will:

- act as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners;

- liaise with the Principal to inform them of issues - especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- as required, liaise with the “case manager” and the designated officer 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/ the named person with oversight for SEN at the college 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 for all staff, including making safeguarding supervision available.

Training

The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) will undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training will be updated at least every two years. The designated safeguarding lead will undertake Prevent awareness training.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills will be refreshed via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads and taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments at regular intervals, as required, and 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 early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children’s social care referral arrangements;
- 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/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 Erccall Wood Academy, and with the three safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners;
- can keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;
- understand and support the Erccall Wood Academy with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and can provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;

- can 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.

Raise Awareness

The designated safeguarding lead will:

- ensure the school's/college's child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately;
- ensure the school's/college's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the governing body/proprietor regarding this;
- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the Ercall Wood Academy in this; and
- link with TWSP to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements.

Child protection file

Where children leave Ercall Wood Academy the designated safeguarding lead will ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new educational setting as soon as possible. This will be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt will be obtained. As a receiving Ercall Wood Academy we will ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and SENCOs/the named person with oversight for SEN in college, are aware as required.

In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new Ercall Wood Academy 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) will always be available (during Ercall Wood Academy hours) for staff in the Ercall Wood Academy to discuss any safeguarding

concerns. The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will be available in person. Only in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Skype or other such media is acceptable.

Ercall Wood Academy will arrange adequate and appropriate cover of a designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) for any out of hours/out of term activities and trips/residential stays/outings.

Acronyms

Glossary of School Acronyms and abbreviations.

ADD	attention deficit disorder
ADHD	attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
AS	Asperger syndrome
ASC	autistic spectrum condition
ASD	autistic spectrum disorder
BESD	behavioural, emotional and social difficulties
CAF	common assessment framework
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CIN	Child in Need
CoP	Code of Practice
CP	child protection
CYP	children and young people
DDA	Disability discrimination act
EAL	English as an additional language
EHCP	education health care plan
EP	educational psychologist
EYFS	Early years Foundation Stage
EWO	educational welfare officer
FAS	Fetal Alcohol syndrome

FASD	Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders
FSM	free school meals
GLD	Global learning delay
HI	hearing impaired
HLTA	higher level teaching assistant
IEP	individual education plan
IRP	independent review panel
LAC	looked after children
LARM	locality allocation and review meeting
LDD	learning difficulties and disabilities
LO	Local Offer
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children's Board
MARAG	multi agency referral action group
MLD	moderate learning difficulty
ODD	oppositional defiant disorder
OT	occupational therapist
PDA	pathological demand avoidance
PEP	personal education plan (for looked after children)
PLP	Personal learning plan
PMLD	profound and multiple learning difficulties
PP	pupil premium

PSHE	personal, social and health education
RAD	reactive attachment disorder
RAISEonline	Reporting and Analysis for Improvement through School Self Evaluation
SALT	speech and language therapy
SDQ	strengths and difficulties questionnaire
SEAL	social and emotional aspects of learning
SEND	special educational needs and disabilities
SENCo	special educational needs coordinator
SLCN	speech, language and communication needs
SLD	severe learning difficulty
SLT	school leadership team
SM	selective mutism (formerly known as elective mutism)
SpLD	specific learning difficulty
SPDs	sensory processing disorders
START	Statutory Assessment Resources Team
TA	Teaching assistant / teacher assessment
TAC	team around the child
TAF	team around the family (when CAF is about whole family)

TFF

Together for Families

VI

visually impaired