



St Hilda's School

HARPENDEN

Caring, Curious & Confident

SAFEGUARDING (CHILD PROTECTION) POLICY (INCLUDES EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION)

Name of Policy	Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy (Includes Extremism and Radicalisation)
Reviewed by	Dan Sayers Emily Halliday (Proprietor) Natalie Atkins
Review Date	September 2026
Next Review Date	July 2027
To be Read in Conjunction with:	• PSHCE Policy • Relationships and Sex Education Policy • Preventing and Tackling Bullying Policy • Behaviour Management Policy • Online Safety and Computing Acceptable Usage Policy • Internet and Email Acceptable Use Policy • Educational Visits Policy • Risk Assessment Policy • Risk Assessment for EYFS Outings Policy • Missing Child Policy • Safer Recruitment Policy • Mobile Phone Usage Policy • Staff Code of Conduct • Whistleblowing Policy • Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children Policy. • Attendance Policy • Mental Health Policy

Legislation Referenced	• The Children and Families Act 2014 (formerly The Children Act 1989 and 2004) • The Children and Social Work Act 2017 • Education Act 2011 (section 175/157) • Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Inter-agency Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Procedures • Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE September 2026) • Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2023) (including Information Sharing) • The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Amendment Regulations 2019 • Sexual Offences Act (2003) • Section 26, The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (PREVENT duty) • Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (Section 74, Serious Crime Act 2015) • Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006 (Statutory Guidance) • Use of Social Media for On-line Radicalisation (DofE Guidance 2015) • Child Abuse Concerns: Guidance for Practitioners (DofE Guidance 2015) • Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DofE Guidance 2018). • Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance 2025 • Working Together to Improve School Attendance Statutory Guidance August 2024. • School Attendance Regulations 2024 • Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities and Schools 2025 • Mobile Phones in Schools, DfE Statutory Guidance 2026
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Unless otherwise stated, all Policies of St Hilda’s School apply to the school in its entirety. This comprises all staff and pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the Junior School (Key Stage 1) and the Senior School (Key Stage 2).

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1. INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play, and **must** consider at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.

Safeguarding is defined as protecting children from maltreatment whether that is within or outside the home, including online, preventing impairment of mental and physical health and/or development, ensuring that children grow up in the provision of safe and effective care and optimising children's life chances.

This Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy forms part of a group of documents and policies which relate to the safeguarding responsibilities of the school.

In particular this policy should be read in conjunction with the following Policies:

- PSHCE Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Online Safety and Computing Acceptable Usage Policy
- Internet and Email Acceptable Use Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Risk Assessment for EYFS Outings Policy
- Missing Child Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Mobile Phone Usage Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children Policy.
- Attendance Policy

This policy is made available on the school's website for the information of parents and guardians of pupils of St Hilda's School.

Purpose of a Safeguarding/ Child Protection Policy

- To inform staff, parents, volunteers and directors about the school's responsibilities for safeguarding children.
- To enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how these responsibilities should be carried out.
- To enable all staff and those associated in any way in the teaching, management or running of the school to have a clear understanding of how these responsibilities should be carried out.

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Procedures
The school follows the procedures established by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) *A guide to procedure and practice for all agencies in Hertfordshire working with children and their families*. See link: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/Childrens-social-care/Child-protection/Hertfordshire-Safeguarding-Children-Partnership/hscp.aspx>

School Staff and Volunteers

St Hilda's School takes a whole school approach to safeguarding, and a zero-tolerance approach to abuse. All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. School staff and volunteers are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour and failure to develop because they have daily contact with children.

All school staff will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (which is updated regularly – HSCP advises every 3 years), so that they are knowledgeable and aware of their role in the early recognition of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, and of the appropriate procedures to follow. In addition, all staff members **receive** safeguarding and child protection updates (for example via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. This includes online safety which, amongst other things, covers an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring. Induction and training will be in line with any advice from safeguarding partners.

St Hilda's uses SmartLog to provide regular staff training on safeguarding issues, in particular (but not limited to):

- Safeguarding in general
- Cybersecurity awareness
- Online Safety
- PREVENT
- Safer Recruitment (for senior members of staff)

Compliance with the training requirement is also monitored and recorded through SmartLog.

In relation specifically to Mental Health, both the Mental Health Lead and Deputy Mental Health Lead have attended Hertfordshire Training and are MHFA England Youth Mental Health First Aid Champions.

Temporary staff and volunteers will be made aware of the safeguarding policies and procedures by the Designated Senior Person.

Mission Statement

To establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to when they have a worry or concern.

To establish and maintain an environment where school staff and volunteers feel safe, are encouraged to talk and are listened to when they have concerns about the safety and well-being of any child.

To ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.

To ensure that children who have been abused will be supported in line with a child protection plan, where deemed necessary.

To include opportunities in the PSHCE and IT curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

To contribute to the five Every Child Matters Outcomes: -

- **Be healthy**
- **Stay safe**
- **Enjoy and achieve**
- **Make a positive contribution**
- **Achieve economic well-being**

To consider how children may be taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

To prepare pupils for life in modern Britain and create a culture within the school of zero tolerance for sexism, racism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, sexual violence/harassment, or any other form of discriminatory or derogatory behaviour, or physical violence and conflict. Any such behaviours will be recognised, challenged and addressed as part of the school's safeguarding responsibilities under this Policy.

All staff at St Hilda's recognise that pupils may experience prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-based prejudice and/or faith-targeted abuse, and other forms of discrimination. Such experiences may have a significant impact on a child's welfare, wellbeing, mental health, sense of safety and willingness to seek help. Staff are alert to the signs and impact of prejudice-based harm and will treat any concerns as safeguarding concerns according to this Policy.

Staff members working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members **must** always act in the interests of the child. This includes when providing "online" education.

Implementation, Monitoring and Review of the Child Protection Policy

The policy will be reviewed annually **by the Head and** the Governors. It will be implemented through the school's induction and training programme, and as part of day to day practice. Compliance with the policy will be monitored by the Designated Senior Person and through staff appraisal measures.

2. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, the school will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- The Children and Families Act 2014 (formerly The Children Act 1989 and 2004)
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Education Act 2011 (section 175/157)
- **Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Inter-agency Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Procedures** (Electronic)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE September **2026**)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2023) (including Information Sharing)
- The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Amendment Regulations 2019
- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Section 26, The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (PREVENT duty)
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (Section 74, Serious Crime Act 2015)
- Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006 (Statutory Guidance)
- Use of Social Media for On-line Radicalisation (DofE Guidance 2015)

- Child Abuse Concerns: Guidance for Practitioners (DofE Guidance 2015)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DofE Guidance 2018)
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance 2025
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance Statutory Guidance August 2024
- Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities and Schools 2025
- **Mobile Phones in Schools, DfE Statutory Guidance 2026**

Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2023) requires all schools to follow the procedures for protecting children from abuse which are established by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Schools are also expected to ensure that they have appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which they believe that a child has been abused or are at risk of abuse. These procedures should also cover circumstances where a member of staff has behaved in a way that has, or may have, harmed a child or that indicates they would pose a risk of harm.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE September 2026) places the following responsibilities on all schools:

- Schools should be aware of and follow the procedures established by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP)
- Staff should be alert to signs of abuse and know to whom they should report any concerns or suspicions
- Schools should have procedures (of which all staff are aware) for handling suspected cases of abuse of pupils, including procedures to be followed if a member of staff is accused of abuse, or suspected of abuse
- A Designated Senior Person (referred to in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2026 as Designated Safeguarding Lead') should have responsibility for co-ordinating action within the school and liaising with other agencies
- **Staff should undergo updated child protection training every two years. At St Hilda's, in addition to the required training for the DSL and DDSs, all staff receive child protection training at least annually. This is undertaken in the form of both interactive group training sessions delivered by the DSL and also training modules to be completed individually, provided through the SmartLog platform**
- All staff, including volunteers and contract personnel, are required to complete a self-declaration to ensure their suitability to work with children, this also requires them to advise their manager of any change in circumstances immediately.

Keeping Children Safe in Education also states:

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure there is an effective child protection policy in place together with a staff behaviour policy (Code of Conduct). Both should be provided to all staff – including temporary staff and volunteers – on induction. The child protection policy should describe procedures which are in accordance with government guidance and refer to locally agreed inter-agency procedures put in place by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB), be updated annually, and be available publicly either via the school website or by other means.

Staff Induction

Policies, Documents and Information to be provided to new members of staff:

Employee Handbook

Health and Safety Handbook

Safeguarding Policy (including duties under Prevent)

Behaviour Policy

Whistleblowing Policy

Mobile Phone Usage Policy

Attendance (including Child Missing from Education) and Admissions Register Policy

Management of Health and Safety Policy

Crisis Management & Communications Policy

Internet and Email Acceptable Use Policy

Online Safety & Computing Acceptable Usage Policy (includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring)

Staff Code of Conduct

Copy of KCSIE (link provided in appendix 3a)

List of DSL and DDSLs

Note: all policies are available on the Teacher drive or upon request from Compliance.

3. THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection (including EYFS) in St Hilda's School is the Assistant Head of Pastoral Care.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead **has** lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety).

The school also has a policy of appointing at least one Deputy DSL (DDSL) who is required to act in the event of absence/unavailability of the DSL.

During term time the DSL and or a Deputy will always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns and individual arrangement for out of hours / out of term activities / remote learning will be the same.

Contact details of DSL and DDSLs are provide in Appendix **6**.

Organisations or Individuals using School Premises

- St Hilda's may receive an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using the school premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example extra-curricular activities). As with any safeguarding allegation, St Hilda's will follow the usual safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.
- St Hilda's will seek assurance from the provider that it has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies in place (and may inspect them if needed).
- St Hilda's will ensure that safeguarding requirements are included in any lease or hire agreement, as a condition of use and occupation of the premises, failure to comply will lead to a termination of the agreement.

4. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Governing bodies and proprietors must ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. They must also have regard to this guidance to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in their schools are effective and comply with the law at all times. Governors undertake specific Safeguarding training as part of their induction as with all staff, and Safeguarding matters and procedures are discussed at termly Board Meetings.

It is the policy of the school to appoint a member of the Governors to take lead responsibility for all matters relating to safeguarding/child protection.

The nominated Governor for safeguarding/child protection is:

Dr Katharine Solomons

The responsibilities placed on governing bodies and proprietors include:

- Their contribution to inter-agency working, which includes providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified.
- Ensuring that an effective child protection policy is in place (the Safeguarding training provided should equip them with the knowledge to ensure that they are in a position to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place are effective), together with a staff Code of Conduct.
- Ensuring staff are provided with the most recent Part One of the Keeping Children safe in Education.
- Ensuring that staff induction is in place with regards to child protection and safeguarding.
- Appointing an appropriate senior member of staff to act as the Lead Designated Senior Person.
- Ensuring that all of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (including deputies) should undergo formal child protection training every two years (in line with LCSB guidance) and receive regular (annual) safeguarding refreshers (for example via e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).
- Prioritising the welfare of children and young people and creating a culture where staff are confident to challenge senior leaders over any safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring that children are taught about safeguarding in an age-appropriate way.
- Ensuring appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place to safeguard children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. These should be regularly reviewed for their effectiveness. Care should be taken to avoid “over blocking” which would lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding. Additional information to support governing bodies and proprietors is available at http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/child_protection/policy/national.shtml.
- Having a senior board level lead to take leadership responsibility for the organisation’s safeguarding arrangements.
- Reviewing the School’s Child Protection policies, ensuring policies are workable in practice.
- Ensuring the School’s compliance with its duties under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information held by the School safe and secure. Additional guidance about the legislative obligations and how to comply, including protecting personal information and providing access to official information, is available at: [For organisations | ICO](#)

5. SCHOOL PROCEDURES - STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff receive regular training in order to be aware of safeguarding issues that often overlap and can put children at risk of harm. This is undertaken in the form of both interactive group training sessions for all staff and also training modules to be completed individually, provided through the SmartLog platform.

Staff do not need to wait for a disclosure but must act on any concerns they may have. If any member of staff is concerned about a child he or she must inform the DSL. Any concerns about a child’s welfare should be acted on immediately. Early information sharing is vital for effective identification.

All staff **must** be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and / or may not recognise their experience as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened, this could be due to their vulnerability, disability and / or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

St Hilda's has adopted the CPOMS platform for the management and recording of all matters pertaining to safeguarding.

All members of staff must record information regarding the concerns on the same day that the concern arises. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations. **Staff must record all concerns via CPOMS** or may notify the DSL of their concern verbally, to then be recorded on **CPOMS** on the same day the concern arises. Children should be reassured that their concerns are and will continue to be taken seriously. A child should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation. Nor should a child ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

The DSL will make a referral to the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership after a discussion with the parents, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm when a referral will be made prior to a discussion with parents.

Particular attention will be paid to the attendance and development of any child about whom the school has concerns, or who has been identified as being the subject of a child protection plan. **A record on CPOMS** will be kept in all cases.

If a pupil who is (or has been the subject of) a child protection plan changes school, the DSL will inform the social worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the DSL at the receiving school, **either by direct transfer via CPOMS if the receiving school also uses this, or by secure post in all other cases**. This will be done in a secure manner and will be passed separately from the child's academic file.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for making the senior management team aware of trends in behaviour that may affect pupil welfare. If necessary, training will be arranged.

As a person who works with children, staff have a duty to refer safeguarding concerns to the designated senior person for child protection. However, if:

- concerns are not taken seriously by an organisation or action to safeguard the child is not taken by professionals and
- the child is considered to be at continuing risk of harm

then Staff should contact Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) (including out of hours) on 0300 123 4043. Local authorities have a duty to investigate concerns under the Children and Families Act 2014.

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.

If the allegations raised by the staff member are against other children the school should follow **the guidance in section 5 of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) Procedures Manual at <https://hertfordshirescp.trixonline.co.uk/>**.

As with any other safeguarding disclosures or concerns, any concern or allegation relating to child on child abuse must be recorded on CPOMS on the same day the concern arises, and also notified to the DSL. Following a disclosure it is important for the School to work with the relevant agencies and to be part of the discussions with the statutory safeguarding partners to agree services or assessments. It **must** be recognised that a victim may need long term help and support.

Information Sharing

Staff at St Hilda's recognise that information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation, and in promoting pupils' welfare, including in relation to their educational outcomes.

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

Staff are made aware of their obligations under Data Protection Law to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep information they hold safe and secure. Nonetheless, staff are also aware that **data protection laws do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and that fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.**

6. WHEN TO BE CONCERNED

St Hilda's adopts a child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding. Safeguarding and promoting the mental and physical welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals **must** make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

Types of abuse may include:

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

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and 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 verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling or name-calling as well as** 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, causing or inciting a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, such as acts of penetration, whether that is with part of a person's body or an object (e.g. rape or assault by penetration) and non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching over clothing. Sexual abuse 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 as well as offline, 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. There are specific offences for children under 13, who can never provide valid consent to sexual activity.

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.

Upskirting: Upskirting typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, to obtain sexual gratification or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm and is a criminal offence.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and child sexual exploitation (CSE): Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal or sexual activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. This can be committed or facilitated by an organised network or gang, and the victim may identify as being part of this group. CCE and CSE can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. This may constitute modern slavery. Exploitation can be carried out online or physically and can appear to be consensual. Indicators can include unexplained gifts or possessions, regularly missing education or inappropriate sexual knowledge.

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear or experience the effects of abuse at home. This also applies even if all those involved are not residing in the same household. All can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is based on the principle of providing help for families to stay together where it is safe for the children to do so, and looking at alternatives where it is not, whilst acting in the best interests of the child at all times.

Safeguarding incidents and behaviours can be linked to events outside of School or familial groups and abuse may happen at the hands of other children. Staff should remain vigilant to indicators of abuse outside of a family environment and the multiple forms this may take, such as exploitation or serious youth violence.

Abuse does not need to be face to face. Online bullying, consensual and non-consensual taking / sharing of inappropriate images are also forms of abuse. Children who witness violence or abuse, such as domestic abuse between family members, can also be impacted or adversely affected.

Mental Health

While only trained professionals should attempt to diagnose mental health issues, all staff at St Hilda's School are aware that:

- In some cases, mental health problems can in themselves develop into safeguarding concerns, including but not limited to self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide.
- Mental health issues can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

St Hilda's staff are well placed to observe pupils 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. Potential warning signs which staff should observe for include, but are not limited to:

- Significant changes in behaviour,
- Ongoing difficulty sleeping,
- Withdrawing from social situations,
- Not wanting to do things that pupil usually likes, and
- Physical signs of self-harm or self-neglect.

Any concerns about a child's mental health being related to a safeguarding issue **will** be treated in the same way as other safeguarding concerns and raised immediately with the DSL.

By identifying potential warning signs that a pupil may be struggling with their mental health, the school will then offer support and early interventions, ensuring that any such interventions are effective and appropriate for the need and phase of education.

If staff consider a child is in danger, they should call 999 or arrange for them to be taken to A&E immediately by a parent / carer or other suitable person.

Children who may require early help / Family help assessment

Families First is Hertfordshire's programme of early help assessment services for families. A directory of early help assessment services is available at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/familiesfirst and will help practitioners and families find information and support to prevent escalation of needs and crisis.

All staff **receive training and information on the assessment processes for both universal service and community-based Early Help, and targeted early help provided by Family Help**, in order to provide help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge, and understand their role in identifying emerging problems, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment of a child's needs. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalation. This also includes staff monitoring the situation and feeding back to the Designated Senior Person any ongoing/escalating concerns so that consideration can be given to a referral to Children's Services (Safeguarding and Specialist Services) if the child's situation doesn't appear to be improving.

Staff and volunteers working within the school **are** alert to the potential need for early help **and/or Family help** assessments for children also who are more vulnerable. **As set out in Paragraph 17, Page 11 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE September 2026), examples of children who are more vulnerable include but are not limited to pupils who are:**

- showing early signs of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation,
- disabled or have certain health conditions and has specific additional needs,
- have special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan),
- have a mental health need,
- are a young carer,
- are pregnant and/or are a parent themselves,
- have exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours,
- are showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines,
- are frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care,
- have been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiple suspensions, are on a part-time timetable, are at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit,
- are at risk of exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking, including criminal or sexual exploitation,
- are at risk of being radicalised into terrorism,
- have a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending,
- are in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse,
- are misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves,
- are at risk of honour or faith-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage, and
- are privately fostered.

School staff members should be aware of the main categories of maltreatment: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. They should also be aware of the indicators of maltreatment and specific safeguarding issues so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

See Appendix 2 for information on indicators of abuse and for specific safeguarding issues.

Some children are potentially at great risk of harm. The DSL will liaise with Social workers of children in need, or those who have safeguarding concerns, to ensure the best interests of the child are met. Similarly, the DSL will liaise with external agencies dealing with children in need of extra mental health support to ensure best possible outcomes for pupils.

Children with Specific Safeguarding concerns

The family, community or immediate environment of a child may raise specific safeguarding concerns. These include, but are not limited to:

- Children in the court system / family members in prison
- Modern slavery
- Domestic abuse
- Homelessness

If staff have concerns over the community involvement or environmental welfare of a child, these should be treated as any other safeguarding concerns, and raised with the DSL.

Further specific advice can be found in KCSIE ([new Annex A](#))

Operation Encompass

St Hilda's School is registered with Operation Encompass, to ensure the school is notified, by the next day, of any police attended incidents of domestic abuse.

The School will receive Operation Encompass notifications by email. Any such notifications will then be referred to the DSL immediately and recorded on CPOMS alongside a password-protected copy of the Police report.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and/or exploitation in this group of children. This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's impairment without further exploration.
- Assumptions that children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying – without outwardly showing any signs.
- Communication barrier difficulties.
- Reluctance to challenge carers, (professionals may over empathise with carers because of the perceived stress of caring for a disabled child).
- Disabled children often rely on a wide network of carers to meet their basic needs and therefore the potential risk of exposure to abusive behaviour can be increased.
- A disabled child's understanding of abuse.
- Lack of choice/participation.
- Isolation.

Children with special needs or disabilities may be particularly vulnerable to child on child abuse.

Additional guidance can be obtained from:

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) | NSPCC Learning and Safeguarding d/Deaf and disabled children and young people | NSPCC Learning

Alternative Service Providers

Where a pupil is placed with an alternative service provider, the School will continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil as set out in this Policy, and will ensure that the placement meets the pupil's needs. We have occasional pupils who attend alternative service providers in the course of taking part in extra-curricular activities (for example, sport or drama) at high level and in these instances the School will continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of those pupils and will be satisfied that any placement meets the pupil's needs as set out in paragraphs 208-213 and 356 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE September 2026).

Virtual School Head

St Hilda's currently has no looked-after or previously looked-after children to whom the statutory guidance in relation to Virtual School Heads will apply.

Child on child abuse

Education settings are an important part of the inter-agency framework not only in terms of evaluating and referring concerns to Children's Services and the Police, but also in the assessment and management of risk that the child or young person may pose to themselves and others in the educational setting. All Staff should be aware that child on child abuse is likely to be experienced by pupils even if it is not reported.

If one child or young person causes harm to another, this behaviour should be challenged. When considering whether behaviour is abusive, it is important to consider:

- Whether there is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the young people concerned; or
- Whether the perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children; or
- Whether there are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

Child on child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and the alleged perpetrator and can manifest itself in many ways:

- Bullying including cyberbullying and discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other prejudice-based incidents; bullying of this kind must never be dismissed as mere "banter".
- Physical abuse, such as hitting, kicking or biting or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse).
- Serious physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon.
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this includes an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence).
- Sexual harassment such as sexual comments (including online).
- Initiation of hazing types of violence or rituals.
- Consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and upskirting.
- County Line or gang membership.

Child on child abuse can have a gendered nature, (i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators). All child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. We do not tolerate this. This includes child on child abuse that happens between pupils outside of school hours. Severe harm may be caused

to children by abusive and bullying behaviour of other children. Child on child abuse will be recorded and treated as any other safeguarding concern.

It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting, nor should they be made to feel ashamed for making a report. It is important for the child to understand that the law on child on child abuse is there to protect them rather than criminalise them.

St Hilda's ensures that all girls receive online safety training (using CEOP guidelines) at the start of each academic year, as well as receiving guidance on dealing with all forms of abuse, including child on child. Bullying will not be dismissed as "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up". Pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones, or other forms of smart technology, whilst at School (see further under **"Technology"** below).

Any pupils who are victims of child on child abuse will receive support from their form tutor or mentor as appropriate. The DSL will be alerted as soon as possible and any online evidence will be gathered to form a record of what has taken place. Any concerns will be forwarded to the appropriate authorities as with all other safeguarding concerns.

For perpetrators of child on child abuse, the School will attempt to ascertain any underlying cause for concern and to seek to support the perpetrator. The School will then, if appropriate, follow the standard disciplinary procedures. The aim of the School will be to avoid recurrence of the offending behaviour.

Hertfordshire County Council recommends that education settings use The Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool by the Brook Advisory Service to help professionals; assess and respond appropriately to sexualised behaviour. The traffic light tool can be found at www.brook.org.uk/our-work/the-sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool.

Guidance on responding to and managing incidents relating to the making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes can be found at http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/child_protection/reference/index.shtml#sex

Guidance on responding to and managing child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>

A Child Who Has Unexplainable and/or Persistent Absences from Education.

The School recognises its legal duty to report certain attendance issues to the local authority – specifically, ten days of unauthorised absence (other than for reasons of sickness or leave of absence), failure to attend regularly, and deletion from the school register when the next school is not known. In this last case, the school is required to report the circumstances as soon as possible to the local authority in which the pupil lives. St Hilda's will make contact with the parent/guardian of a pupil who is identified by the School as having unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education. Contact may be by telephone, email or a visit to the pupil's place of residence. Unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education will be identified as a safeguarding matter.

If a child is removed from School for elective home education, St Hilda's will request a meeting with parents/guardians before the child's final day. Removal from the roll for elective home education will be recorded with the local authority.

Contextual Safeguarding

Safeguarding behaviours can be associated with factors outside of the School. The DSL should give regard to the context within which such incidents or behaviours occur. 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.

Domestic abuse and violence within the home environment are indicators that a child may be vulnerable to abuse.

Serious Violence

Serious violence is a continuing safeguarding concern. It may involve physical assault, carrying, threatening with, or using weapons, often in the context of peer conflict or bullying, and it can also be associated with criminal exploitation.

The safeguarding of children involved in serious violence includes the safeguarding of both victims, as well as those who may be at risk of, or are involved in, committing serious violence, who may also be victims themselves. Staff receive regular training in order to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of or involved in serious violence. If any pupils are considered to be at risk, this should be reported immediately to the designated safeguarding lead for referral to early help and support services.

All staff should be 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, or involvement in offences such as theft, could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence>) and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>).

Behaviours that are not typical of pupils, such as drug and alcohol misuse, consensual and non-consensual sharing of inappropriate material (including nudes or semi-nudes) are all indicators that children are at risk and should be treated as issues of safeguarding concern.

Staff should report any concerns about a child carrying or using a weapon (or expressing intent to do so) to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). The designated safeguarding lead should assess the risk to both the individual pupil and others in the school, considering wider information or concerns, and take appropriate action. Depending on the risk, they should put in place a safety and support plan, and where relevant, consider action to de-escalate peer conflict.

7. DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE

If a child discloses that they have been abused in some way, the member of staff/volunteer should:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is being said.
- Allow the child to talk freely, reminding them they should not be afraid of disclosing concerns.
- Reassure the child that they will be kept safe and supported, but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep.
- Never promise a child that you will not tell anyone – it might be necessary to refer to Children Schools and Families in the best interests of the child.
- Reassure the child that what has happened is not their fault.
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell.

- Listen, only asking questions when necessary to clarify a fact. It is important that no leading questions are asked. (What, when and where questions are best).
- Not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.
- Make a written record **on CPOMS** (see Record Keeping).
- Pass the information to the DSL without delay.

When a disclosure is made, the DSL should be made aware of the child's wishes and feelings. If allegations are ultimately proven to be false or malicious, the DSL will consider whether the allegation may have been a cry for help and if the pupil concerned is in need of assistance or further support. Following a disclosure, it may be necessary to also support any siblings.

Support

Dealing with a disclosure from a child and related safeguarding issues can be stressful. The member of staff/volunteer should therefore consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the DSL.

If a school staff member receives a disclosure about potential harm caused by another staff member, they should see section 11 of this policy– *Allegations involving school staff/volunteers*.

8. RECORD KEEPING

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing. If in doubt about recording requirements staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding person.

When a child has made a disclosure, the member of staff/volunteer is required to:

- Make brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation. Use the school record of concern sheet wherever possible.
- Not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court.
- Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child.
- Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any injuries (visible without removing clothing).
- Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions.

All records need to be **recorded on CPOMS** promptly. No copies should be retained by the member of staff or volunteer.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that all safeguarding records are managed in accordance with the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005.

If a pupil who is/or has been the subject of a child protection plan changes school, the Designated Senior Person will inform the social worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the Designated Senior Person at the receiving school, in a secure manner, and separate from the child's academic file.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

Safeguarding children raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all staff/volunteers in the school.

All staff (both teaching and non-teaching) have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies (CSF Safeguarding and Specialist Services and the Police).

If a child confides in a member of staff/volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff/volunteer tells the child in a manner appropriate to the child's age/stage of development that they cannot promise complete confidentiality. Instead, they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe.

Staff/volunteers who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts. The processing of all correspondence relating to safeguarding will be within the guidance of GDPR and treated as "special category personal data". **Fears about the legality of sharing information must not stand in the way of the welfare and protection of children.**

10. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

St Hilda's School will:

- Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly either via the school website or by other means.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibilities placed on the school and staff for safeguarding children.
- Inform parents prior to referral, unless it is considered to do so might place the child at increased risk of significant harm by:
 - The behavioural response it prompts e.g. a child being subjected to abuse, maltreatment or threats / forced to remain silent if alleged abuser informed;
 - Leading to an unreasonable delay;
 - Leading to the risk of loss of evidential material;

11. ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING SCHOOL STAFF, INCLUDING SUPPLY TEACHERS, VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACTORS

An allegation is any information that indicates a member of staff, including supply staff, volunteers or contractors may have:

- Behaved in a way that has, or may have, harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against/related to a child.
- Behaved in a way which indicates he or she is unsuitable to work with children. This includes behaviour towards a child.

This applies to any child that the member of staff has contact with in personal, professional or community life.

All staff should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school or education setting's safeguarding arrangements.

The Education Act 2011 introduced reporting restrictions preventing the reporting of any identification of a teacher who has been accused by, or on behalf of, a pupil. All efforts to maintain confidentiality must be made until the accused is charged with an offence.

If staff members have concerns about another staff member (including any supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers or contractors) then this should be referred to the Headteacher (or the Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding, if that is more appropriate) who will consider whether an onward referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is required. If there is a conflict of interest in reporting to the Headteacher, a member of staff should report the concern to the Acting Chair of Governors or, where this is not possible, to the LADO. Where there are concerns about the Headteacher, this should be referred to the Acting Chair of

Governors without informing the Head. If staff are concerned about immediate or serious harm, the police should be informed immediately.

The Acting Chair of Governors is Dr Katharine Solomons, who is also the Governor responsible for safeguarding.

Dr Katharine Solomons

ksolomons@sthildasharpenden.co.uk

In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Headteacher, or where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the Proprietor or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, allegations should be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). (See Keeping Children Safe in Education: Part Four for further information).

The person to whom an allegation is first reported should take the matter seriously and keep an open mind. He or she should not investigate or ask leading questions. If seeking clarification, it is important not to make assumptions. Confidentiality should not be promised and the person should be advised that the concern will be shared on a 'need to know' basis only.

Actions to be taken include making a written record of the allegation using the informant's words - including time, date and place where the alleged incident took place, what was said, and details of anyone else present. This record should be signed and dated and immediately passed on to the Headteacher.

The recipient of an allegation must not unilaterally determine its validity, and failure to report it in accordance with procedures is a potential disciplinary matter.

The Headteacher will not investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements, but will assess whether it is necessary to refer the concern to CSF social care in consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer SOOHS (Out of Hours Service-Children's Services) – 0300 1234043.

If the allegation meets any of the three criteria set out at the start of this section, contact should always be made with the Local Authority Designated Officer without delay. If there is any doubt as to the level of concern, the LADO should be consulted.

The following definitions should be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegations and there has been a deliberate act to deceive.
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegations.
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. There is, therefore, no implication of guilt or innocence.
- **Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which support the allegations being made.

If it is decided that the allegation meets the threshold for safeguarding, this will take place in accordance with the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Inter-agency Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Procedures.

If it is decided that the allegation does not meet the threshold for safeguarding, it will be handed back to the employer for consideration via the school's internal procedures.

The Headteacher should, as soon as possible, following briefing from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), inform the subject of the allegation.

If staff are found guilty of, or complicit in, safeguarding failures, this will be treated as gross misconduct within the procedures set out in the Staff Handbook and Code of Conduct. In cases which lead to dismissal of staff, St Hilda's has a legal duty to report this to the DBS and/or Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA). In cases where this criterion is met, the School will report that person to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) as soon as possible (and no later than one month) after the termination of the individual's employment at the School.

In the case of teaching members of staff, separate consideration will be given to a TRA referral. The School will consider making a referral to the TRA where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate. The reasons such an order would be considered are: unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute or a conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence.

Reports of allegations may also be made to the DBS / TRA on the advice of the LADO.

For further information see:

HSCB Inter-agency Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Procedure (2010): Section 4.1.1 Managing Allegations Against Adults who work with Children and Young People

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer/through the whistleblowing procedure or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

Children's Services 0300 123 4043.

NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Low Level Concerns

St Hilda's encourages an open and transparent culture, with clear professional boundaries. Staff should feel empowered to report concerns of perceived problematic, inappropriate or concerning behaviour among colleagues.

A "low level concern" is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease – that a staff member may have acted in a way that:

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

Examples of such behaviours include, but are not limited to:

- Being overfriendly with pupils.
- Having favourites.
- Taking photographs of children on a mobile phone, contrary to school policy.
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door.
- Humiliating children.

All low-level concerns must be reported to the DSL immediately. The DSL will record the concern in writing and will inform the headteacher in a timely fashion according to the nature of the concern. Low-level concerns about supply staff and contractors must also be notified to their employers, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviours can be identified.

St Hilda's will respond to low level concerns or allegations promptly, considering evidence and discussion with those involved. If concerns are of a low-level nature, such as over familiarity with a child, then staff may be subject to disciplinary action as set out in the Staff Code of Conduct, with a written record kept on the relevant staff file(s).

If a pattern of behaviour moves from a low-level concern to meeting the harm threshold, the DSL or headteacher will refer this to the LADO.

Safer working practice

To reduce the risk of allegations, all staff should be aware of safer working practice and should be familiar with the guidance contained in the staff handbook/ school Code of Conduct / Staff Behaviour Policy and Safer Recruitment Consortium document *Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (February 2022)* available at https://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/_files/ugd/f576a8_0d079cbe69ea458e9e99fe462e447084.pdf

The document seeks to ensure that the responsibilities of school leaders towards children and staff are discharged by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe, unprofessional and unwise behaviour. This includes guidelines for staff on positive behaviour management in line with the ban on corporal punishment (School Standards and Framework Act 1998). Please see the school's behaviour management policy for more information.

Technology

The use of technology by staff within the School environment, and around pupils more generally, has safeguarding implications. St Hilda's has dedicated policies relating to the use of mobile phones, internet and photography / videography which must be read in conjunction with this policy.

Use of mobile phones / smart technology by pupils

St Hilda's School is phone-free by default, in accordance with the Mobile Phones in Schools, DfE Statutory Guidance 2026. Pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones, or other forms of smart technology, whilst at School. Other forms of smart technology encompass all devices with similar functionality to mobile phones, for example the ability to access the internet, the ability to send and/or receive notifications or messages via the internet or mobile phone networks, or the ability to record images, audio and/or video.

Pupils in Form VI who walk to school unaccompanied by an adult are permitted to bring a non-Internet enabled 'brick' phone for the purposes of being contactable during their travel to and/or from school. All such phones must be turned off at the school gate upon arrival and handed in to the school office for the day. At home time, pupils can collect their phones and turn on once off site.

St Hilda's recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances in which adaptations may be made to the school's mobile phone policy to allow a pupil to have access to a mobile phone or other smart technology device during the school day. Each case will be assessed on its own merits. Any adjustments made for individual pupils under exceptional circumstances will be proportionate to the circumstances and individual need, for example any permitted use of a mobile device may still be restricted to a specific purpose, time and/or location.

Use of mobile phones / smart technology by staff

Staff are not allowed to use their personal mobile phones during the School day when in the presence of pupils, including but not limited to in classrooms or communal areas (including outside within School grounds). Mobile phones should be switched off and left in a safe place during lesson times. As an exception to this, the School

mobile phone may be used for the sole purpose of School business, for example the taking of photographs for displays or for School social media updates, **or personal mobile phones may be used for short instances solely for allowing access to school online systems which require multi-factor authentication.**

Online Safety

St Hilda's School recognises its responsibility to educate pupils on online safety issues; this includes teaching pupils the appropriate behaviour and critical thinking skills to enable them to remain safe and legal when using the internet and related technologies, both in and out of the classroom.

This includes understanding the safe use of, and risks posed by, emerging and developing technologies, including Artificial Intelligence, as well as being alert to the risks of online scams. In relation in particular to generative AI, further guidance may be found within the DfE guidance at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/generative-ai-product-safety-standards>

St Hilda's recognises that its pupils may, in situations outside of school, have unfettered access to the internet through smart devices. Technology and the platforms available, and the safeguarding risks and harms related to it, evolve, and change rapidly.

Full details of the school's approach and practice to online safety is set out in the Online Safety and Computing Acceptable Usage Policy and Internet and Email Acceptable Use Policy. St Hilda's will carry out a review, at least once a year, of its approach to and teaching of online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks its pupils face.

Filtering and monitoring

St Hilda's ensures that appropriate firewall protection is in place to safeguard pupils from potentially harmful or inappropriate online material. St Hilda's ensures that it has the appropriate level of security protection in place in order to safeguard systems, staff and pupils. The procedures in place are regularly reviewed to ensure effectiveness and to keep up with ever evolving cyber-crime technologies. Training is also provided to all staff to ensure awareness. St Hilda's complies with the Department for Education's Filtering and Monitoring Standards. **St Hilda's has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and conducts twice-yearly reviews of their effectiveness of these systems. Records are kept of all results of the filtering and monitoring checks, and results are reviewed once a week. Further details of St Hilda's filtering and monitoring systems are set out in the School's Internet and Email Policy and Online Safety and Computing Acceptable Usage Policy.**

12. FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 16-17 of the Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines, and Chapter 9 of those Guidelines (pp42-44). It is mandatory for FGM to be reported to the police.

Section 5B of the FGM Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a legal duty upon teachers, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, 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 examine pupils. Where a teacher discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18, this should be

reported to the Designated Senior Person (DSP) or Deputy Designated Senior Person (DDSP), who will promptly report any concerns to the police.

13. CHILDREN WHO ARE QUESTIONING THEIR GENDER

This section applies in the situation where a pupil of the school, or their parent(s) or guardian(s), has requested that the school make changes or put support in place in order to facilitate the pupil presenting as the opposite biological sex (“social transition”).

St Hilda’s School recognises that social transition is an active intervention that may have significant effects on the pupil in question in terms of their psychological functioning and longer-term outcomes, and will take a very careful approach in relation to any such requests. St Hilda’s recognises the potential vulnerabilities of children who are questioning their gender, including the possibility of complex mental health and psychosocial needs, for example relating to relationships with family, peers or their broader social environment, including discriminatory bullying.

St Hilda’s will not in any circumstances initiate any action regarding social transition. Members of staff will not adopt any changes relating to social transition unless a decision has been made by the Senior Management Team and a child’s parents or guardians have been involved (subject to the below).

In responding to a request from a pupil for support with social transition, St Hilda’s will consider how best to fulfil its duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of both the pupil in question and other pupils, and in particular will be guided by the following:

- As a first step, to consider what is in the best interests of the pupil in question and other pupils, exercising a very careful approach.
- The pupil’s parents / guardians will be engaged as a matter of priority, and the school will work together with the parents to establish what is best for the pupil.
- In exceptional situations where involving parents/guardians would constitute a greater risk to the child than not involving them, the DSL will determine what action is needed to safeguard the pupil before parents or guardians are contacted or any decision is taken.
- The DSL will consider any professional clinical evidence or advice and seek any additional non-clinical professional advice where relevant, and will take into account all factors that could be affecting the pupil in question, including whether they have any wider health issues or neurodiversity.
- St Hilda’s is particularly conscious of the safeguarding concerns relating to the age of its pupils, as primary-school aged children.

Any ultimate decision relating to social transition may not be the same as the pupil’s wishes.

St Hilda’s will record on CPOMS the decision-making process, all factors and evidence taken into consideration, and the outcome/decision reached.

Single-sex facilities: toilets and changing rooms

In Pre-Nursery and Nursery classes, both girls and boys use the designated toilet facilities for those classes, under the supervision of staff. The EYFS Policy further details the school’s responsibilities and practice around intimate care and the use of toilets.

As a single-sex girls' school from Reception class upwards up to the age of 11, St Hilda's does not have pupil toilets designated for boys, and pupils therefore do not have access to toilets designated for the opposite biological sex. Pupils are not allowed to use staff toilets unless in exceptional circumstances and where overseen by a member of staff from outside the toilet. Staff do not have access to pupil toilets, again unless access is necessary for the safeguarding of pupils, such as a medical emergency, or other safeguarding situation. In the situation where a gender-questioning pupil does not want to use the school toilets, which are for the exclusive use of girls, the school will consider whether and how an alternative toilet facility can be provided that not does compromise the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the gender-questioning pupil or of any other pupils.

In the Pre-Nursery and Nursery classes, both boys and girls will usually change for PE in their classroom, under the supervision of staff.

As a single sex girls' school for pupils from Reception class (ages 4-5) up to the age of 11, no pupils at the School of any age in these classes change or undress (for example when changing into sports kit for PE lessons) in front of children of the opposite biological sex. Pupils will usually change for PE in their classroom, with the blind pulled down across the classroom door window for privacy. In the situation where a pupil does not wish to use the designated space for changing, the School will consider whether it can provide an alternative changing facility that does not compromise the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the pupil in question or of any other pupils.

The School will keep a clear record on CPOMS of any request from a pupil to use alternative toilet or changing facilities, as well as the outcome of the request and any alternative facilities provided, and will review any such situations regularly.

Single sex sports

As a single-sex girls' school, all physical education on site at St Hilda's is single sex. Occasionally, pupils at St. Hilda's may take part in mixed sex tournaments at primary age level for sports such as, for example, Hockey. In this instance, the school will ensure the safeguarding of its pupils according to this Policy and in particular in relation to access to single-sex toilets and changing spaces.

14. CHILD-ON-CHILD HARMFUL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR (HSB), SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE.

Harmful sexual behaviour ("HSB") can occur between two or more children of any age and sex, and can occur also through a group of children towards a single child or towards another group of children. HSB exists on a continuum and may escalate into sexual harassment or sexual violence. HSB can occur online or face-to-face (both physically and verbally), or both, and is never acceptable.

Sexual harassment is "unwanted conduct of a sexual nature" which can occur online or face-to-face and inside or outside of school. Sexual harassment can violate a pupil's dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothing or appearance and using sexualised names,
- Sexual "jokes" or taunting,
- Physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone or interfering with their clothes. The experience of the victim will be taken into account in considering whether such behaviour crosses into sexual violence,
- Displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature,
- Upskirting (which is a criminal offence),

- Online sexual harassment, which may include (1) consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes (2) sharing of unwanted explicit content (3) sexualised online bullying (4) unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media (5) sexual exploitation, coercion and threats, and (6) coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they're not comfortable with online.

Sexual violence refers to the following specific sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003:

- Rape
- Assault by penetration
- Sexual Assault
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent. As all pupils at St Hilda's are under the age of 13, no pupil can be deemed to consent to sexual activity.

St Hilda's School takes a zero-tolerance approach to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence. No instances of harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment or sexual violence will be considered acceptable, tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "a part of growing up".

All staff at St Hilda's School maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" and recognise the importance of:

- The school's zero tolerance approach to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence, and that failure to take a zero tolerance approach can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, misogyny, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios, a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it normal and not coming forward to report it.
- recognising, acknowledging, and understanding the scale of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence and that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported.
- recognising the escalatory nature of misogyny and the benefits of early identification to support their approach to minimising the risk of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence.
- challenging potentially criminal behaviours and that dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
- Taking a safeguarding approach in response to all incidents involving the sharing of nude or semi-nude images, regardless of whether they are consensual or non-consensual.

In responding to incidents of harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence, St Hilda's will follow its usual safeguarding procedures as set out in this Policy.

Staff at St Hilda's recognise that children may struggle to verbally disclose abuse but instead may show signs or behave in ways that signal distress, or that disclosures may come indirectly. All staff must act immediately on any concerns about a child's welfare.

St Hilda's recognises in particular that reports of harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence are likely to be complex, requiring decisions to be made quickly and often under pressure. Where possible, any reports will be managed with two members of staff present, one of whom will be the DSL or a DDSL. St Hilda's follows the specific guidance issued on this [at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>] and also ensures all staff receive regular training on how to respond and act in such cases.

15. "HONOUR BASED" ABUSE AND FORCED MARRIAGE

So called "honour based" Abuse is the term used to describe incidents of violence, including murder (so called "honour killings"), that have been committed in the belief that those actions will protect or defend the honour

of the family and / or community. The victims of such incidents are predominantly women, perceived to have behaved immorally and deemed to have breached the honour code of a family and / or community, causing shame.

A child who is at risk of **so-called** “honour based” abuse is at significant risk of physical harm and/or neglect, and may also suffer significant emotional harm through the threat of violence or witnessing violence directed towards a sibling or other family member. When receiving a disclosure from a child, professionals should recognise the seriousness / immediacy of the risk of harm.

A child who is being forced into marriage is at risk of significant harm through physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Suspicions that a child may be forced into marriage may arise in a number of ways, including a family history of older siblings leaving education early and marrying early. In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial ‘marriages’ as well as legal marriages.

The DSL should contact the **Forced Marriage Unit** where experienced caseworkers will be able to offer support and guidance, on 020 7008 0151 or through:

<https://www.gov.uk/stop-forced-marriage>.

Further information can be found via the following link :

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-right-to-choose-government-guidance-on-forced-marriage>

APPENDIX 1

Safeguarding Pupils from Extremism and Radicalisation

The policy is written with due regard to the following:

- *The Children and Families Act 2014 (formerly The Children Act 1989 and 2004)*
- *The Children and Social Work Act 2017*
- *Education Act 2011 (section 175/157)*
- ***Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Inter-agency Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Procedures (Electronic)***
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE September 2026)*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2023 (including Information Sharing))*
- *The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Amendment Regulations 2019*
- *Sexual Offences Act (2003)*
- *Section 26, The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (PREVENT duty)*
- *Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (Section 74, Serious Crime Act 2015)*
- *Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006*
- *Use of Social Media for On-line Radicalisation (DofE Guidance)*
- *Child Abuse Concerns: Guidance for Practitioners (DofE Guidance 2015)*
- *Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DofE Guidance 2018)*
- *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance 2025*
- *Working Together to Improve School Attendance Statutory Guidance August 2024*
- *School Attendance Regulations 2024*
- *Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities and Schools 2025*
- ***Mobile Phones in Schools, DfE Statutory Guidance 2026***

Prevent is supplemented by non-statutory advice and a briefing note:

The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childminders (June 2015)

The use of social media for on-line radicalisation (July 2015)

The DSL is responsible for implementing the Prevent duty.

Introduction

St Hilda's School is committed to providing a secure environment for pupils, where children feel and are kept safe. All staff recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility irrespective of the role they undertake or whether their role has direct contact or responsibility for children or not.

In adhering to this policy and the procedures therein, staff and visitors will contribute to the school's delivery of the outcomes to all children, as set out in s10 (2) of the Children and Families Act 2014. This Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation section of the Safeguarding Policy is one element within our overall school arrangements to Safeguard and Promote the mental and physical welfare of all Children in line with our statutory duties set out at s175 of the Education Act 2011.

Aims and Objectives

When operating this policy the school uses the following accepted Governmental definition of extremism which is:

“The promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to:

- 1. negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or*
- 2. undermine, overturn or replace the UK’s system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or*
- 3. intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (1) or (2).”*

Additional guidance on this definition can be obtained from:

New definition of extremism (2024) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our school or community. Our pupils see St Hilda’s School as a safe place where they can explore controversial issues safely and where our teachers encourage and facilitate this – we have a duty to ensure this happens.

As a school we recognise that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for children and so should be addressed as a safeguarding concern. We also recognise that if we fail to challenge extremist views we are failing to protect our pupils.

Extremists of all persuasions aim to develop destructive relationships between different communities by promoting division, fear and mistrust of others based on ignorance or prejudice and thereby limiting the life chances of young people.

Education is a powerful weapon against this; equipping young people with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking, will enable them to challenge and debate in an informed way.

We provide a broad and balanced curriculum, primarily through PSHCE lessons and assemblies so that our pupils are enriched, understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity and also to ensure that they thrive, feel valued and not marginalised. We will ensure that all of our teaching approaches help our pupils build resilience to extremism and give pupils a positive sense of identity through the development of critical thinking skills. We will ensure that all of our staff are equipped to recognise extremism and are skilled and confident enough to challenge it. We will be flexible enough to adapt our teaching approaches, as appropriate, so as to address specific issues so as to become even more relevant to the current issues of extremism and radicalisation.

Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, displayed by pupils or staff will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with our Behaviour Policy for pupils and the Code of Conduct for staff. Where misconduct by a member of staff is proven the matter may be dealt with through the school’s disciplinary procedures.

The DSL has undertaken Prevent awareness training so they can provide advice and support to other staff members.

All adults working with children at St Hilda’s undertake an online course on an annual basis.

Additional guidance can be obtained from:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

St Hilda’s has a dedicated Prevent Duty Risk Assessment. We will be alert to the possibility that persons may seek to gain positions within our school so as to unduly influence our school’s character and ethos. We are aware that such persons seek to limit the opportunities for our pupils thereby rendering them vulnerable to extremist views and radicalisation as a consequence.

We will work with our parent body and the local community in our efforts to ensure we understand and embrace our local context and values in challenging extremist views and to assist in the broadening of our pupils' experiences and horizons. We will help support pupils who may be vulnerable to such influences as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities. Additionally in such instances our school will seek external support from appropriate local services working to prevent extremism.

We will promote the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. We will teach and encourage pupils to respect one another, essentially our similarities and differences.

Staff will be alert to the fact that whilst Extremism and Radicalisation is broadly a safeguarding issue there may be some instances where a child or children may be at direct risk of harm or neglect. For example, staff may be aware of information about a child's family that may equally place a child at risk of harm.

E-Safety

The school ensures that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school. For more information please see our Online Safety and Computing Acceptance Usage Policy , and Internet and E-Mail Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) for pupils.

The Role of the Governors

The Board of Governors will undertake appropriate training to ensure that they are clear about their role and the parameters of their responsibility, to support the school in tackling extremism and radicalisation.

Parents

Parents who have concerns about their children may look to the school as a trusted source of advice on how to keep their children safe from these risks. All Prevent materials used by the School will be provided to parents on request.

Outside Speakers Protocol

This policy applies to all sections of the school.

The "prevent" statutory guidance requires schools to have clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers who might fall within the scope of the Prevent duty, whether invited by staff or pupils, are suitable and appropriately supervised. This means that even in cases where specific vetting checks are not prescribed by KCSIE in Part 4, for example, when speakers will not be left alone with pupils, schools must take action to ensure that they are suitable. (The precise action is not prescribed although an internet search, for example, may sometimes be more instructive than formal vetting checks).

Occasionally, we have speakers who enrich the children's experience of school, providing information that helps them make decisions at different phases of their education, widening their understanding of world and global issues and providing motivational inspiration through the sharing of a speaker's experience.

Our responsibility to our pupils is to ensure that the information they receive is aligned to the ethos and values of the school and the identified British Values.

The following protocols apply:

- The purpose of the speaker must be clearly defined as to the information the speaker/visitor wishes to communicate. The information must align to the core values and ethos of the school and to British and Universal Values.

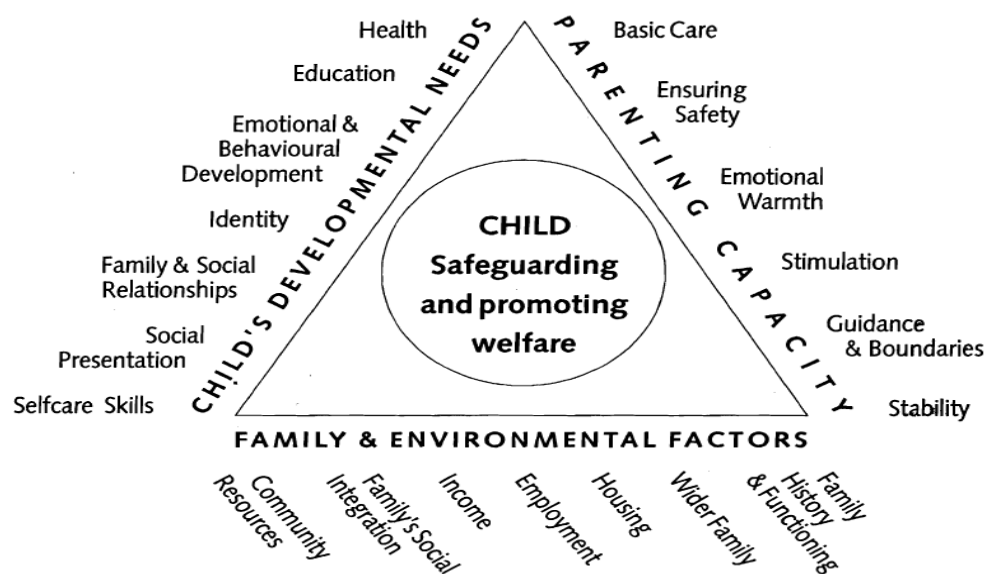
- The member of staff organising the event must ascertain that all information communicated by the visitor/speaker must be lawful.
- The Speaker will be issued with a visitor's badge which they must wear at all times. Visitors will be accompanied in the buildings at all times.
- A member of staff will be present during the visit, who will monitor that the speech aligns with the values and ethos of the school and British Values. In the unlikely event that the speech does not meet this requirement, immediate action will be taken by the member of staff to balance the information given.

PREVENT concerns should be reported to the staff and governors of St Hilda's, the local police authority (101) or the DfE dedicated non-emergency helpline: 020 7340 7264 (extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk)

APPENDIX 2

Indicators of Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation and **Modern Slavery** (DfE 2016)

The framework for understanding children's needs:



Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2023) (including Information Sharing)

Physical abuse	
<i>Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.</i>	
Child	
Bruises – shape, grouping, site, repeat or multiple	Withdrawal from physical contact
Bite-marks – site and size	Aggression towards others, emotional and behaviour problems
Burns and Scalds – shape, definition, size, depth, scars	
Improbable, conflicting explanations for injuries or unexplained injuries	Unexplainable and/or persistent absences from school
Untreated injuries	Admission of punishment which appears excessive
Injuries on parts of body where accidental injury is unlikely	Fractures
Repeated or multiple injuries	Fabricated or induced illness -
Parent	Family/environment
Parent with injuries	History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.

Evasive or aggressive towards child or others	Past history in the family of childhood abuse, self-harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault
Explanation inconsistent with injury	Marginalised or isolated by the community.
Fear of medical help / parents not seeking medical help	Physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement.
Over chastisement of child	

Emotional abuse	
<i>Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, not giving the child opportunities to express their views, 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate, hearing the ill-treatment of another and serious bullying (including cyber bullying).</i>	
Child	
Self-harm	Over-reaction to mistakes / Inappropriate emotional responses
Chronic running away	Abnormal or indiscriminate attachment
Drug/solvent abuse	Low self-esteem
Compulsive stealing	Extremes of passivity or aggression
Makes a disclosure	Social isolation – withdrawn, a 'loner' Frozen watchfulness particularly pre school
Developmental delay	Depression
Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)	Desperate attention-seeking behaviour
Parent	Family/environment
Observed to be aggressive towards child or others	Marginalised or isolated by the community.
Intensely involved with their children, never allowing anyone else to undertake their child's care.	History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.
Previous domestic violence	History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgery in parents and/or siblings of the family
History of abuse or mental health problems	Past history in the care of childhood abuse, self harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault
Mental health, drug or alcohol difficulties	Wider parenting difficulties
Cold and unresponsive to the child's emotional needs	Physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement.
Overly critical of the child	Lack of support from family or social network.

Neglect	
<i>Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.</i>	
Child	
Failure to thrive - underweight, small stature	Low self-esteem
Dirty and unkempt condition	Inadequate social skills and poor socialisation
Inadequately clothed	Frequent lateness or unexplainable and/or persistent absences from at school
Dry sparse hair	Abnormal voracious appetite at school or nursery
Untreated medical problems	Self-harming behaviour
Red/purple mottled skin, particularly on the hands and feet, seen in the winter due to cold	Constant tiredness
Swollen limbs with sores that are slow to heal, usually associated with cold injury	Disturbed peer relationships
Parent	Family/environment
Failure to meet the child's basic essential needs including health needs	Marginalised or isolated by the community.
Leaving a child alone	History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.
Failure to provide adequate caretakers	History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgery in parents and/or siblings of the family
Keeping an unhygienic dangerous or hazardous home environment	Past history in the family of childhood abuse, self harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault
Unkempt presentation	Lack of opportunities for child to play and learn
Unable to meet child's emotional needs	Dangerous or hazardous home environment including failure to use home safety equipment; risk from animals
Mental health, alcohol or drug difficulties	

Sexual abuse	
<i>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 or non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at sexual images or being groomed on line / child exploitation.</i>	
Child	
Self-harm - eating disorders, self-mutilation and suicide attempts	Poor self-image, self-harm, self-hatred
Running away from home	Inappropriate sexualised conduct
Reluctant to undress for PE	Withdrawal, isolation or excessive worrying
Pregnancy	Sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate to age/stage of development, or that is unusually explicit
Inexplicable changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn	Poor attention / concentration (world of their own)
Pain, bleeding, bruising or itching in genital and /or anal area	Sudden changes in school work habits, become truant

Sexually exploited or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners	
Parent	Family/environment
History of sexual abuse	Marginalised or isolated by the community.
Excessively interested in the child.	History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.
Parent displays inappropriate behaviour towards the child or other children	History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgery in parents and/or siblings of the family
Conviction for sexual offences	Past history in the care of childhood abuse, self harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault
Comments made by the parent/carer about the child.	Grooming behaviour
Lack of sexual boundaries	Physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement.

APPENDIX 3

Keeping Children Safe in Education: Information for all School Staff

What school staff should know and do

1. Safeguarding and promoting the mental and physical welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as: protecting children from maltreatment; 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.
2. Children includes everyone under the age of 18.
3. Where a child is suffering harm, or is likely to do so, **immediate** action should be taken to protect that child. Action should also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or are at immediate risk.

The Role of the school

1. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding the mental and physical welfare of children. School staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children, to prevent concerns from escalating. Schools and colleges and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023*. Schools and Colleges should work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.
2. St Hilda's has a designated safeguarding lead who will provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as children's social care.

The role of school staff

1. The *Teacher Standards 2011 (updated 2021)* state that teachers, including headteachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
2. All school staff have a responsibility to identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. All staff then have a responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed.
3. In addition to working with the designated safeguarding lead staff members should be aware that they may be asked to support social workers to take decisions about individual children.

What school staff need to know

1. All staff members should be aware of systems within their school which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This includes: the School's Safeguarding Policy; the School's Staff Behaviour Policy (sometimes called a Code of Conduct); and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

2. All staff members should also receive appropriate child protection training which is regularly updated.
3. Induction information will include:
 - Employee Handbook
 - Health and Safety Handbook
 - Safeguarding Policy
 - Behaviour Policy
 - Whistleblowing Policy
 - Mobile Phone Usage Policy
 - Attendance (including Child Missing from Education) and Admissions Register Policy
 - Management of Health and Safety Policy
 - Crisis Management & Communications Policy
 - Internet and Email Acceptable Use Policy
 - Online Safety & Computing Acceptable Usage Policy
 - Staff Code of Conduct
 - Copy of KCSIE
 - List of DSL and DDSLs

What school and college staff should look out for

1. All school staff members should be aware of the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.
2. Staff members working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child.
3. There are various expert sources of advice on the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
4. Each area's Children's Services (Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership) should be able to advise on useful material, including training options. One good source of advice is provided on the [NSPCC website](#). Types of abuse, neglect and exploitation, and examples of specific safeguarding issues, are described in paragraphs 20-25.
5. Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse, neglect and exploitation. If staff members are unsure they should always speak to children's social care.
6. A child with unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education is a potential indicator of abuse, neglect or exploitation.
7. School staff members should follow the school's procedures for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation, including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

What school and college staff should do if they have concerns about a child

1. If staff members have concerns about a child they should raise these with the school's designated safeguarding lead. This also includes situations of abuse which may involve staff members. The safeguarding lead will usually decide whether to make a referral to children's social care, but it is important to note that any staff member can refer their concerns to children's social care directly.⁶ Where a child and family would benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency (for example education, health, housing, police) there should be an inter-agency assessment.

2. These assessments should identify what help the child and family require to prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children and Families Act 2014. The early help assessment should be undertaken by a lead professional who could be a teacher, special educational needs coordinator, General Practitioner (GP), family support worker, and/or health visitor.
3. **If at any point, there is a risk of immediate harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.**
4. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and Serious Case Reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. Poor practice includes: failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation, poor record keeping, failing to listen to the views of the child, failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve, sharing information too slowly and a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

APPENDIX 3 (a)

Keeping Children Safe in Education: Information for all School Staff

Part One: Information for all school staff

(formerly Annex A: Further information)

Link to KCSIE 2026

[Keeping children safe in education 2026 \(comes into force from 1 September 2026\)](#)

It is **essential** that **all** staff have access to this online document and read Part 1 and **new Annex A** which provides further information on:

- children missing from education
- child sexual exploitation (including **the making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes, with or without consent**, or upskirting)
- **so called** 'honour based' violence
- FGM mandatory reporting duty
- forced marriage
- preventing radicalisation
- serious violence
- **child criminal exploitation** (including financial exploitation or that linked to county lines) and **child sexual exploitation**
- child on child abuse

Staff will be required to declare via SmartLog that they have read and are familiar with the contents of the following documents and understand their role and responsibilities as set out in these document(s):

(1) The School's Safeguarding Policy

(2) Part 1 and new Annex A of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' DfE Guidance, 2026

and that they are aware that the DSL and DDSLs are:

Mrs Natalie Atkins (Director of Pastoral Care) DSL

Mr Dan Sayers (Headteacher) DDSL

Mrs Tracey Couch (Deputy Headteacher) DDSL

Mrs Jan Radgman (Head of EYFS) DDSL

Mrs Carey Matthews (Teaching Assistant and Head of Holiday Club Provision) DDSL

Mrs Katy Griffin (Director of Studies) DDSL

and they are able to discuss any concerns that they may have with them.

Staff will subsequently be re-directed to these online documents again should any changes occur.

APPENDIX 4

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE WORRIED A CHILD IS BEING ABUSED: ADVICE FOR PRACTITIONERS (DfE 2015)

Be alert

- Be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect
- Identify concerns early to prevent escalation.
- Know what systems the school have in place regarding support for safeguarding e.g. induction training , staff behaviour policy / code of conduct and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSP) .

Question behaviours

- Talk and listen to the views of children, be non - judgemental.
- Observe any change in behaviours and question any unexplained marks / injuries
- To raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice , refer to the HT or principal, if the concerns is about the HT or Principal, report to Chair of Governors. Utilise whistleblowing procedure.

Ask for help

- Record and share information appropriately with regard to confidentiality
- If staff members have concerns, raise these with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSP)
- Responsibility to take appropriate action, do not delay.

Refer

- DSP will make referrals to children's services but in an emergency or a genuine concern that appropriate action has not been taken, staff members can speak directly to Children's Services on 03001234043 .

APPENDIX 5

Job Description for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL and DDSLs)

Job description for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL and DDSLs)

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment	
Summary of the role	- To take lead responsibility for all child protection matters (including online safety and overseeing that the required filtering and monitoring systems and processes are in place and effective) occurring at the school and to support all other staff in dealing with any child protection concerns that arise. - To have the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources, and where appropriate, supporting and directing other staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils. - Whilst the activities of DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies (DDSLs), the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection remains with the DSL. This lead responsibility cannot be delegated. - To promote and safeguard the welfare of pupils in the school. To ensure that child protection files are kept up to date and that information is kept confidential (accessible only to those who need to see it) and stored securely. The DSL is also responsible for ensuring the records contain: A clear and comprehensive summary of any concerns Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, and A note of any action taken and/or decisions reached and the outcome. To ensure the transfer of any child protection files, as well as the sharing of any additional relevant information where appropriate, in relation to both incoming or outgoing pupils, in accordance with the statutory requirements. At St Hilda's, pupil files are to be transferred via CPOMS if the receiving/sending school also uses this platform, or otherwise are to be sent by secure delivery.
Main duties and responsibilities	Further specifics:
Managing referrals	You are expected to: - refer all cases of suspected abuse of any pupil at the school to the local authority children's social care. - refer cases where a crime has been committed to the Police.

	• refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern. • refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). • provide support to staff who make referrals. • be aware of the appropriate adult guidelines. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance PACE Code C 2019.
Work with others	You are expected to: • act as a point of contact with Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (0300 123 4043). • liaise with the Headteacher 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” (as per Part 4 of KCSIE) and the designated officer (LADO) at the local authority for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member. • liaise with staff (especially pastoral support staff, IT staff, First Aiders, and the named persons with oversight for SEND) on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies. • share information with appropriate staff in relation to a child’s looked after (CLA) legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an Interim Care Order or Care Order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. • to act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
Training	You are expected to ensure your child protection training and that of the DDSLs is sufficient and appropriate to provide the knowledge and skills required to carry out this role. This training must be updated every two years. All members of the DSL team should also undertake Prevent awareness training. In addition to the formal training, the knowledge and skills of members of the DSL team should be supplemented and refreshed at least on an annual basis to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role in order to: • 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 or school's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff. • be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers, including recognising the impact caring responsibilities can have on the attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing of young carers. • understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation. • understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school, and with the local authority, other agencies, organisations and practitioners. • be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals, discussions and decisions made, including the rationale for those decisions. • understand and support the school with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and be able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation. • be able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school. • be able to 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. • encourage a culture of listening to pupils and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.
Raising awareness	You are expected to: • ensure that the school's child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately. • ensure the school's safeguarding policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the Governing Board regarding this. • ensure the safeguarding policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation may be made and the role of the school in this. • link with the local authority to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements.
Child protection files	You are expected to: • consider whether it is appropriate to share any information with the new school in advance of pupil leaving.

	• ensure that when a pupil leaves the school their child protection file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible. • ensure child protection files are transferred separately from the pupil's main file in a secure manner and confirmation of receipt is received from the destination school or college and then destroy any information held on the child in line with data protection guidelines.
Availability	You are expected to: • ensure during term time either the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) will always be available during school hours (7.30am – 6 pm) to discuss any safeguarding concerns. During the school day and wraparound care, St Hilda's always has a DSL or DDSL on site or contactable and within 10 minutes from the school . A member of SLT is always present on late duty. • Arrange robust and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities. • Arrange robust and appropriate cover arrangements in the event of remote learning.

Signed:

Position:

Date:

APPENDIX 6

CONTACT DETAILS

Designated Safeguarding Lead:	natkins@sthildasharpenden.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Headteacher@sthildasharpenden.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:	TCouch@sthildasharpenden.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:	KGriffin@sthildasharpenden.co.uk
EYFS Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:	jradgman@sthildasharpenden.co.uk
Holiday Club Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:	cmatthews@sthildasharpenden.co.uk

The Mobile No for the DSL or DDSLs to be contactable on outside of school hours will be confirmed.

Proprietor: **Emily Halliday** 01582 712307

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (24 hours): 0300 123 4043

NSPCC whistleblowing helpline: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Child Protection Consultation Line for Schools: 01438 737 511

PREVENT concerns should be reported to the staff and governors of St Hilda's, the local police authority (101) or the DfE dedicated non-emergency helpline: 020 7340 7264 (extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk)

This policy will be reviewed annually, by the Senior Management Team, in line with the school's review schedule for policies.