

NEWLANDS GIRLS' SCHOOL

POLICY DOCUMENT



NEWLANDS GIRLS' SCHOOL
COURAGE COMMITMENT COMPASSION

Safeguarding Policy (Child Protection Policy)

LAST UPDATED AND REVIEWED	(by) DSL	September 2025
POLICY TYPE	Statutory	
REVIEW DATE	Annually – July 2026	
RESPONSIBLE		
Leadership Team	Headteacher	
Governing Committee	Full Governing Body	
APPROVED	Approved by Governors	Full Governing Body
	Meeting Date	

COURAGE COMMITMENT COMPASSION

1. This policy has been authorised by the Governors, and is addressed to all pupils, members of staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to the school. It is freely available and is published on the school website. It applies wherever staff or volunteers are working with pupils, even when they are away from the school, for example at an activity centre or on an educational visit.
2. The welfare of our pupils will always be our central concern, informed by the school's ethos and by legal requirements. Pupils are actively encouraged to raise personal and general concerns with members of staff.

'School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating. All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn' Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE, September 2025.

Full details of this shared responsibility can be found in the DfE document *Working Together to Safeguard Children, June 2025.*

3. The Headteacher (who is a qualified Designated Safeguarding Lead), the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads have very important roles in being available to all members of the school community to offer advice on matters relating to Safeguarding. Responsibility for the welfare of pupils rests with all staff, but particularly with Senior Leaders in the school.
4. The Governors of Newlands Girls' School, are fully and properly informed of matters relating to Child Protection and Safeguarding. The Governors have full access to all the facts surrounding Child Protection concerns and the school's response, as and when it is appropriate. They have overall responsibility for the response made and to those in their care when events took place. This includes the responsibility to assure themselves that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place. To support them in that work, a Governor is identified as having a role in leading on Child Protection and Safeguarding.
5. The Designated Safeguarding Lead, supported by the Deputies, will ensure that the performance of the safeguarding and Child Protection regime is reported at regular meetings of the Governing Body (see the Designated Safeguarding Lead's responsibilities on Page 7).
6. Safeguarding is everybody's business. **All staff** should be aware of the challenges faced by pupils in understanding what they are being asked and in explaining what has happened to them. While staff must be mindful of the importance of not leading or suggesting, they will need to ensure that the pupils understand and are understood. Some pupils will choose to

have a member of staff with them if they have any interviews or meetings with outside agencies and will be made aware of the opportunity to do so, where it is permitted. It is also important to recognise that children may not feel ready to tell someone that they are being abused or exploited or neglected, but this shouldn't stop staff from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL. All staff should take the attitude of 'it could happen here'.

Filtering and Monitoring

In line with *Meeting Digital and Technology Standards in Schools*, all staff have a duty to report directly to the DSL via CPOMS in the following circumstances:

- a. if they see or suspect unacceptable content has been accessed;
- b. if they discover that unacceptable content can be accessed;
- c. if they are teaching content that could cause a spike in logs;
- d. if they become aware of a failure or abuse of the system;
- e. if they perceive unreasonable restrictions;
- f. if they discover any abbreviations or misspellings that allow access to unacceptable content.

Daily reports from Smoothwall, the school's filtering and monitoring software, are sent to the DSL, Leadership Team and Systems Manager, with any safeguarding concerns being followed up and logged.

Commitment

7. Newlands Girls' School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff and volunteers to share that commitment. The school will take measures to:
 - a) ensure that we practise safer recruitment (including relevant overseas sources) in checking the suitability of **staff, supply teachers, volunteers and contractors (including staff employed by another organisation)** to work with children and young people in accordance with the guidance given in *Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2025*. This includes risk assessment completion for all volunteers from September 2018. We also carry out online searches of any shortlisted candidates in relation to applications received from September 2022, with their knowledge, to outline any potential issues.
 - b) ensure that we carry out all necessary checks on the suitability of people who serve on the school's governing body in accordance with the above regulations and guidance given in *Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2025*. This includes relevant Section 128 checks on any new member of staff or Governors in a

managerial capacity from September 2018 achieved through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

- c) work with local agencies to: identify children and families who would benefit from early help (i.e. providing support as soon as a problem emerges, which includes children with health conditions); undertake an assessment of the need; and provide targeted early help to address the assessed need in accordance with the guidance given in *Working Together to Safeguard Children, June 2025*.
- d) ensure that where the school ceases to use the services of any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or pupil) because that person has engaged in conduct that harmed (or is likely to harm) a child or if they otherwise pose a risk of harm to a child, a detailed report is made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) as soon as possible and in any event within one month. Ceasing to use a person's services includes dismissal; non-renewal of a fixed-term contract; no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency; terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee; no longer using staff employed by contractors; no longer using volunteers; resignation, and
- e) voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering.
- f) ensure that referrals are always made to the DBS as provided for in this policy whether the issue to be referred is current or historical.
- g) ensure that whenever staff from another organisation are working with our pupils unaccompanied on another site, we have received assurances from that organisation, that appropriate Child Protection checks and procedures apply to those staff.
- h) ensure that when a pupil is placed with an alternative provision provider, the school continues to be responsible for safeguarding and in person checks and written confirmation is obtained to confirm that the relevant safeguarding checks have taken place.
- i) follow the RBWM Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedures.
- j) protect each pupil from any form of abuse, whether from an adult or another pupil.
- k) be alert to signs of abuse both in the school and from outside. The school understands the importance of contextual safeguarding (for example, County Lines, CCE, CSE and self-harm being relevant in RBWM) and will seek the advice of the Safeguarding Schools' Officer from Thames Valley Police in raising awareness of local issues. A member of the

school Safeguarding Team will always be present when a police search is taking place. The DSL will also make all staff aware of when to call the police by providing relevant information based on the National Police Chiefs Council: When to Call the Police - Guidance for Schools and Colleges'. [when-to-call-the-police--guidance-for-schools-and-colleges.pdf \(npcc.police.uk\)](https://www.npcc.police.uk/when-to-call-the-police--guidance-for-schools-and-colleges.pdf)

- l) deal appropriately with each suspicion or allegation of abuse against a member of staff, volunteer or governor in accordance with *"RBWM Child Protection Procedures and Working Together to Safeguard Children, June 2025"*, and by consulting with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
 - m) operate procedures which promote this policy.
 - n) operate procedures which, so far as possible, ensure that teachers and others who are innocent are not prejudiced by false allegations.
 - o) support children who have been abused in accordance with an agreed multi-agency Child Protection plan or Child in Need plan if applicable.
 - p) be alert to the needs of children with medical conditions.
 - q) operate robust health & safety procedures.
 - r) ensure that school premises are as secure as circumstances permit.
 - s) provide staff with training about taking sensible steps when working with individual pupils to ensure they are not in secluded or private areas.
 - t) deal with any other safeguarding issues which may be specific to individual children in our school; have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education (DfE) in accordance with section 157 of the Education Act 2002 and associated regulations, the main sources of guidance currently being: *Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2025; Working Together to Safeguard Children, June 2025 and RBWM Child Protection Procedures.*
 - u) maintain a positive school atmosphere, which will help prevent incidents from occurring, supported by the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils.
8. Every Child Protection concern, complaint, or suspicion of abuse from within or outside the school is taken seriously and followed up and, as set out in this policy, referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Children's Services, or Child Protection lead for education. In each case, the matter will be referred to Children's Services and where

appropriate, Children's Services in the child's home area. This includes allegations of historic abuse. In the case of those working in a school, the employer (school) will report to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) all cases where it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates she is unsuitable to work with children.

Roles and responsibilities

9. The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection

The school has appointed a senior member of staff with the necessary status and authority (Designated Safeguarding Lead) to be responsible for matters relating to Child Protection and welfare. The main responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead are:

- a) to be the first point of contact for parents, pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff and external agencies in all matters of Child Protection.
- b) to be fully conversant with the Local Authority and School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures. (The Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements)
- c) to be available to all staff of the school community for consultation on Child Protection issues.
- d) to co-ordinate the Child Protection procedures in the school.
- e) to maintain an ongoing training programme for all school employees.
- f) to monitor the keeping, confidentiality and storage of records in relation to Child Protection.
- g) With the Headteacher, to liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- h) to ensure that appropriate action is taken in the school and that procedures are followed in all Child Protection concerns and actual or suspected cases of child abuse.

This includes making referrals to the Channel Programme (Prevent), the DBS or the Police as relevant.

- i) to contact the duty social worker/MASH and/or the Police within twenty-four hours to seek advice on concerns brought by staff, volunteers or pupils, where a student is suspected to be, or has previously been, subject to abuse.
 - j) to monitor records of pupils in the school who are subject to a Child Protection or Child in Need plan. To ensure that their records are maintained and updated as notification is received.
 - k) to liaise with other professionals to ensure that children who are subject to a Child Protection or Child in Need Plan are monitored.
 - l) where appropriate, to take part in the Child Protection conferences, reviews, core group meetings and Child in Need meetings. When the Designated Safeguarding Lead cannot attend, he or she will ensure that the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead or a key member of staff attends. Where this is not possible, to provide a written report to the conference from the school. (It is acknowledged that this should occur rarely as the involvement of school staff is vital given their close involvement with the child.)
 - m) to inform the child's Social Worker in writing when a child who is subject to a Child Protection or Child in Need Plan moves to another school and to inform the new school of the child's status.
 - n) in consultation with the Headteacher, to monitor staff development and training needs with regard to Child Protection issues and to ensure that training provided is current and relevant. This includes mandatory training for governors.
 - o) to ensure that the curriculum offers opportunities for raising pupil awareness of Child Protection issues and developing strategies for ensuring their own protection.
 - p) together with the Headteacher and School Leadership Team, review annually the School's Policy on Child Protection and Safeguarding, looking at how the duties have been discharged, and reporting on this to the Governors.
 - q) To take lead responsibility for safeguarding and online safety, which includes overseeing and acting on: filtering and monitoring reports; safeguarding concerns; checks to filtering and monitoring systems.
10. In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, who must be nominated in advance, must take responsibility

for Child Protection issues within the school. They will:

- advise and act upon all Child Protection concerns reported to him or her.
 - keep the Headteacher informed of all actions unless the Headteacher is the subject of a complaint. In this situation, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should consult with the Chair of Governors or in his or her absence, the Vice Chair.
 - liaise with Children's Services and other agencies on behalf of the school.
 - Carry out any other duties normally conducted by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
11. If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is unavailable or is herself the subject of a complaint, her duties will be carried out by a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead who has received appropriate training in safeguarding and inter-agency working.
12. To undertake appropriate training every two years in relation to their role and the Child Protection procedures.

Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (Replaced the Local Safeguarding Children Boards)

New safeguarding partners and child death review partner arrangements came into force by 29 September 2019.

Newlands Girls' School is aware of these changes and how to follow the new local arrangements.

Employees, Governors, School Advisors and Volunteers

13. The Headteacher and all other employees of the school, as well as every volunteer and school advisor who works with pupils, is under a general legal duty:
- a) to protect children from abuse and promote their welfare.
 - b) to be aware of the school's practice and policies on Safeguarding and Child Protection and to follow them.
 - c) to know how to access and implement the procedures, independently if necessary.

- d) in dealing with a Child Protection issue to remain as objective as possible, never assuming that they know which categories of children are at risk.
- e) to keep an appropriate record of any significant complaint, conversation or event. Information should be recorded verbatim, if possible. Adults should not prompt, lead or suggest information to the child.
- f) to refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.
- g) to undertake appropriate training, including induction training and refresher training, at regular intervals.

Whistle blowing

14. All staff are required to report any concern or allegations about school practices or the behaviour of colleagues which are likely to put pupils at risk of abuse or other serious harm. Such reports are made to the Headteacher, and, if appropriate, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). There will be no retribution or disciplinary action taken against a member of staff for making such a report provided that it is done in good faith. See also Section 48: Allegations against staff members, volunteers or Governors. There is a separate policy on Whistle blowing which should be read in conjunction with this summary.

Low-level concerns can arise in several ways from various sources, e.g. suspicion, complaint or a disclosure. If ANY staff member has a worry, they should confidentially share low-level concerns with the Headteacher. The Headteacher will be the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low-level concerns, although they may wish to consult the DSL to take a more collaborative approach. If the DSL or Headteacher is in any doubt as to whether a low-level concern meets the harm threshold, then the Local Authority Designated Officer(LADO) will be contacted. 'Humiliating pupils' could be an example of a low-level concern.

Training

15. The Designated Safeguarding Lead has undertaken Child Protection training and training in inter-agency working and will attend refresher training at two yearly intervals. The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads with responsibilities for Child Protection issues, as detailed in this policy, will also undertake this same training.
16. All staff, governors and volunteers undertake training in Child Protection and Safeguarding and this is updated at least annually. This is bespoke to the remit of the role.

17. Records of training will be monitored by Governors.
18. Every year at the beginning of the school year, all staff and volunteers who work in the school are reminded of the provisions in this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
19. Every recruitment panel includes at least one member of staff who has undergone Safer Recruitment training, with refresher training every three years.
20. The Governors will receive appropriate and up-to-date Child Protection training and safer recruitment training (where relevant) to ensure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities.
21. If they have not attended the initial staff training, temporary and voluntary staff who work with children are made aware of the school's arrangements for safeguarding and their responsibilities.
22. The school will keep a central record of all safeguarding training undertaken by members of staff, Governors and others.
23. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies will attend the Multi Agency DSL Network Meetings and share good practice within the DSL community of RBWM.
24. There is a planned programme of training throughout the year, including online safety.

Child abuse: Categories and definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

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

Children includes everyone under the age of 18. The school's safeguarding responsibilities extend to all pupils, including those aged 18.

25. Possible signs of abuse include (but are not limited to):

- the pupil says she has been abused or asks a question which gives rise to that inference.
- there is no reasonable or consistent explanation for a pupil's injury; the injury is unusual in kind or location; there have been a number of injuries; there is a pattern to the injuries.
- the pupil's behaviour stands out from the group as either being extreme model behaviour or extremely challenging behaviour; or there is a sudden change in the pupil's behaviour.
- the pupil asks to drop subjects with a particular teacher and seems reluctant to discuss the reasons.
- the pupil's development is delayed.
- the pupil loses or gains weight.
- the pupil appears neglected, e.g. dirty, hungry, inadequately clothed.
- the pupil is reluctant to go home, or has been openly rejected by her parents or carers.
- The pupil is reluctant to go to school.

Physical Abuse (as defined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025*)

26. 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.

Possible signs of Physical Abuse:

27. Hitting, squeezing, biting or twisting a child's arms or legs can cause injuries like bruises, grazes, cuts or broken bones. Sometimes someone burns a child, perhaps by holding a part of the body against something very hot or by scalding. Poisoning a child, perhaps by giving them alcohol or drugs, is also physical abuse. Older children may seek to conceal such injuries by keeping their arms and legs covered or being reluctant to change for sport. Responsible staff need to be especially concerned about:
- injuries which do not match the explanation given for them.
 - bruises in places where you would not normally expect to find them, in soft tissue, for example, rather than on the bony prominence.
 - bruises which have a distinctive shape or pattern, like hand prints, grasp or finger marks or belt marks.

- burns or scalds with clear outlines.
- bite marks and bruises like love-bites.
- bruising in or around the mouth.

Emotional Abuse (as defined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025*)

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

Possible signs of Emotional Abuse:

29. This form of abuse may result in a child becoming withdrawn, nervous, and unhappy or lacking in confidence. It may result in a child being unable to make friends, perhaps because they behave aggressively or inappropriately towards other children. Emotional abuse may happen when a carer behaves in a persistently indifferent or hostile way towards a child, perhaps through bullying, rejecting, frightening, criticising or scapegoating the child. It may happen when a carer's behaviour is inconsistent so that the child never knows what reaction to expect. It may happen when carers are very possessive or over-protective. In severe cases, children may be subjected to cruel treatment and punishment, like being locked in cold, dark surroundings or being made to do endless, inappropriate household tasks. A child living with domestic violence is also suffering emotional harm. Responsible staff should be especially concerned about a child who:
- is continually depressed and withdrawn.
 - runs away or who is frightened to go home.

- is reluctant to attend school.
- is persistently blamed for things that go wrong.
- is made to carry out tasks inappropriate to their age.
- is not allowed to do normal childhood activities.
- displays excessive fear of their parents or carers.
- is excessively clingy and tearful.

Sexual Abuse (as defined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025*)

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

The key elements in any definition of sexual abuse are:

- the betrayal of trust and responsibility.
- abuse of power for the purpose of the sexual gratification of the abuser.

Possible signs of sexual abuse:

31. The abuser may use different ways to persuade the child to cooperate such as bribery, threats or physical force. Sexual abuse can take different forms, from touching to intercourse, and often does not cause any outward signs of physical injury. It can happen to boys as well as girls and to children of any age, from birth to 18 years old. Sexual abuse can have long lasting effects. Some children who have been abused go on to abuse other children. Some find as they grow up that they are unable to have close relationships with other people. Others deliberately injure themselves because they feel so awful about themselves.

Be especially concerned about a child who:

- exhibits sexually explicit behaviour.

- has inappropriate sexual knowledge for his or her age.
- attempts suicide or self-inflicts injuries.
- repeatedly runs away from home.

Neglect (as defined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025*)

31. 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. 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).
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

Possible signs of neglect:

32. Responsible staff should be especially concerned about a child who:

- is constantly hungry, greedy or stealing food.
- has lingering illnesses which have not been treated.
- is continually smelly, scruffy and dirty.
- is often dressed in inadequate or unsuitable clothing for the weather conditions.
- suffers repeated accidents, suggesting a lack of proper supervision.
- is constantly tired.
- does not respond when given attention or, on the other hand, craves attention and affection from any adult.

Online Safety

33. The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.

contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.

conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying

commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

For further information, please refer to the Online Safety Policy.

Child on Child Abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or online.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. All staff must take the attitude of 'it could happen here'.

33. Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up.
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”,

“part of growing up” or “just having a laugh” and the different forms of child on child abuse can take:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
 - abuse in intimate personal relationships between children;
 - physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
 - sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
 - sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
 - causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
 - consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery). Taking and sharing nude photographs of under 18s is a criminal offence; Coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they're not comfortable with online.
 - upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
 - initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).
-
- challenging behaviour (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia and flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them; and
 - understanding that all of the above can be driven by wider societal factors beyond the school, such as everyday sexist stereotypes and everyday sexist language. This is why a whole school approach (especially preventative education) is important and forms part of the PSHE programme.

NB: Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;

- the potential for children with SEND being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying and harassment, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties overcoming these barriers.

Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) and the SENCO.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBT+) can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by their peers to be LGBT+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT+. It is vital that this group have a safe space in school to share concerns or worries.

Please see separate policy on **Sexual Violence and Harassment (Child on Child Abuse)** and Part five of *Keeping Children Safe in Education*: Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment for further support: [Keeping children safe in education 2025](#) It also needs to be recognised that there may be intra-familial harms experienced by siblings following a report of sexual harassment, and they may need supporting in school.

Upskirting

34. Changes to the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 criminalises the act of 'upskirting'. The Criminal Prosecution Service (CPS) defines 'upskirting' as:

“a colloquial term referring to the action of placing equipment such as a camera or mobile phone beneath a person’s clothing to take a voyeuristic photograph without their permission. It is not only confined to victims wearing skirts or dresses and equally applies when men or women are wearing kilts, cassocks, shorts or trousers. It is often performed in crowded public places, for example on public transport or at music festivals, which can make it difficult to notice offenders.”

It is now seen as a form of child on child abuse and pupils should report any incidents of upskirting by following the usual safeguarding procedures. Appropriate action will then be taken.

Sharing Nudes and Semi-nudes (Sexting)

35. What is 'sexting'?

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes means the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos, or live streams by young people under the age of 18 online. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's AirDrop which works offline.

The sharing of nudes and semi-nudes can happen publicly online, in 1:1 messaging or via group chats and closed social media accounts.

Nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams may include more than one child or young person. The term 'nudes' is used as it is most commonly recognised by young people and more appropriately covers all types of image sharing incidents. Alternative terms used by children and young people may include 'dick pics' or 'pics'. Professionals may refer to this as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery'.

'Sexting' does not include the sharing of sexual photos and videos of under 18-year olds with or by adults. This is a form of child sexual abuse and must be referred to the police.

In March 2024, the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) released updated non-statutory guidance in England on responding to incidents involving the sharing of nude and semi-nude images. The full guidance can be found here: [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people \(updated March 2024\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people)

If an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nudes or semi-nudes comes to the attention of a member of staff, they must report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.

Staff must not intentionally view or forward any nudes and semi-nudes unless absolutely necessary or unavoidable. Responses to incidents should be based on what DSLs have been told about the content of the imagery.

Staff should never copy, print, share, store or save them; this is illegal.

The Law

Making, possessing, and distributing any imagery of someone under 18 which is 'indecent' is illegal. This includes imagery of yourself if you are under 18. The non-consensual sharing of private sexual images or videos with the intent to cause distress is also illegal. HOWEVER, the law criminalising indecent images of children was created to protect children and young people from adults seeking to sexually abuse them or gain pleasure from their sexual abuse. It was not intended to criminalise children and young people. The law was also developed long before mass adoption of the internet, mobiles and digital photography. The new guidance states that safeguarding children should be the focus and education settings may respond to incidents without involving the police for example where an incident can be defined as 'experimental' and there is no evidence abusive or 'aggravating' elements.

Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive – but children still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive.

When an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nudes or semi-nudes comes to a school's attention:

- The incident should be referred to the DSL as soon as possible.
- The DSL should hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff.
- There should be subsequent interviews with the young people involved (if appropriate).
- Parents should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process, unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm.
- At any point in the process if there is a concern a young person has been harmed, or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to Children's Social Care and/or the police immediately.

The next steps about whether to refer or report will be decided on a case by case basis by the DSL.

Serious Violent Crime

36. All staff need to know the indicators that may signal that pupils are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include:

- Unexplained gifts/new possessions - these can indicate children have been approached by/involved with individuals associated with criminal networks/gangs
- Increased absence from school
- Change in friendship/relationships with others/groups
- Significant decline in performance
- Signs of self-harm/significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault/unexplained injuries

If you suspect any pupil may be at risk or involved in serious violent crime it must be reported immediately, in person, to the DSL for investigation. Further guidance on preventing youth violence can be accessed here:

[Preventing youth violence and gang involvement - Practical advice for schools and colleges \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/671112/preventing-youth-violence-and-gang-involvement-practical-advice-for-schools-and-colleges.pdf)

Staff and volunteer responsibility

37. Staff and volunteers should understand that they are not making a diagnosis, only receiving concerns. None of the signs listed previously may actually prove that a child is being abused and these indications should not be taken as proof. They may be indicators, which when put into context, provide justification for action.
38. Emotional abuse is more than just the occasional criticism of a child. Abuse is a symptom of continued negative treatment, which ostracises or belittles a child. This is usually the result of extremes of inappropriate care by the parents and so very difficult to confront.
39. ALL abuse is emotional abuse irrespective of whether or not it is accompanied by physical injury, sexual abuse or neglect.
40. Child on child abuse must be taken as seriously and be reported in the same manner.

Procedures

41. A member of staff suspecting or hearing a complaint of abuse:
 - Must listen carefully to the child and keep an open mind. Staff should not take a decision as to whether or not the abuse has occurred.
 - Must not ask leading questions, that is, a question which suggests its own answer (“Was it your Father?” or “Did this take place on Tuesday when you were away?”).
 - Must reassure the child but not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality. The member of staff should explain that they need to pass the information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will ensure that the correct action is taken.

Preserving evidence

42. All evidence (for example scribbled notes, mobile phones containing text messages, clothing, and computers) must be safeguarded and preserved.

Recording

43. It is essential to create a full, contemporaneous report of the meeting. To do this:

- a) make brief notes as soon as possible after the meeting. This may be possible in the meeting itself.
- b) write up your notes in full and include time, date, place and signature.
- c) describe observable behaviour e.g. was shaking, continued to cry, constantly moved around the room (Do not interpret these features).
- d) record the actual words spoken by the child wherever possible.

Reporting

44. All suspicion or complaints of abuse must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Action by the Designated Safeguarding Lead

45. The action to be taken will:

- a. conform to the RBWM Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedures.
- b. ensure that the school will not investigate concerns but refer them to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Children's Services or Police; respect the wishes of the complainant's parents, provided they have no interest which is in conflict with the pupil's best interests and that they are properly informed. Again, it may be necessary, after all appropriate consultation, to override parental wishes in some circumstances. If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is concerned that disclosing information to parents would put a child at risk, he or she will take further advice from the relevant professionals before making a decision to disclose.
- c. respect duties of confidentiality, so far as applicable.
- d. ensure that a child's interests are paramount.
- e. ensure that, if there is room for doubt as to whether a referral to Children's services should be made, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consult with MASH, or in the case of an allegation against a professional, the LADO, or other appropriate professionals on a no names basis without identifying the pupil. However, as soon as sufficient concern exists that a child may be at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made as soon as possible. If no response or acknowledgment is received within three working days, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact Social Care again. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will agree with the recipient of the referral what the child and parents will be told, by whom and when.

Referral guidelines

46. Our policy is to refer all matters of concern to the appropriate agency. If it is a matter of Child Protection it will be referred to Children's Services. If the concern relates to an allegation against a member of staff it will be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
47. Any indication of a potential Child Protection issue must be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If the Designated Safeguarding Lead has concerns he or she will contact the LADO to seek clarification on what action should be taken.

Allegations against staff members, volunteers or Governors

48. The School follows procedures for dealing with allegations against staff (and volunteers who work with children) that aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect staff and volunteers from malicious or unfounded allegations. These procedures follow the guidance in *Working Together to Safeguard Children* and also from the RBWM Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedures. Full consideration will be given to all the options, subject to the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the pupils or pupil concerned. Transferrable risk will also, be carefully considered; where an incident outside school could have an impact on suitability to work with children. For example, if a member of staff is involved in domestic violence at home.
49. Where an allegation or complaint is made against the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation should immediately inform the Chair of Governors, or in his or her absence, the Vice Chair.
50. Staff should be aware of how to reduce the likelihood that their behaviour and actions might place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm. They should read the DfE document *Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those Working with Children and Young People in Education Settings 2019*.
51. If the school ceases to use the services of a member of staff (or a governor or volunteer) because that person has engaged in conduct that harmed (or is likely to harm) a child, or if they otherwise pose a risk of harm to a child, a compromise agreement will not be used and there will be a prompt and detailed report to the Disclosure and Barring Service. Any such incidents will be followed by a review of the safeguarding procedures within the school, with a report being presented to the Governors without delay.
52. If an allegation against a member of staff is found to have been malicious it will be removed from personnel records. Then on a case by case basis if an allegation is not substantiated, is unfounded or malicious, the decision will be made as to whether it will be referred to in any employment reference.

Allegations against pupils

53. A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be excluded from the school and the school's policy on behaviour, discipline and sanctions will apply. The school will take advice from Children's Services or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) as appropriate on such allegations and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils involved, including the pupil or pupils accused of abuse. If it is necessary for a pupil to be interviewed by the police in relation to allegations of abuse, the school will ensure that, subject to the advice of Children's Services or the LADO, parents are informed as soon as possible and that the pupil is supported during the interview by an appropriate adult. In the case of pupils whose parents are abroad, the pupil's guardian will be requested to provide support to the pupil and to accommodate him/her if it is necessary to exclude him/her.

If a pupil is excluded from school as a result of an allegation of abuse, the Chair of Governors and at least one Designated Governor will be informed as soon as practicable.

Harm from outside the school

54. A member of staff who suspects that a pupil is suffering harm from outside the school should refer the matter to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

When a Child Goes Missing or is Absent From Education

55. When the whereabouts of a pupil is unclear or unknown the school, in conjunction with RBWM, will complete and record one or more of the following actions:
- a. make contact with the parent, relatives and neighbours using known contact details.
 - b. check local databases within the local authority.
 - c. follow local information sharing arrangements and where possible make enquiries via other local databases and agencies e.g. those of housing providers, school admissions, health services, police, refuge, Youth Justice Services, children's social care, and HMRC5.
 - d. check with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) and/or the Border Force.

- e. check with agencies known to be involved with family.
- f. check with the school from which the student moved originally, if known.
- g. check with any local authority and school to which the student may have moved.
- h. check with the local authority where the girl lives, if different from where the school is.
- i. in the case of children of Service Personnel, check with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS); and
- j. home visit(s) made by appropriate team, following local guidance concerning risk assessment and if appropriate make enquiries with neighbour(s) and relatives.

This list is not exhaustive or prescriptive. The school will treat each case on its individual merits using our judgement, ensuring we have taken into account all of the facts of the case. This will be managed by the DSL in collaboration with the Attendance Officer and the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer.

Further information on Children who are Absent from Education

56. All staff should be aware that children being absent from school, particularly with persistent and/or unexplainable absences and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation. Staff should follow our standard procedures for unauthorised absence, particularly on repeated occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future.

Homestay Arrangements

57. When the school arranges a homestay (such as a language exchange programme) professional judgement will be used to safeguard those involved to ensure that when children stay in host families abroad, relevant and rigorous safeguarding checks will be made. This will be the responsibility of the trip organiser and reported back to the DSL. When the school arranges for a visiting child to be provided with care and accommodation in the UK in the home of a family to which the child is not related, school will obtain a DBS enhanced certificate with children's barred list information to help assess the suitability of the UK host family.

Supporting pupils at risk

58. Newlands Girls' School recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth or view the world as a positive place. School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

The school will endeavour to support pupils through:

- the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
 - The school core values of courage, commitment, compassion and the school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
 - the implementation of the school's relational approach to behaviour management policies.
 - a consistent approach agreed by all staff which will endeavour to ensure the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but that she is valued.
 - regular liaison with other professionals and agencies that support the pupils and their families.
 - a commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents and carers, whenever it is in the child's best interest to do so.
 - the development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in Child Protection situations.
 - recognition that statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities, are most vulnerable to abuse so staff who work in any capacity with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.
 - recognition that in a home environment where there is domestic abuse, drug or alcohol abuse, and any other difficulties experienced by families, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support and/or protection.
59. This policy should be considered alongside other related policies in school. These are the policies for the teaching of PSHE, behaviour policy, the physical intervention policy, the anti-bullying policy and the health and safety policy, SEND policy (SIR) and the online safety pupil and staff user agreements.

Further information on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

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

Further information on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

61. 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. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present, this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Further information and guidance can be found here: [Female genital mutilation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) When staff suspect a girl is at risk of FGM they should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

In addition, is a statutory duty for staff to refer known FGM cases to the Police. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 places a specific legal duty on teachers. 14 If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police.

The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: [New duty for health and social care professionals and teachers to report female genital mutilation \(FGM\) to the police](#)

Further information on Forced Marriage

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

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.

Further information on Preventing Radicalisation

63. Children may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk is part of the school's safeguarding approach.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Radicalisation is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home). However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being drawn to terrorism. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of

radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) making a Prevent referral. If any staff member suspects any student is being drawn into radicalisation, they should follow the normal safeguarding procedures.

The Prevent duty

All schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard” to the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

Further information can be found in the revised Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 141-210, which are specifically concerned with education.

[Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales \(2023\) - GOV.UK](#)

Channel

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals are assessed and may be passed to a multiagency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are at risk of being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from the school will attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment (if appropriate).

Monitoring

64. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will monitor the operation of this policy and its procedures and make an annual report to the Board of Governors.
65. The Board of Governors will undertake an annual review of this policy and how the related duties under it have been discharged. The Governors will ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to Child Protection arrangements are remedied without delay.
66. A single record will be implemented giving a full history of Child Protection matters at the School which will be available to successive Headteachers and Chairs of Governors. This record will help the school in upholding the highest standards of safeguarding.

Former pupils

67. The Board of Governors will ensure that the desire to exonerate the school will not be allowed to take precedence over concerns for the current physical and emotional health of former pupils.

Use of the school premises by other organisations

68. Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, using the school premises, the Governing Body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to Safeguarding children and Child Protection and ensure that there are arrangements in place for the provider to liaise with the school or college on these matters where appropriate. This applies regardless of whether or not the children who attend any of these services or activities are children on the school roll or attend the college. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will co-ordinate this process.

The school will follow the advice set out in [Out-of-school settings: safeguarding guidance for providers - GOV.UK](#)

Designated Safeguarding/Child Protection Adults

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is: **Mrs Suzanne Nuttycombe (Assistant Head)**

The Deputy DSLs are: **Miss Charley Young (Head of Year), Mrs Emma Robertson (Wellbeing Practitioner) and Mrs Jemma Haseler (Assistant SENDCo)**

The Designated Governor for Safeguarding is: **Mr Simon Baker**

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Sexual Violence and Harassment (Child on Child Abuse) policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Designated Teacher Policy

FLOW CHART FOR RAISING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS ABOUT A PUPIL

