

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

The leadership team and governors at Brentford Schools for Girls recognise our moral and statutory responsibility under Sections 175 and 157 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students. The aims of this policy applies to all governors, senior leaders, teaching staff, operational support staff, volunteers, contractors, and regular visitors. The key strategic aims of this policy are:

- **Family Help (previously Early Help):** Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge, coordinating closely with local authority early and family help arrangements.
- **Protection from Maltreatment:** Protecting children from physical, emotional, sexual abuse, or neglect, whether that harm occurs within or outside the home, in school, or in the digital/online space.
- **Preventing Impairment of Health & Development:** Proactively preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development, including active vigilance around self-harm and anxiety.
- **Safe Learning Environment:** Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and taking direct action to enable all children to have the best life outcomes.
- **Safer Recruitment & Use of Technology:** Implementing robust recruitment procedures to deter unsuitable individuals and ensuring all staff understand and enforce safe mobile and digital technology boundaries.

There are nine main elements to our policy:

• Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with students

• Raising and maintaining understanding and awareness of all safeguarding issues amongst staff and students and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe, both mentally and physically

• Alerting staff to warning signs and risk factors.

• Developing and implementing systems and procedures through the use of the Child Protection Online Management Systems (CPOMS) for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of significant harm.

• Supporting students who have been abused in accordance with their agreed child protection plan.

• Ensuring that safeguarding arrangements reflect the KCSIE 2026 focus on Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), misogyny and misandry, safe and effective use of generative AI, mobile phone safety, safeguarding in sport and activities using school premises, and the safeguarding of children with medical conditions and young carers.

• Providing guidance for staff dealing with students with mental health issues and support to students who self-harm and their peers and parents/carers.

• Providing guidance for staff dealing with students at risk of radicalisation

• Establishing a safe environment in which students can learn and develop

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. 'Children' includes everyone under the age of 18. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centered. This means that they should consider at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

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

School staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children and prevent concerns from escalating. All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn (including those who do not work directly with children.) All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Family help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from foundation years through to teenage years.

Any staff member who has a concern about a child's welfare should follow the referral processes. Staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.
Brentford School for Girls has a designated safeguarding lead who provides support to staff to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as children's social care.
The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.
The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers (which includes headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure an appropriate senior member of staff , from the school leadership team is appointed to the role of DSL. The DSL should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety)

As a school we are committed to:

- Establishing and maintaining an environment where school staff (including supply staff) visitors, volunteers and tradespersons feel safe, are encouraged to talk and are listened to when concerns about the safety and wellbeing of students is raised.
- Supporting the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- Providing an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident, and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to.
- Raising the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse

- Providing a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, Brentford School for Girls, contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those children.
- Developing a structured procedure within Brentford School for Girls which will be followed by all members of Brentford School for Girls community in cases of suspected abuse.
- Developing and promoting effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Social Care.
- Ensuring that all staff working within our school who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications, and a satisfactory DBS check (according to guidance) , and a central record is kept for audit. (Please see safer recruitment policy for further details.)

This policy is compiled and updated annually in accordance with statutory guidelines and national legislation. The leadership team and governing body of Brentford School for Girls comply with all requirements and locally agreed procedures of our safeguarding partners. This policy is strictly based on the following key statutory instruments and guidance:

- *The Children Act 1989 & Children Act 2004*: Establishes the legal duty to safeguard children, promote welfare, and enforce multi-agency cooperation.
- *Education Act 2002 (Section 175 / Section 157):* Imposes statutory duties on maintained schools, academies, and independent settings to ensure functions are exercised with a view to safeguarding pupils. 4
- *Education and Inspections Act 2006:* Sets out statutory powers regarding behaviour management, pupil discipline, confiscation, and managing conduct outside school premises.
- *The Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED):* Requires schools to prevent discrimination, harassment, and victimisation across protected characteristics.
- *Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003* (Section 5B, as amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015): Imposes a mandatory legal duty on teachers to report known cases or disclosures of FGM in under-18s directly to the police.
- *Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015* (Section 26): Places a statutory duty on specified authorities (including schools) to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (The Prevent Duty).
- *Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR, and The Data (Use and Access) Act 2025*: Governs the lawful processing, security, and sharing of confidential safeguarding records, confirming data protection is not a barrier to child protection.
- *The Crime and Policing Act 2026*: Updates statutory powers surrounding anti-social behaviour, public order, and institutional criminal liability for senior leadership.
- *Online Safety Act 2023*: Establishes legal duties regarding illegal content, grooming, cyberbullying, and digital platform safety standards.
- *Sexual Offences Act 2003*: Defines sexual offences, consent, child sexual exploitation, illegal image sharing, and abuse of a position of trust (Sections 16–19).
- *Children and Social Work Act 2017*: Governs local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) and statutory Relationships and Sex Education.

- *The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014*: Outlines safeguarding, pupil welfare, and leadership suitability standards for academies and independent settings.
- *Local Government Act 2000:* Governs local authority executive arrangements and community well-being provisions. 2.2 Statutory Guidance
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 (DfE):* Core statutory safeguarding guidance for all school staff, leaders, and governing bodies.
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 (DfE):* Statutory multi-agency framework setting out roles and responsibilities for inter-agency child protection.
- *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE):* Statutory guidance governing attendance tracking, Children Missing Education (CME), and multi-agency escalation. 5
- *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Guidance (DfE*): Statutory curriculum guidance for delivering mandatory health, consent, and safe relationship education.
- *Operation Encompass Statutory Guidance*: Framework governing police notifications to schools regarding domestic abuse incidents involving enrolled pupils.
- *Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice*: 0 to 25 years (DfE/DoH): Statutory requirements for identifying, supporting, and safeguarding children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- *Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners (DfE):* Guidance on lawful multi-agency information sharing to safeguard vulnerable children.
- *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (DfE*): Practical guidance for frontline staff identifying physical, emotional, and sexual indicators of abuse or neglect.
- *Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (Home Office/DfE):* Operational guidance on identifying, managing, and referring to radicalisation risks.
- *Children Missing Education (CME) Guidance (DfE):* Operational protocols for identifying, tracking, and reporting pupils missing from education.
- *Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes*: Advice for Education Settings (UKCIS): Decision-making framework for responding to image sharing, self-generated imagery, and peer harassment.
- *Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools (DfE):* Operational guidance on lawful search powers, screening, and property confiscation procedures.
- *Meeting Digital and Technology Standards in Schools and Colleges (DfE*): Technical standards governing filtering, broadband, and active network monitoring systems (e.g., Smoothwall).
- *Teaching Online Safety in Schools (DfE)*: Curriculum guidance on embedding online safety, digital literacy, and cyber-hygiene across subject areas. 2.4 International & Human Rights Frameworks
- *Human Rights Act 1998*: Incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law, specifically:
    - Article 2: Right to life.
    - Article 3: Prohibition of torture, inhuman, or degrading treatment. 6
    - Article 8: Right to respect for private and family life.
    - Article 14: Prohibition of discrimination.
    - Protocol 1, Article 2: Right to education.

All staff should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. Main related policies

- Safer recruitment
- Anti – bullying
- Visitors to the School
- Behaviour
- Attendance
- Restrictive Intervention and Use of Reasonable Force
- Whistleblowing
- Looked after Child
- Children Who Cannot Attend School due to Medical Needs
- Exclusions and Suspension
- Trips and visits
- Allegations against Staff
- Drug and Substance Abuse
- Sex and Relationships – RSE
- Safer working practices
- Site security
- Health and Safety
- E-safety
- Anti- extremism and anti- radicalisation
- Child on Child abuse
- Children missing education
- Work Experience

The Role of Staff at Brentford School for Girls (What to look out for and how to respond)

Brentford School for Girls recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of every member of staff. All staff have a duty to provide a safe environment in which children can learn, develop and thrive. This requires a vigilant, proactive and child-centred approach, underpinned by professional curiosity and an attitude of *'it could happen here'*.

Staff must recognise that safeguarding concerns, including abuse, neglect and exploitation, can arise inside or outside the home, within or beyond the school environment, and online. Children may be harmed by adults or by other children, and online safety must be considered an integral and interrelated aspect of safeguarding practice. Staff should remain alert to signs of harm, including changes in behaviour, attendance, presentation or emotional wellbeing, as well as indicators of vulnerability and risks arising within the wider community.

Safeguarding practice must also recognise the impact of prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-based prejudice and other forms of discrimination. Such experiences can adversely affect a child's welfare, wellbeing, mental health and willingness to seek help. Staff should understand that children

may not feel ready or able to disclose abuse, neglect or exploitation, or may not recognise their experiences as harmful. Fear, embarrassment, humiliation, threats, disability, vulnerability, sexual orientation and language barriers may all prevent a child from seeking help. The absence of a disclosure must never be interpreted as evidence that a child is safe. Staff must maintain professional curiosity, raise concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL and build trusting relationships with children and young people to encourage open communication and help them feel safe to share their experiences.

All staff must take safeguarding concerns seriously and act promptly. Where a child discloses abuse, neglect or exploitation, staff must listen carefully, remain calm, allow the child to speak freely and provide appropriate reassurance. They must not ask leading questions, press the child for unnecessary details or attempt to investigate the matter themselves. Children must be reassured that they are being taken seriously, will be supported and will be kept safe. They must never be made to feel that they are creating a problem by reporting their experiences.

Staff must explain that information cannot be kept secret where it relates to a child's safety or welfare. Confidentiality must be maintained appropriately by sharing information only with those who need to know, including the DSL or a Deputy DSL and, where appropriate, local authority children's social care. Staff must never promise a child that they will not share information about a safeguarding concern, as this may prevent appropriate action from being taken to protect them. Data protection must not be treated as a barrier to the necessary sharing of information to safeguard a child.

All safeguarding concerns, disclosures and information about a child's welfare must be reported to the DSL or a Deputy DSL without delay, in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures. Staff must not assume that another colleague or professional will report a concern or take appropriate action. If the DSL or a Deputy DSL is unavailable in exceptional circumstances, this must not delay action. Staff should speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children's social care. Any action taken must be shared with the DSL or a Deputy DSL as soon as reasonably practicable. Where a child is in immediate danger, staff must take urgent action to secure their safety, including contacting the emergency services by calling 999 where necessary.

Following a concern being reported, the DSL or a Deputy DSL will consider the appropriate response. This may include managing support through the school's pastoral arrangements, undertaking or arranging a Family Help assessment, or making a referral to statutory services. Staff must remain engaged in the safeguarding process, follow up concerns where necessary and escalate matters if they believe that appropriate action has not been taken or that a child's circumstances are not improving.

All safeguarding concerns, disclosures, discussions and subsequent actions must be recorded promptly on the school's designated digital safeguarding system, CPOMS. Records must be factual, accurate, clear and sufficiently detailed to provide a comprehensive account of the concern and the response. They should include a summary of the concern, the actions taken to follow it up, decisions reached, the rationale for those decisions and any outcomes. Records must be handled confidentially, shared appropriately and stored securely in accordance with the school's procedures.

All staff must be aware of the local arrangements for community-based Early Help and Family Help and understand their role in identifying and responding to emerging needs. They should recognise when a child or family may benefit from support through universal services, community-based Early Help, targeted early help through Family Help or statutory services. Family Help is intended to provide support when difficulties emerge, helping children and families access the right assistance at the right

time. Early identification and intervention are essential to improving outcomes, addressing emerging needs and reducing the likelihood of concerns escalating to the point where statutory intervention becomes necessary.

Staff must understand the local procedures for making referrals to children's social care and the statutory assessment processes that may follow under the Children Act 1989. In particular, they should be familiar with Section 17, which provides for services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need, and Section 47, which places a duty on local authorities to make enquiries where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Staff should also have an awareness of the wider statutory framework, including Section 20, relating to the local authority's duty to accommodate a child in specified circumstances, and Section 31, relating to care and supervision orders. They must understand the circumstances in which referrals may be required and the role they may be expected to play in contributing to assessments, sharing relevant information and supporting plans to safeguard and promote a child's welfare.

All staff must receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training as part of their induction, including training on online safety and an understanding of their responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring. This training must be regularly updated. In addition, all staff must receive safeguarding and child protection updates, including online safety, as required and at least annually, to ensure that they maintain the knowledge and skills necessary to identify and respond effectively to safeguarding concerns.

In accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*, all staff, including those who do not work directly with children, must read Part One of the guidance in full and understand their individual safeguarding responsibilities. This is a mandatory requirement and applies to all members of staff.

Staff must also be familiar with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy, reporting procedures, the identity and responsibilities of the DSL and Deputy DSLs, and the local arrangements for obtaining help and protection for children.

Brentford School for Girls is committed to ensuring that every child receives the right help at the right time. Effective safeguarding depends on all staff understanding their responsibilities, recognising and responding to concerns promptly, maintaining professional curiosity, keeping accurate records and working collaboratively with the DSL team and relevant external agencies. These responsibilities are informed by the statutory guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*, alongside the relevant provisions of the Children Act 1989.

Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

The school has appointed Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) to provide safeguarding support and ensure that appropriate cover arrangements are in place whenever the DSL is unavailable.

Brentford School for Girls Key Safeguarding Personnel

- Designated Safeguarding Lead – Devesha Singh (Head of School) dsingh@brentford.hounslow.sch.uk
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads
    - Carlie Pennington cpennington@brentford.hounslow.sch.uk

    - Kimberley Young kyoung@brentford.hounslow.sch.uk
    - Gemma Timms gtimms@brentford.hounslow.sch.uk
- Designated Safeguarding Governor – Terri George

The DSL is the Named SLT Lead for Filtering and Monitoring

The DSL and DDSLs form the school's safeguarding leadership team. All deputies are appropriately trained to the same standard as the DSL, with their safeguarding responsibilities clearly defined within their job descriptions.
The DSL retains overall lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. Although specific activities and responsibilities may be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, ultimate accountability remains with the DSL.
During term time, a trained DSL or DDSL will be available during school hours to provide advice and support to staff regarding safeguarding concerns. Appropriate arrangements will also be made to ensure safeguarding cover during periods of absence and for out-of-hours activities where required.

Roles and Responsibilities of the DSL and DDSLs

The DSL, supported by the DDSLs, has responsibility for ensuring that Brentford School for Girls maintains effective safeguarding arrangements and fulfils its statutory duties in accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*, *Working Together to Safeguard Children* and relevant local safeguarding partnership procedures.
The responsibilities of the DSL and, where appropriate, the DDSLs include:

1. Training and professional development

- Undertake appropriate DSL training and ensure that this is updated at least every two years, in accordance with KCSIE.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge and understanding of safeguarding developments, legislation, statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures.
- Ensure that all staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction and regular updates thereafter, enabling them to recognise, respond to and report safeguarding concerns effectively.
- Ensure that all new staff receive safeguarding induction before or as part of commencing their duties, including an explanation of the school's safeguarding policy, procedures, staff code of conduct and the identity and responsibilities of the DSL and DDSLs.
- Ensure that volunteers, supply teachers, agency staff and contractors receive appropriate safeguarding information and understand the procedures for reporting concerns.

2. Safeguarding policies and procedures

- Ensure that the school's safeguarding and child protection arrangements are implemented effectively, regularly reviewed and compliant with statutory guidance and local safeguarding partnership procedures.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities and know how to identify and report concerns without delay.

- Ensure that staff have access to clear guidance and appropriate support to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Promote a strong safeguarding culture in which the welfare and best interests of children remain paramount.
- Ensure that safeguarding procedures reflect current risks, including online safety, child-on-child abuse, exploitation, radicalisation, domestic abuse and other forms of harm.

3. Responding to safeguarding concerns and referrals

- Act as the main point of contact for staff, parents/carers and external agencies regarding safeguarding and child protection concerns.
- Ensure that all concerns about a child are taken seriously, recorded accurately and responded to promptly.
- Make referrals to the relevant local authority children's social care service where a child is believed to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, or where statutory intervention is otherwise required.
- Consider whether early help or Family Help support is appropriate and coordinate support with relevant agencies and families where necessary.
- Work collaboratively with children, parents/carers and relevant professionals, ensuring that the child's wishes, feelings and best interests inform decision-making.
- Exercise professional judgement when determining the appropriate response to concerns, including consultation with children's social care, referrals to other agencies and escalation where necessary.
- Ensure that referrals are followed up and escalated appropriately if the response from an external agency does not adequately address the concerns.
- Maintain effective communication with the Headteacher and relevant members of the Senior Leadership Team, sharing information on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with safeguarding and information-sharing requirements.

4. Multi-agency working

- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with children's social care, police, health services, local safeguarding partners and other relevant agencies.
- Liaise with social workers and other professionals involved in safeguarding children.
- Attend, or ensure appropriate representation at, relevant multi-agency meetings, including child protection conferences, core group meetings, strategy discussions and other safeguarding meetings.
- Contribute relevant information, professional assessments and reports to multi-agency meetings.
- Ensure that agreed actions are communicated to appropriate staff and implemented, monitored and reviewed.
- Support effective information sharing between agencies to ensure that children receive timely and appropriate protection and support.

5. Safeguarding records and information sharing

- Ensure that accurate, comprehensive and contemporaneous safeguarding records are maintained for individual students.
- Ensure that safeguarding and child protection records are stored securely, separately from the main educational record, with access restricted to authorised staff.
- Ensure that records include a clear summary of concerns, actions taken, decisions made, the rationale for decisions and outcomes.
- Ensure that safeguarding records are regularly reviewed and updated, with appropriate chronology maintained.
- Ensure that information is shared lawfully, securely and promptly with relevant agencies where this is necessary to safeguard a child.
- Ensure that child protection files are transferred securely and separately to a receiving school or educational setting when a student moves, in accordance with KCSIE requirements, and that receipt is confirmed.
- Ensure that safeguarding information held on the school's management information and safeguarding recording systems is accurate, current and appropriately maintained.

6. Monitoring and supporting vulnerable students

- Ensure that students who are subject to child protection plans, child in need plans, early help arrangements or other safeguarding interventions are appropriately monitored and supported.
- Work with relevant staff and external professionals to monitor students' welfare, attendance, engagement and progress.
- Ensure that unexplained or concerning patterns of absence are followed up promptly and that appropriate referrals or notifications are made where safeguarding concerns arise.
- Maintain appropriate communication with children's social care where a student subject to a child protection or child in need plan is absent or cannot be located.
- Ensure that the educational needs and outcomes of children who have a social worker, or who have previously had a social worker, are understood and appropriately supported.
- Ensure that appropriate support is available to students experiencing safeguarding difficulties, including signposting to relevant services and specialist provision.

7. Safeguarding advice and support

- Provide advice and guidance to staff, students and parents/carers on safeguarding and child protection matters.
- Ensure that students and families are supported to access appropriate internal and external services.
- Promote an environment in which students feel safe, listened to and confident that concerns will be taken seriously.
- Support staff in understanding their responsibilities when a student makes a disclosure, including the importance of listening, recording accurately and reporting concerns without delay.

8. Reporting, accountability and governance

- Keep the Headteacher informed of significant safeguarding concerns, referrals and developments, subject to the principles of confidentiality and appropriate information sharing.

- Ensure that the governing body receives an annual report on the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements, including relevant themes, patterns and areas for improvement.
- Provide the governing body with appropriate safeguarding information to enable it to fulfil its statutory oversight responsibilities, while maintaining the confidentiality of individual students.
- Contribute to the regular review and evaluation of safeguarding policies, procedures and practice.
- Ensure that identified safeguarding actions and improvements are implemented and monitored.

The DSL retains overall responsibility for ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place throughout Brentford School for Girls. All staff, governors, volunteers and other adults working within the school share responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and must follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

The Role of the Governing Body

Responsibilities of the Governing Body

The Governing Body of Brentford School for Girls has strategic responsibility for ensuring that effective safeguarding and child protection arrangements are in place, implemented consistently and regularly reviewed. Its responsibilities include ensuring that:

Safeguarding policies and strategic oversight

- The school fulfils its statutory safeguarding responsibilities in accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*, *Working Together to Safeguard Children* and relevant local safeguarding partnership procedures.
- Effective safeguarding arrangements are in place, with appropriate oversight, scrutiny and challenge from the Governing Body.
- A comprehensive Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is maintained, published on the school website and made available to parents/carers, who are informed of their entitlement to receive a copy when their child joins the school.
- The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures are reviewed at least annually and updated to reflect changes in legislation, statutory guidance, local procedures and identified safeguarding needs.
- Any safeguarding weaknesses or deficiencies identified through monitoring, inspection, audit or review are addressed promptly.
- The school has sufficient resources, appropriate leadership and clear lines of accountability to discharge its safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

Leadership and accountability

- A suitably senior member of staff is appointed as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), with appropriate authority, time, training, resources and access to the Senior Leadership Team to undertake the role effectively.
- Appropriately trained Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) are appointed to support the DSL and provide safeguarding cover when the DSL is unavailable.

- The DSL retains overall lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, with clearly defined responsibilities for the DDSLs.
- The names and contact details of the DSL and DDSLs are clearly communicated to staff, students, parents/carers and visitors.
- The DSL and DDSLs undertake the required safeguarding training and regular updates to maintain their knowledge and skills in accordance with KCSIE.
- The Governing Body receives appropriate safeguarding information to enable it to fulfil its strategic oversight responsibilities, while maintaining the confidentiality of individual students.

Safer recruitment and managing allegations

- The school operates effective safer recruitment procedures, including appropriate pre-employment checks, references, criminal record checks and verification of identity, qualifications and employment history.
- Staff involved in recruitment and selection understand their safeguarding responsibilities and receive appropriate safer recruitment training.
- Appropriate procedures are in place for managing allegations and concerns about staff, supply staff, volunteers, contractors and other adults working on behalf of the school.
- Allegations against staff and volunteers are referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for advice and guidance in accordance with local procedures.
- Referrals are made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where the statutory criteria are met, including where an individual has been removed from regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not resigned or otherwise ceased providing their services.
- The Chair of Governors acts as the appropriate point of contact for the Local Authority in relation to allegations concerning the Headteacher.
- Appropriate DBS and other suitability checks are undertaken for governors in accordance with statutory requirements and the eligibility criteria applicable to their roles.

Staff training and safeguarding awareness

- All staff, including those who do not work directly with children, read Part One of KCSIE 2026.
- All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training as part of their induction, followed by regular updates to maintain their knowledge and understanding.
- All new staff and volunteers receive safeguarding induction information, including the school's safeguarding policies, procedures, staff code of conduct and reporting arrangements.
- Supply teachers, agency staff, contractors and volunteers receive appropriate safeguarding information relevant to their roles.
- All staff, governors and volunteers understand how to recognise indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation and know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.
- All staff understand their responsibility to report safeguarding concerns promptly to the DSL or a DDSL and know that concerns must not be delayed or left unreported.
- Staff receive regular training and updates on online safety, including cyber security, online risks, the use of technology and procedures for reporting concerns.

Online safety, filtering and monitoring

- Appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place to safeguard students when accessing school technology and internet-connected devices.

- A suitably senior member of the Senior Leadership Team and a nominated governor have clearly defined responsibilities for overseeing filtering and monitoring arrangements.
- The DSL, IT support and relevant members of the Senior Leadership Team work collaboratively to ensure that filtering and monitoring systems are effective.
- The effectiveness of filtering and monitoring arrangements is reviewed at least once every academic year.
- The annual review considers the school's changing safeguarding risks, the effectiveness and coverage of systems across relevant devices and locations, identified gaps and any necessary improvements.
- Appropriate checks are undertaken to ensure that filtering and monitoring systems are operating effectively, with findings, actions and outcomes recorded and retained.
- Any weaknesses identified in filtering and monitoring arrangements are addressed promptly.

School environment and safeguarding arrangements

- Appropriate policies and procedures are in place regarding the use of reasonable force and restrictive interventions, safer recruitment, cyber security, online safety and safeguarding.
- Appropriate arrangements are in place for managing visitors and external organisations working on school premises.
- The school's lettings arrangements include appropriate safeguarding requirements to ensure the suitability of adults working with or having access to children on school premises, including outside normal school hours.
- Community users and organisations providing activities for children on school premises are made aware of the school's safeguarding expectations and procedures.
- Appropriate assurance is obtained that external organisations have suitable safeguarding policies, procedures and safer recruitment arrangements in place.

Curriculum and keeping children safe

- The Governing Body considers how safeguarding is promoted through the school's curriculum and wider provision.
- Students receive regular, age-appropriate opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills needed to keep themselves safe, recognise unsafe situations and seek help.
- Safeguarding education is delivered through Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE), including the Blossom programme, tutor time, wellbeing weeks and other relevant curriculum opportunities.
- The curriculum reflects statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education.
- Students are supported to understand healthy relationships, online safety, consent, appropriate boundaries and how to report concerns.

Vulnerable students and additional safeguarding needs

- The Governing Body recognises that some children may face additional barriers to recognising, communicating or reporting abuse and neglect.
- Particular consideration is given to the safeguarding needs of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), looked-after children, previously looked-after children and children who have a social worker.

- All staff receive appropriate guidance to understand the potential vulnerabilities and additional safeguarding risks experienced by these groups of children.
- Relevant information is made available to staff on a need-to-know basis to ensure that individual needs, circumstances and safeguarding risks are understood and appropriately addressed.
- A designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children fulfils the relevant statutory responsibilities and works closely with the Virtual School Headteacher and other professionals to promote the educational achievement and welfare of these students.
- Effective arrangements are in place to identify, monitor and support students who may be at increased risk of harm.

Whistleblowing and reporting safeguarding concerns

- An open and transparent safeguarding culture is promoted in which staff feel confident to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and safeguarding failures.
- Staff are made aware of the school's whistleblowing procedures and the alternative external reporting routes available if they feel unable to raise concerns internally or believe that their concerns have not been addressed appropriately.
- Staff are informed that they can contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line if they have concerns about safeguarding practice or failures within the school.
- The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line can be contacted on **0800 028 0285** or by email at help@nspcc.org.uk.

Monitoring and review

- The Governing Body receives regular assurance from school leaders that safeguarding arrangements are effective and that concerns are acted upon appropriately.
- Safeguarding practice, policies and procedures are monitored and reviewed to identify areas for development and continuous improvement.
- The DSL provides the Governing Body with an annual safeguarding report, including relevant themes, patterns, actions taken and areas for improvement, without disclosing confidential information unnecessarily.
- The Governing Body ensures that identified safeguarding actions and improvements are implemented and monitored.
- The school continues to provide a safe, supportive and inclusive environment in which the welfare and best interests of all students remain paramount.

DSL Availability and Cover Arrangements

During term time, the DSL or a trained deputy should be available during school hours for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns. The school will maintain robust and clearly communicated arrangements for periods when the DSL is unavailable because of illness, leave or other circumstances. These arrangements will ensure that safeguarding concerns are received, monitored and acted upon without delay. If the DSL or DDSLs are not available and a member of staff believes that there is an urgent safety issue, then members of staff should refer to the head teacher or another member of the Leadership team as soon as possible. If there is no senior member of staff in school (or if the incident

occurs out of school hours for example) contact the caretakers, who have out of hours contact numbers for the head teacher and members of the Leadership Team. If there are still concerns, then staff are aware that they can contact social care directly.

Multi-agency Working and Safeguarding Partnerships

Brentford School for Girls recognises that effective multi-agency working is essential to safeguarding children, identifying concerns at the earliest opportunity, assessing risk and ensuring that children and families receive timely and appropriate support. In accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, the school will work collaboratively with the three safeguarding partners, local authority Children's Social Care, the police, health services, education services and other relevant agencies and professionals to promote children's welfare and protect them from harm. The school will actively engage with local safeguarding arrangements and contribute to multi-agency processes, ensuring that relevant information is shared promptly, appropriately and securely to support effective assessment, decision-making and intervention. Where children and families require additional support, the school will work with relevant agencies to identify needs at an early stage and contribute to the coordinated delivery of Family Help and other appropriate early intervention and support arrangements. Where a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan, Child in Need Plan or other multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, the school will participate fully in relevant meetings, contribute professional knowledge and information, implement agreed actions and work collaboratively with partner agencies to monitor and review the child's welfare and progress. The school will cooperate fully with requests from local authority Children's Social Care, including the host local authority and, where applicable, a placing local authority, to facilitate access to children and relevant information for the purposes of undertaking assessments under Section 17 (Child in Need) or Section 47 (Child Protection) of the Children Act 1989, or determining whether such assessments are necessary. Brentford School for Girls will ensure that safeguarding concerns are escalated appropriately and that the child's safety, wishes, feelings and best interests remain central to all multi-agency decision-making.

Reflective Practice

Brentford School for Girls is committed to continually reviewing and strengthening its safeguarding practice. Under the school's safeguarding framework, safeguarding arrangements are subject to regular scrutiny, reflection and external validation. The school undertakes formal external safeguarding audits and peer reviews, including those conducted by external agencies, Optimus Education and the Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP). These reviews evaluate the effectiveness of policies and their implementation, identify areas for improvement and inform action plans that address emerging risks and operational challenges, including internal truancy, off-site risks and evolving online safety threats.

The Governing Body provides oversight and challenge to ensure that effective child protection policies and procedures are in place; safer recruitment requirements are followed; a suitably senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is appointed; staff and volunteers receive relevant safeguarding training; and allegations are managed appropriately. Safeguarding policies and procedures are

reviewed at least annually, and any identified deficiencies or weaknesses are addressed without delay. A nominated member of the Governing Body, usually the Chair, takes responsibility for managing allegations concerning the Headteacher. Learning from audits, reviews, incidents, concerns and previous shortcomings is used to inform staff practice, strengthen procedures and ensure that safeguarding arrangements remain effective and responsive to the needs and risks facing children.

Mandatory Staff Induction and Training

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Every member of staff, including administrative, operational, catering, and facilities staff must read 'Part One: Safeguarding Information for All Staff' of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) in full. All staff must sign an annual training declaration by the end of the first week of September confirming they have read, understood, and will comply with this guidance and our associated school policies.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and all Deputy DSLs undergo formal inter-agency safeguarding training every two years, with their knowledge, skills, and statutory understanding updated at regular intervals, and at least annually.

All staff receive annual child protection training that explicitly covers risk indicators of possible neglect, abuse or exploitation, The Prevent Strategy, online safety, and staff roles and responsibilities regarding active filtering and monitoring systems (including Smoothwall alert management)

Safeguarding Information for Parents

- Our school will ensure that we work in partnership with parents and keep parents up to date about ongoing safeguarding issues locally and nationally.
- We are committed to working with parents. We will make parents aware of this policy and that they can view this policy on request
- We will work closely with parents if a child has mental health issues – it is crucial that parents work closely with the school and take an active role in deciding the best course of action for the child
- Information sharing will take account of the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR and Data (Use and Access) Act 2025. Data protection will not be treated as a barrier to appropriate safeguarding information sharing where this is necessary to protect a child.
- KCSIE 2026 requires safeguarding records to be clear, factual and to distinguish observed concerns, professional opinion and historic information. Records should include a clear summary of the concern, how it was followed up and resolved, actions taken, decisions reached, the rationale for decisions and the outcome. Child protection files should be transferred securely and separately from the main pupil file as soon as possible and, for in-year transfers, within 5 days. The exporting school should provide a structured summary of current concerns, relevant context and ongoing support needs.
- We ask that parents keep the school informed of any incidents outside school that they feel the school should know about

Children who may benefit from additional support

Any child may benefit from additional support before statutory intervention becomes necessary. Staff at Brentford School for Girls should be particularly alert to the potential need for support through universal services, community-based Early Help or targeted Family Help where a child:

- Is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs.
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan).
- Has a mental health need or is experiencing difficulties with their emotional wellbeing.
- Is a young carer.
- Is pregnant and/or is a parent themselves.
- Has exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours.
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement, association with organised crime groups or county lines.
- Is frequently missing or goes missing from education, home or care.
- Has been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiple suspensions, is on a part-time timetable, is at risk of permanent exclusion, or is receiving education in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU).
- Is at risk of exploitation, modern slavery or trafficking, including criminal or sexual exploitation.
- Is at risk of being radicalised or drawn into terrorism.
- Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending.
- Is living in family circumstances that present challenges or may adversely affect their welfare, such as parental or family drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health difficulties or domestic abuse.
- Is misusing alcohol or other drugs themselves.
- Is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage or other forms of honour, faith or belief-based abuse.
- Is a privately fostered child.
- Has returned home to their family following a period in care or has other care experience that may increase their need for support.
- Experiences racism, faith-based prejudice, discrimination or other forms of prejudice-based bullying, which may adversely affect their welfare, wellbeing, mental health or willingness to seek help.
- Has communication needs, a disability, language barriers or other circumstances that may make it difficult for them to communicate their experiences, express their wishes and feelings or disclose abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff should recognise that these circumstances are not exhaustive and that vulnerability can arise from a combination of factors. Children may experience several forms of harm simultaneously, and safeguarding concerns may develop or change over time. The presence of one or more of these indicators does not automatically mean that a child is being abused or neglected; however, it should prompt staff to remain professionally curious, consider the child's individual circumstances and discuss any concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL.

Brentford School for Girls recognises the importance of identifying needs at the earliest opportunity and ensuring that children and families receive appropriate support through universal services, community-based Early Help, targeted Family Help or statutory intervention, as required.

Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm (Vulnerable Pupil Groups)

Students who are Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual

Being lesbian, gay or bisexual does not, in itself, place a student at risk of harm. However, students may be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying or other harmful behaviour, including when others perceive them to be lesbian, gay or bisexual. The school will respond to such bullying promptly, take appropriate action and provide suitable pastoral support.

Students with SEND, Disabilities or Health Issues

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), disabilities or particular medical or physical health conditions may experience additional safeguarding challenges, both online and offline.

Staff must not automatically attribute changes in a child's behaviour, mood or physical presentation to their condition without exploring the circumstances further. They should remain alert to potential risks, including isolation or bullying by peers, communication barriers, difficulties in reporting concerns, difficulties recognising that they are experiencing abuse, intimate care needs, separation from their peers and increased reliance on adults for care.

Where a safeguarding concern relates to a child with SEND, the DSL or Deputy DSL will work closely with the SENCO or the person responsible for overseeing SEND. The school will consider whether additional pastoral care or appropriate communication support is needed.

Students with Medical Conditions

An incident involving the management of a child's medical condition, including allergies, does not automatically require a safeguarding referral. However, a referral should be considered where the circumstances suggest that the child's medical condition may increase their vulnerability to neglect, abuse or exploitation.

This may include situations where the school has not been given relevant medical information or where a child is repeatedly sent to school without essential medication, putting their safety at risk.

Young Carers

The school recognises that caring responsibilities can have an impact on a young carer's attendance, academic achievement, behaviour and wellbeing. Staff should be aware of the needs of young carers and recognise the importance of identifying them at an early stage. This will help ensure that appropriate support is provided when needed, including assistance from external partners, local authority services or health services where appropriate.

Children with a Social Worker, Looked-After Children (CLA) and Previously Looked-After Children (PLAC)

The school recognises that children who have a social worker, or who are currently or have previously been looked after, may face increased vulnerabilities in relation to their safety, school attendance and educational outcomes.

- *Designated Teacher and Virtual School Liaison*: The school's Designated Teacher will work directly with the DSL and the relevant Virtual School Head (VSH) to monitor each child's progress, support attendance and ensure that Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are regularly reviewed and kept up to date.
- *Children with a Social Worker:* Where a child is, or has been within the previous six years, subject to an assessment under Section 17 or Section 47 of the Children Act 1989, the DSL will maintain regular communication with the allocated social worker, participate in multi-agency meetings and promptly report any unexplained absences or emerging safeguarding concerns.
- *Attendance, Academic and Welfare Oversight*: Pastoral teams will take a proactive approach to monitoring attendance patterns, including through the school's attendance procedures, and academic engagement for CLA and PLAC students. This will help identify concerns early and ensure that support and intervention are put in place before risks increase.

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

If staff have **any concerns** about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately. See flow chart setting out the process for staff when they have concerns about a child.

Where possible, there should be a conversation with the designated safeguarding lead to agree a course of action, although any staff member can make a referral to children's social care. Any member of staff has the right to refer directly. Other options could include referral to specialist services or family help services and should be made in accordance with the referral threshold set by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
If anyone other than the designated safeguarding lead makes the referral, they should inform the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible. The local authority should make a decision within one working day of a referral being made about what course of action they are taking and should let the referrer know the outcome. Staff should follow up on a referral should that information not be forthcoming. The online tool Reporting child abuse to your local council directs staff to their local children's social care contact number

If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the designated safeguarding lead (or the person who made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure that their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

If family help is appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead should support he staff member in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate.

If a teacher in the course of their work, discovers that an act of **Female Genital Mutilation** appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police.

What staff should do if a child is in danger or at risk of harm

If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately. Anyone can make a referral. Where referrals are not made by the designated safeguarding lead, the designated safeguarding lead should be informed as soon as possible that a referral has been made. Reporting child abuse to your local council directs staff to their local children's social care contact number.

Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) Strategic Priorities (2026)

Safeguarding practice across the school directly reflects the local profile and priority themes established by the Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP). Local data underscores this need, with Hounslow recording on average over 2,500 referrals, 360 Child in Need (CIN) plans, and 250 Child Protection (CP) plans annually.
The school aligns its contextual safeguarding strategy with the HSCP's focus areas:

- Safeguarding adolescents, specifically regarding exploitation and missing children.
- Supporting vulnerable children in education.
- Mental health, self-harm, and suicide prevention.
- Managing online harms and digital risk exposure.

Local and Contextual Safeguarding Risks

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm and the behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education.

Brentford School for Girls recognises that children and young people may be exposed to a range of safeguarding risks within their homes, schools, peer groups and wider communities. In line with the Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership's approach and the borough's Safer Communities Strategy 2024–2027, staff must remain alert to local and emerging risks, recognising that exploitation, violence and abuse can occur both online and in person. The school adopts a contextual safeguarding approach, considering the environments and relationships in which children spend their time, as well as their individual circumstances.

Knife Crime, Serious Violence and Hate Crime

- Knife crime, serious violence and weapon carrying remain important community safety and safeguarding concerns.
- Staff should be alert to indicators such as unexplained injuries, threats, intimidation, violent behaviour, changes in peer groups or possible weapon carrying.
- Hate crime, racism, discriminatory language and prejudice-based bullying can significantly affect children's safety and emotional wellbeing. Staff must challenge and report such behaviour.
- All concerns involving weapons, violence or hate crime must be reported to the DSL or a Deputy DSL without delay. Immediate risks must be referred to emergency services.

County Lines, Gangs and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

- Children may be groomed, coerced or exploited by individuals and organised criminal networks to transport, store or distribute drugs, weapons or money through county lines activity.
- Exploitation may involve threats, intimidation, violence, debt, gifts, money or the manipulation of friendships and relationships.
- Staff should be alert to unexplained money or possessions, changes in behaviour or friendship groups, unexplained absences, secrecy, associations with older individuals and travel to unfamiliar areas.
- Children involved in criminal activity may be victims of exploitation rather than willing participants.
- Staff should also be aware of cuckooing, where criminal groups take over or exploit another person's home for criminal purposes.
- All concerns must be reported promptly to the DSL or a Deputy DSL for appropriate assessment, referral and multi-agency support.

Domestic Abuse and the Impact on Children

- Domestic abuse is a significant safeguarding concern and can have a lasting impact on children's emotional wellbeing, mental health, behaviour, relationships and educational progress.
- Children who see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse are victims in their own right.
- Domestic abuse may include physical, emotional, psychological, sexual and economic abuse, as well as coercive and controlling behaviour.
- Staff should be alert to anxiety, withdrawal, emotional distress, changes in behaviour, poor attendance, unexplained injuries or declining engagement with learning.
- Any disclosure or suspicion of domestic abuse must be reported to the DSL or a Deputy DSL without delay so that appropriate safeguarding action and referrals can be considered.

Mental Health, Emotional Wellbeing and Access to Support

- Mental health difficulties and anxiety are important safeguarding and pastoral concerns. They may also indicate underlying abuse, neglect, bullying, exploitation, trauma or other adverse experiences.
- Staff should be alert to changes in behaviour, attendance, relationships and emotional wellbeing, including anxiety, depression, withdrawal, self-harm and suicidal thoughts.
- Brentford School for Girls recognises the importance of early identification, effective pastoral support and appropriate intervention.
- Staff should be aware of Hounslow's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) referral pathways and work with the DSL, pastoral team, families and relevant professionals to secure appropriate support.
- School-based support must not replace specialist assessment or treatment where required, or delay necessary safeguarding action while a child is awaiting external services.
- Concerns involving self-harm, suicidal thoughts or significant deterioration in mental health must be reported to the DSL or a Deputy DSL immediately. Emergency or urgent medical assistance must be sought where necessary.

Brentford School for Girls Safeguarding Strategic Priorities

- Children absent from education
- Mental ill-health
- Online safety
- Anxiety
- Self-harm behaviours
- Suicidal ideation

Dealing With a Disclosure

When a student discloses abuse, neglect, exploitation, harm or distress, staff and volunteers must respond calmly, sensitively and without judgement. The following guidance must be followed.

DO:

- Remain calm and listen carefully, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what the student tells you and allow them to speak freely.
- Reassure the student that they have done the right thing by speaking up.
- Reassure them that what has happened is not their fault and that they are right to seek help.
- Listen actively and only ask questions when clarification is essential to establish immediate safety or understand what has been said.
- Use open questions based on the *TED model* where necessary:
    - Tell me…
    - Explain what…
    - Describe…
- Check whether the student is in immediate physical danger.
- Explain what will happen next and who needs to be informed.
- Make a factual written record using the appropriate CP Record Sheet.
- Pass the information to the DSL or DDSL without delay.
- Act promptly on any concerns about a child's welfare, even where there has been no direct disclosure.

DO NOT:

- Promise confidentiality or make promises that may not be possible to keep.
- Investigate the disclosure or attempt to establish the facts yourself.
- Ask leading, suggestive or unnecessary questions.
- Criticise the alleged perpetrator.
- Pass judgement, express shock or disbelief, or dismiss concerns as "banter".
- Ask a student to remove clothing or expose injuries in sensitive areas.
- Ask a student to show you, send you or provide access to nude, semi-nude or sexually explicit images or videos on their phone or any other device.
- Intentionally view, copy, screenshot, download, forward, print, store or save such images. If a student attempts to show you an image, do not view it; refer the matter to the DSL immediately.
- Delay reporting a concern while waiting for a student to make a direct disclosure.

Remember: Children may not feel ready or able to disclose abuse, neglect or exploitation. They may not recognise that what is happening to them is harmful and may communicate their distress through changes in behaviour, actions or indirect comments. Concerns may also be raised by friends or arise from conversations overheard by staff. A child does not need to make a direct disclosure for staff to take action.

Record Keeping

All safeguarding concerns, disclosures, discussions and decisions must be recorded accurately, clearly and promptly. At Brentford School for Girls, staff must use CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System) to record and report all safeguarding concerns. The school's CPOMS system must be used in accordance with the following six quality criteria: Accurate, Adequate, Comprehensive, Factual, Relevant and Timely.

Records must provide a clear and comprehensive account of the concern and include:

- **Who**: The names of the people involved and anyone present.
- **When**: The date and time of the incident, disclosure or observation.
- **Where**: The location where the concern arose.
- **What**: A clear description of what happened, what was said or what was observed.
- **Why**: The reason for the concern and any relevant context.

When making a safeguarding record, staff must:

- Provide a clear, factual and objective summary of the concern.
- Record the student's own words wherever possible, using direct quotations and quotation marks to capture their voice accurately.
- Include the date, time and location of the incident or disclosure, together with any relevant details of the student's presentation or noticeable non-verbal behaviour.
- Record observations and statements rather than assumptions, interpretations or personal opinions. Staff must use neutral language and avoid speculation about a child's circumstances or family life.
- Record any action taken, how the concern was followed up, decisions reached, the reasons for those decisions and the outcome.
- Use the CP Record Sheet (Appendix 2) wherever possible to support accurate and consistent recording.
- Use the digital body-mapping facility on CPOMS, where appropriate, to indicate the position and describe the appearance of any visible bruising, marks or injuries. Staff must not ask a student to expose parts of their body that would not normally be visible.
- Ensure that all written records are clear, precise, relevant and completed as soon as possible after the concern arises.

All safeguarding information must be treated confidentially and stored securely. Child protection records must be maintained separately for each child and kept distinct from the main pupil file. The DSL is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date and that information is appropriately managed and shared.

Staff must submit their records to the DSL or Deputy DSL promptly through CPOMS and must not retain personal copies. Any original handwritten notes made at the time of a disclosure must be passed to the DSL and retained in accordance with the school's record-keeping procedures; they must not be destroyed or disposed of by the member of staff. If staff are unsure about what or how to record, they should seek advice from the DSL or Deputy DSL without delaying the reporting of the concern.

Reporting Timescales and Urgent Escalation

Same-day recording: All safeguarding concerns, disclosures and observations must be recorded on email as soon as possible and, at the latest, on the same day the concern arises. Staff must not delay recording or reporting while waiting for further information or clarification. Safeguarding team to log on CPOMS on the same day.

Urgent concerns: Where a concern is urgent or a student may be at immediate risk of harm, staff must alert a member of the DSL team verbally and immediately. This verbal notification must always be followed by a detailed, factual written record on email as soon as possible. Where a child is in immediate danger, emergency services must be contacted by calling 999.

All staff are responsible for reporting concerns promptly and must not assume that another member of staff has already done so.

Why is all of this important?

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.11 Examples of poor practice include:

- failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect;
- poor record keeping;
- failing to listen to the views of the child;
- failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve;
- not sharing information;
- sharing information too slowly; and
- a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action

Unsubstantiated, Unfounded, False Or Malicious Reports

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

Allegations Involving School Staff/Volunteers

See the separate policy on Allegations against Staff and the Whistleblowing policy

All concerns or allegations about adults working in or on behalf of Brentford School for Girls, whether paid or unpaid, must be taken seriously and reported without delay. This includes teaching and support staff, supply teachers, trainee teachers, volunteers, contractors, visitors and other adults who have contact with children.
A low-level concern is any concern, however small, that an adult may have acted inconsistently with the school's Staff Code of Conduct or professional expectations, including inappropriate behaviour outside work, but which does not meet the harm threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Low-level concerns
All staff must report any concern, however minor, that an adult working in or on behalf of Brentford School for Girls may have acted inconsistently with the Staff Code of Conduct or professional expectations, even where the behaviour does not meet the harm threshold. This includes inappropriate behaviour outside work where it may indicate a transferable risk to children. Low-level concerns must be reported promptly to the Executive Headteacher or Head of School and recorded in accordance with the school's procedures. Concerns about the Executive Headteacher must be referred directly to the Chair of Governors. They will be considered sensitively, fairly and consistently, with appropriate confidentiality and information shared only on a need-to-know basis. Concerns involving the Chair of Governors or involve a conflict of interest must be referred directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Allegations against staff
Any concern or allegation that an adult working in or on behalf of Brentford School for Girls may have harmed a child, committed a criminal offence against or relating to a child, behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm, or behaved in a way that may make them unsuitable to work with children must be reported without delay and managed under the school's Managing Allegations Against Staff procedures. This applies to all adults, whether paid or unpaid, including staff, supply and trainee teachers, volunteers, contractors and visitors, and includes behaviour in their personal or community life where it may indicate a risk to children. Staff must report concerns to the Executive Headteacher or Head of School. Concerns about the Headteacher must be reported to the Chair of Governors; concerns about the Chair of Governors must be referred directly to the LADO.

The person receiving the information must listen carefully, keep an open mind, avoid investigating or asking leading questions, and not promise confidentiality. They must make a prompt written record in the informant's own words, including relevant dates, times, locations, what was said or observed and any witnesses, and pass it on without delay. Staff may also refer concerns directly to Children's Social Care or the LADO where appropriate. The school and the relevant initial teacher training provider share responsibility for managing concerns about trainee teachers and must liaise where necessary. Further guidance is set out in the school's separate Managing Allegations Against Staff and Whistleblowing policies.

Specific Safeguarding Harms

Brentford School for Girls recognises that safeguarding concerns can overlap and that pupils may experience multiple forms of harm at the same time. Staff must maintain professional curiosity, remain alert to changes in a pupil's behaviour, presentation and circumstances, and report any safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy without delay. Staff should seek advice whenever they are unsure. The school takes a child-centred approach and recognises that a pupil may be at risk of harm even where they do not recognise themselves as a victim or do not make a direct disclosure.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and County Lines

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal activity. CCE may be committed or facilitated by an individual, an organised network or a gang and can affect children of all genders.

CCE may involve children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing, vehicle crime, threatening or committing serious violence, or other criminal activity. Children may be trapped through violence, threats, coercion, manipulation, debt or the offer of money, status or other benefits.

County lines is a form of CCE in which children may be exploited to transport drugs, money or other commodities. A child may appear to identify with, or consider themselves to be part of, the group exploiting them while nevertheless being a victim of exploitation. Children may be moved for the purpose of exploitation, which may constitute trafficking and modern slavery.

Staff must remain alert to indicators of CCE, including:

- Unexplained or repeated absences from school.
- Changes in behaviour, appearance or peer group.
- Unexplained injuries, money or possessions.
- Association with unfamiliar adults or older children.
- Increased mobile-phone activity or travel to unfamiliar locations.
- Substance misuse, threats, coercion or intimidation.
- Possession of, or suspected involvement with, weapons.

Any concern that a pupil may be at risk of, or experiencing, CCE must be reported immediately to the DSL. The DSL will assess the pupil's immediate safety and wider safeguarding needs and make appropriate referrals to Children's Social Care, the police or other relevant agencies.

Serious Violence

Serious violence may involve serious physical assault, the use or threat of weapons, knife crime, robbery or other serious violence. It may occur inside or outside school and may be associated with CCE, county lines, gangs, bullying, domestic abuse, substance misuse or other safeguarding concerns. Risk factors may include previous experience of violence, involvement in or association with gangs or criminal exploitation, possession or suspected possession of weapons, unexplained injuries, significant changes in behaviour or peer group, increased absence, substance misuse, threats or intimidation, or exposure to violence within the community or online.

Staff must remain professionally curious where a pupil's behaviour, circumstances or presentation indicate that they may be involved in, or at risk of, serious violence. Any concern must be reported immediately to the DSL.

The DSL will assess the immediate risk to the pupil and others and consider the wider safeguarding context. Appropriate action may include referral to Children's Social Care, the police, youth services, health services or other relevant agencies. Where there is an immediate risk of serious injury or loss of life, staff must contact the emergency services on 999 without delay.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a pupil has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff should be alert to changes in a pupil's behaviour, mood, presentation, attendance, relationships or emotional wellbeing which may indicate that they are experiencing difficulties with their mental health.

Possible indicators include significant changes in behaviour or mood, withdrawal from friends or usual activities, persistent low mood, anxiety, changes in eating or sleeping patterns, unexplained physical symptoms, expressions of hopelessness, self-harm or talk of suicide. Staff must also consider whether changes may indicate other safeguarding concerns.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to diagnose a mental health problem. Staff must not attempt to diagnose a pupil but should share concerns with the DSL or an appropriately trained mental health professional.

The school provides pastoral and wellbeing support through its existing arrangements, including pastoral teams, Time OUT cards, Calm Areas and Inclusion Plans. Pupils may also be signposted to appropriate specialist services, such as Kooth. Where appropriate, the school will work with parents/carers and external agencies to secure additional support.

Mental health concerns must always be considered alongside other safeguarding concerns, including abuse, neglect, exploitation, bullying, child-on-child abuse and online harms. Where there is an immediate concern that a pupil is at risk of serious harm, including an immediate risk of serious self-harm or suicide, staff must act without delay. The DSL or an appropriate senior leader must be informed immediately and, where necessary, emergency services contacted on 999.

Domestic Abuse and Operation Encompass

Children who see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse at home are recognised as victims in their own right under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. Brentford School for Girls participates in Operation Encompass, which enables the police to notify the school when they have attended a domestic abuse incident involving a pupil's household.

The police notification should be made to the school's designated Key Adult, usually the DSL, before the start of the next school day. This information enables the school to consider the pupil's individual needs and put appropriate, sensitive pastoral and safeguarding support in place. The school will handle all notifications confidentially and share information only with those who need to know. An Operation Encompass notification does not replace a referral to Children's Social Care where this is necessary.

Child-on-Child Abuse, Including Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

Children are capable of abusing other children, both online and offline. Brentford School for Girls does not tolerate child-on-child abuse. Abusive behaviour must never be dismissed as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up', as this can normalise harmful behaviour and prevent pupils from reporting their experiences.

Child-on-child abuse can include:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying.
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children.
- Physical abuse, serious physical assault or threats involving weapons.
- Harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
- The consensual or non-consensual making or sharing of nude or semi-nude images, including AI-generated images.
- Upskirting.
- Initiation or hazing-type violence and rituals.

Child-on-child abuse can occur inside or outside school and online. The school recognises that, for some forms of child-on-child abuse, girls are more likely to be victims and boys more likely to be perpetrators, while recognising that this is not the case for every form of abuse. All reports will be taken seriously and responded to on a case-by-case basis, using a child-centred and trauma-informed approach. This includes assessing immediate risks and taking appropriate steps to protect and support all pupils involved.

The school's response may include:

- **Support for victims:** Immediate safety planning, access to pastoral leads and counselling, ELSA support where appropriate, and referrals to external services such as the Mental Health Support Team (MHST) or West London NHS Trust.
- **Intervention for pupils who have caused harm:** Structured risk assessment, targeted education on consent and boundaries, appropriate action under the Behaviour Policy, and external or multi-agency intervention to address underlying harmful behaviours.
- **Support for affected peers:** Pastoral check-ins, group support where appropriate and targeted classroom supervision for pupils affected by witnessing or experiencing secondary trauma.

The DSL routinely reviews local patterns and risks relating to child-on-child abuse and liaises with the local police Safer Schools Team and Hounslow Children's Social Care about the multi-agency response to sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Safeguarding separation arrangements

In exceptional circumstances, a temporary separation arrangement may be necessary where a serious safeguarding concern, such as child-on-child harm, means pupils need to be physically separated and the risk to pupils or staff cannot reasonably be managed while all pupils remain on the school site. The Head of School and DSL, in consultation with relevant members of the pastoral team, will consider whether such an arrangement is necessary and proportionate. A risk assessment must be undertaken, appropriate measures to mitigate risk put in place, and the arrangement kept under regular review. It must be used only for as long as necessary while the safeguarding concern is being considered and managed, in accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*, including paragraph 565. Parents/carers will be informed of the decision and the reasons for it, unless doing so would place a pupil at further risk or compromise safeguarding action. The Local Authority will be informed where required, particularly where the arrangement involves a pupil remaining off the school site. The school will ensure that appropriate investigation, support and education arrangements are in place. A

reintegration meeting will be held when the pupil returns, and any support or safety plan will be reviewed.

Requests for Confidentiality in Child-on-Child Abuse Cases

Where a pupil discloses sexual violence, sexual harassment or other child-on-child abuse and asks staff not to inform their parents/carers or external agencies, staff must explain sensitively that they cannot promise absolute confidentiality.

The DSL will consider the pupil's age, understanding, wishes and feelings, immediate safety and any ongoing risk of harm to the pupil or others. The DSL will balance the pupil's wishes with the school's statutory safeguarding responsibilities, relevant data protection requirements, including UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 as amended, and local multi-agency referral arrangements.

Where information must be shared to protect the pupil or another child, the DSL will, wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so, explain the reasons for this to the pupil before action is taken and outline the support that will be provided.

Children Missing Education and Pupils Absent from Education

Repeated or prolonged absence from education, and children missing education (CME), can be indicators of underlying safeguarding concerns, including abuse, neglect and exploitation. Unexplained or persistent absence may indicate that a pupil is experiencing or at risk of serious harm, including:

- Abuse and neglect, including child sexual exploitation (CSE) and CCE such as county lines involvement.
- Domestic abuse, significant mental health concerns or substance misuse.
- Specific forms of harm, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and honour-based abuse.
- Increased vulnerability for pupils already known to Children's Social Care, including children in need, pupils subject to child protection plans and children in care.

The school's response

To identify emerging risks, prevent pupils from becoming missing from education and ensure appropriate safeguarding action, Brentford School for Girls will:

- Maintain clear procedures for responding to unauthorised absence and children missing education. Staff must remain alert to patterns of repeated or prolonged absence and report safeguarding concerns immediately to the DSL.
- Make prompt enquiries about unexpected and unexplained absences to establish the pupil's whereabouts and welfare.
- Hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil wherever reasonably possible, so that the school has additional ways to contact a responsible adult when welfare or safeguarding concerns arise.
- Work with the Local Authority and Children's Social Care in accordance with statutory guidance and local procedures where absence indicates safeguarding risks.
- Make a referral to the relevant Local Authority children missing education team as soon as possible where enquiries indicate that a pupil may no longer be attending the school and their whereabouts or educational arrangements are not known.

- Work jointly with the Local Authority to make reasonable enquiries to locate and support a pupil before their name is removed from the school roll, including at standard and non-standard transition points, and fulfil all statutory notification requirements.
- Where there is reason to believe that a pupil is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, the school will make an immediate referral to Children's Social Care and contact the police where appropriate.

Making or Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes, Including Images Generated Using AI

The making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes includes photographs, videos, livestreams and digitally altered or wholly AI-generated images.

All incidents involving the making or sharing of nude or semi-nude images require a safeguarding response, whether the sharing is consensual or non-consensual. Brentford School for Girls will respond to each incident on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the ages and circumstances of the pupils involved, their wishes and feelings, the nature of the image, whether there has been coercion, pressure, exploitation, blackmail or abuse, and any wider safeguarding concerns.

Staff must not view, copy, print, share or store the image and must not ask a pupil to show it to them. Staff must inform the DSL immediately and follow the school's procedures for responding to the incident and preserving relevant evidence. The DSL will assess the circumstances and determine the appropriate safeguarding response, including whether parents/carers, Children's Social Care, the police or another specialist agency should be involved. Specialist advice will be sought where required.

The school will follow relevant Department for Education and UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) guidance on responding to the making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes. Appropriate support and education will be provided to pupils involved and any other children affected.

Online Safety, Filtering and Monitoring

Brentford School for Girls uses active filtering and monitoring systems, including Smoothwall, to help protect pupils from online risks. The school considers online safety through the 'Four Cs': Content, Contact, Conduct and Commerce.

In line with KCSIE 2026, the DSL acts as the designated senior leadership team (SLT) lead for filtering and monitoring, supported by the IT support team. The effectiveness of filtering and monitoring arrangements is reviewed at least annually. This review considers whether filtering is operating appropriately on internet-connected devices across the school site and whether monitoring arrangements are effective in identifying and responding to safeguarding risks. A formal written record of the review and relevant checks is maintained and presented to the Local Governing Body to provide assurance.

Mobile Phone-Free School Environment

Brentford School for Girls operates a mobile phone-free environment by default. Pupils must not have access to their mobile phones during the school day, including lessons, breaktimes, lunchtimes and movement between classes. Mobile phones and smart technology must be switched off and stored securely in bags in accordance with the school's procedures. Unauthorised use of mobile devices during the school day will result in the device being confiscated and appropriate action taken in line with the Behaviour Policy.

Misogyny, Misandry and Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Brentford School for Girls recognises that misogynistic and misandrist attitudes, language and online content can contribute to a culture in which harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence are normalised. Staff must challenge inappropriate behaviour and report concerns to the DSL where a pupil is exposed to or engaging with misogynistic or misandrist content, including material promoted by online influencers.
The school recognises the links between misogyny, misandry and harmful sexual behaviour and will promote early identification and appropriate, evidence-informed support to prevent behaviour from escalating. Sexual harassment and sexual violence must never be dismissed as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys'. Staff must maintain professional curiosity even where no reports have been made, as under-reporting does not mean that harmful behaviour is not occurring.

Honour-Based Abuse, Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage
Honour-based abuse (HBA) refers to incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the perceived honour of a family or community. It can include female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and breast ironing.
FGM comprises all procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is a serious criminal offence.
Under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, teachers in England and Wales have a personal, non-delegable duty to report known cases of FGM in girls under 18 directly to the police. This duty applies where FGM is disclosed by the girl or identified through physical observation in the course of the teacher's professional work. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.
FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils or students.

All staff must remain alert to the risks of HBA, FGM and forced marriage and follow the 'One Chance' principle: they may have only one opportunity to speak to a pupil and help secure protection. Staff must report concerns immediately to the DSL and must not approach family members or take action that could increase risk to the pupil.

Child Sexual Exploitation
Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity. CSE can occur online or offline and may involve an exchange for something the child needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. It may also involve violence or the threat of violence.
CSE can be perpetrated by males or females and by children or adults. It may be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents and may range from opportunistic abuse to complex organised abuse. Children may be moved for the purpose of sexual exploitation, which may constitute trafficking and modern slavery.

Staff should remain alert to indicators of CSE, including:

- Unexplained gifts or money.
- Older, controlling or exploitative relationships.
- Unexplained or repeated absences and travel.
- Sexualised behaviour or concerns about online contacts and images.
- Increased online activity, self-harm or substance misuse.
- Changes in behaviour, appearance or peer group.

Any concern that a pupil may be at risk of, or experiencing, CSE must be reported immediately to the DSL. The DSL will assess the pupil's immediate safety and wider safeguarding needs and make appropriate referrals to Children's Social Care, the police and other relevant agencies. Where there are concerns that a pupil may have been trafficked or exploited, the DSL will consider whether referral through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) or to an Independent Child Trafficking Guardian (ICTG) is appropriate.

Prevent Duty and Radicalisation

Under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, Brentford School for Girls has a statutory duty to have due regard to the need to prevent pupils from being drawn into terrorism. This is known as the Prevent Duty.

Radicalisation is the process by which an individual comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism that lead to terrorism. Staff must maintain professional curiosity and remain alert to indicators of vulnerability, including:

- Expression of extremist or discriminatory views.
- Sudden social withdrawal or isolation from peers and family.
- Significant changes in behaviour or appearance.
- Accessing radicalising or harmful content online.
- Susceptibility to indoctrination by external influences or online groups.

Any concern that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or being drawn into extremist ideologies must be reported immediately to the DSL. The DSL will assess the concern, liaise with the Local Authority Prevent Lead and the police where appropriate, and consider early multi-agency intervention through the Channel programme.

Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. Guidance on Channel is available at: Channel guidance, and a Channel awareness elearning programme is available for staff at: Channel General Awareness. The school's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Channel referral. As a Channel partner, the school or college may be asked to attend a Channel panel to discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

Children can be victims of modern slavery, domestic servitude, forced labour or human trafficking, often linked to county lines or organised crime networks. Brentford School for Girls recognises that children who are exploited are victims who require protection and support.

Staff must report any concerns about possible modern slavery or trafficking immediately to the DSL. The DSL will assess the pupil's immediate safety and wider safeguarding needs and coordinate appropriate referrals to Children's Social Care and other relevant agencies. The DSL will consider whether a referral through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) or the Independent Child Trafficking Guardian (ICTG) service is appropriate.

Safeguarding in Physical Education and Sport

Brentford School for Girls is committed to providing a safe, secure and inclusive environment across physical education lessons, extra-curricular sports clubs, fixtures and coaching sessions. All sports activities, whether conducted on or off the school site, are subject to appropriate risk assessments. These consider venue safety, physical contact and professional boundaries, transport arrangements and suitable adult-to-pupil supervision.

External sports coaches, specialist instructors and volunteers are subject to the school's safer recruitment and safeguarding procedures, including the appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and barred list checks where legally permitted and required for the role.

Staff and sports coaches must adhere to professional standards of conduct, maintain clear physical boundaries and report any safeguarding concern immediately. Any sports-related injury, disclosure or peer concern must be recorded on CPOMS and reported to the DSL in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Alternative Provision and Respite Placements

When placing a pupil with an Alternative Provision (AP) or respite provider, the home school retains ultimate, non-delegable responsibility for the pupil's safeguarding and welfare. Our DSLs must carry out thorough due diligence and quality assurance on all AP providers. The school enforces the following strict safeguarding controls for all AP placements:

- **Written Vetting Confirmation:** The school must obtain written confirmation from the AP provider that all necessary safer recruitment checks (including Enhanced DBS and barred list checks) have been carried out on all staff working at their setting.
- **AP Staff Change Notifications**: AP providers are contractually required to notify the school immediately of any staff changes, allowing the school to verify that safeguarding checks have been completed on new personnel.
- **Half-Termly Placement Reviews:** The DSL, DDSL, or Head of Year must conduct structured reviews of the AP placement at least once every half-term. These reviews must verify regular attendance, confirm the placement remains safe, and assess whether the provider continues to meet the pupil's educational and emotional needs.
- **Immediate Review on Concerns:** If any safeguarding or welfare concern arises at the AP setting, the placement must be immediately reviewed and, if necessary, terminated until the concerns are fully resolved.

Information Sharing and Child Protection File Transfers

Effective information sharing is fundamental to identifying safeguarding concerns at an early stage, assessing risks, protecting children from harm and promoting their welfare. All staff must recognise that they should not assume that another professional, organisation or agency will share information that may be essential to safeguarding a child.
Brentford School for Girls will maintain clear procedures and arrangements for sharing safeguarding information both within the school and with relevant external agencies, including local authority Children's Social Care, the three safeguarding partners, the police, health services, other schools and colleges, and any other relevant organisations, agencies or practitioners involved in safeguarding children.
Information must be shared promptly and proactively whenever this is necessary to identify, assess or respond to safeguarding concerns. All information sharing must be lawful, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure, taking account of data protection legislation, statutory safeguarding responsibilities and the Trust's information-sharing procedures. Information should only be shared with individuals and agencies who need it to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

When considering whether and how information should be shared, staff must consider:

- Whether the information is relevant to the safeguarding concern, circumstances or identified risk.
- What information is necessary and proportionate for the receiving individual or agency to understand and respond to the concern effectively.
- Whether the information is presented clearly, accurately and with sufficient context to support appropriate safeguarding decisions.

Staff must exercise professional judgement when sharing information, ensuring that disclosures are focused and proportionate to the safeguarding purpose. Information that is not relevant or necessary may be summarised or excluded; however, no information should be withheld if it could be significant in understanding a child's circumstances, assessing risk or determining the appropriate safeguarding response.

Data protection legislation does not prevent the sharing of information where this is necessary to safeguard children and promote their welfare. Staff must not allow concerns about confidentiality, data protection or obtaining consent to delay or prevent the appropriate sharing of safeguarding information where there is a lawful basis to do so. Information may be shared without consent where obtaining consent is not possible, would be inappropriate or could place a child at increased risk of harm. The child's safety and best interests must remain the primary consideration.

Where a member of staff is uncertain about whether information should be shared, they must seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) without delay. Significant information-sharing decisions must be appropriately recorded, including the information shared, the recipient, the purpose of sharing and, where relevant, decisions not to share information, together with the rationale for those decisions.

Transfer of Child Protection Files

When a child leaves the Trust to attend another school or college, the DSL or an appropriately designated deputy must ensure that the child's child protection file is transferred securely and promptly to the receiving educational setting.

- Where a child transfers to another school or college during the academic year, the child protection file must be transferred within five days of the child leaving.
- Where a child moves at the beginning of a new term, the child protection file must be transferred within the first five days of the new term.
- The child protection file must be transferred separately from the main pupil educational record, using secure methods of transfer to maintain confidentiality and protect sensitive information.
- Confirmation that the receiving school or college has received the child protection file must be obtained and retained.
- The DSL must ensure that relevant safeguarding information is brought to the attention of appropriate staff at the receiving school or college, including the receiving DSL and, where relevant, the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) or the member of staff responsible for overseeing SEND provision.
- In addition to arranging the formal transfer of the child protection file, the DSL must consider whether it is necessary and appropriate to share relevant safeguarding information with the receiving school or college before the child leaves.
- Particular consideration must be given to sharing information in advance where this will help the receiving school or college identify and assess potential safeguarding risks, put appropriate protective measures in place or ensure that the necessary support is available when the child starts.

The school recognises that the timely and secure transfer of safeguarding information is essential to maintaining continuity of protection and support for children when they move between educational settings. The child's welfare and best interests must remain central throughout the transfer process.

Supporting Gender-Questioning Students & Use of Facilities

Supporting Gender-Questioning Students and a Cautious Approach

Brentford School for Girls is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, emotional well-being and dignity of all students, including those who are questioning their gender. The school recognises that each student's circumstances and experiences are individual and that any requests for support relating to gender identity or social transition must be approached sensitively, carefully and in accordance with the school's safeguarding responsibilities, the Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998 and *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026*.

- The school will adopt a cautious and considered approach when responding to requests for social transition, including changes to a student's name, pronouns, uniform or other aspects of their presentation.
- All requests will be considered individually, with the best interests and welfare of the child as the primary consideration.
- Decisions will take account of the principles and recommendations of the Cass Review (2024), particularly the importance of caution in relation to social transition for pre-pubertal children and the value of appropriate clinical advice.

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will have oversight of cases involving requests for social transition and will ensure that appropriate safeguarding considerations are addressed.
- A clear and confidential record of discussions, decisions, actions and the rationale for any agreed arrangements will be maintained.
- The school will consider the potential impact of any proposed arrangements on the individual student and other students, including their safety, welfare, privacy and dignity.
- Where appropriate, advice will be sought from relevant health professionals and external agencies to support informed decision-making.
- Any arrangements agreed will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they continue to meet the safeguarding and welfare needs of those involved.

Parent and Carer Involvement

Brentford School for Girls recognises the important role that parents and carers play in supporting their children's welfare and development. In accordance with KCSIE 2026, the school will seek to involve parents and carers in decisions concerning a child's request for social transition wherever possible and appropriate.

- Where a student raises questions about their gender or requests support with social transition, the school will consider how best to involve their parents or carers at the earliest appropriate opportunity.
- Parents and carers will be given appropriate opportunities to contribute to discussions and decision-making, with their views and understanding of their child's circumstances taken into account.
- The school will consider the individual circumstances of each student and ensure that decisions are informed by safeguarding considerations and the child's best interests.
- Where there are concerns that involving parents or carers may place a child at risk of harm, the DSL will seek advice from Children's Social Care and, where appropriate, other relevant professionals before taking further action.
- The school will not make promises of confidentiality to a student where information may need to be shared to safeguard them.
- Any decision to delay parental involvement must be based on an assessment of the individual circumstances, with the rationale and agreed safeguarding actions clearly recorded.

Single-Sex Toilets, Changing Rooms, Showers and Overnight Accommodation

Brentford School for Girls has a responsibility to safeguard all students and to protect their privacy, dignity, safety and welfare. In accordance with KCSIE 2026, the Equality Act 2010 and the School Premises (England) Regulations 2012, the school will maintain appropriate single-sex provision for toilets, changing rooms and showers, taking account of the statutory requirements relating to biological sex.

Toilets

- Separate toilet facilities will be provided for boys and girls aged eight and over, in accordance with the School Premises (England) Regulations 2012.
- Students must use toilet facilities designated for their biological sex and must not access facilities designated for the opposite biological sex.
- Where a gender-questioning student does not wish to use the facilities designated for their biological sex, the school will consider whether an appropriate alternative can be provided.

- Where possible, an alternative may include an individual, self-contained toilet that can be secured from the inside and is intended for use by one student at a time.
- Any alternative arrangements must protect the safety, comfort, privacy and dignity of the student concerned and other students, without compromising the school's provision of single-sex facilities.
- Where mixed-sex toilet provision is available in addition to single-sex facilities, appropriate safeguarding risk assessments will be undertaken. Such facilities should open directly onto communal areas, such as corridors.
- Decisions and arrangements will be recorded, communicated appropriately and reviewed regularly.

Changing Rooms and Showers

- The school will provide appropriate single-sex changing accommodation and shower facilities for students aged 11 and over at the beginning of the school year, in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Students aged 11 and over must not undress or wash in front of students of the opposite biological sex, nor be required to do so.
- Students must not access changing rooms or showers designated for the opposite biological sex, including where a request for social transition has been made.
- Where a gender-questioning student does not wish to use the facilities designated for their biological sex, the school will consider whether suitable alternative, individual changing or washing arrangements can be provided.
- Any alternative arrangements must safeguard the privacy, dignity and welfare of all students and must not compromise the provision of single-sex changing facilities.

Overnight Accommodation and Residential Visits

- On school trips, residential visits and other activities involving overnight accommodation, students must not share dormitories, bedrooms, tents or other overnight accommodation with students of the opposite biological sex.
- Accommodation arrangements will be organised in accordance with the school's safeguarding responsibilities, ensuring that the privacy, dignity, safety and welfare of all students are protected.
- Where a gender-questioning student requests alternative accommodation arrangements, the school will consider whether an appropriate individual arrangement can be made.
- Any alternative arrangements must be considered carefully, taking account of the needs and welfare of the student concerned and the safety, comfort and privacy of other students.
- Relevant safeguarding considerations and any agreed arrangements will be documented and reviewed as necessary.

Single-Sex Participation in PE and Sport

Brentford School for Girls recognises the importance of ensuring that all students have opportunities to participate in physical education and sporting activities in a safe, inclusive and supportive environment. Decisions regarding participation in single-sex sports and physical activities will be made in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and KCSIE 2026.

- The school will consider whether a sporting activity needs to be organised into single-sex groups to ensure fairness, safety and appropriate competition.
- The Equality Act 2010 provides an exception permitting participation in competitive sport to be separated by sex where this is necessary to ensure fairness or safety, including where differences in average physical strength, stamina or physique would otherwise place participants at a disadvantage.
- Where the school determines that an activity must be organised into single-sex groups for safety reasons, participation will be organised according to biological sex, with no exceptions.
- Where there are no identified safety concerns requiring single-sex participation, requests from gender-questioning students will be considered individually and sensitively.
- Decisions will take account of fairness, the nature of the activity, the age and developmental stage of students, the potential impact on all participants and the school's safeguarding responsibilities.
- The school will consider relevant guidance from the governing body of the sport concerned where appropriate.
- All decisions will be guided by the best interests of students and the need to provide a safe, fair and supportive environment for everyone.

Safer Recruitment, Staff Vetting, & Volunteers

Safer Recruitment and Vetting Checks

Brentford School for Girls is committed to maintaining robust safer recruitment practices to ensure that all staff and individuals working with or having access to students are suitable to do so. The school will comply with statutory safer recruitment requirements by undertaking all necessary pre-employment checks and maintaining an accurate and up-to-date Single Central Record (SCR). All appointments will be subject to the satisfactory completion of the relevant checks, including:

- Verification of the individual's identity.
- An Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including Children's Barred List information where the individual will be undertaking regulated activity with children.
- Verification of the individual's physical and mental fitness to undertake the responsibilities of the role.
- Confirmation of relevant professional qualifications and, where applicable, registration with professional bodies.
- Verification of the individual's right to work in the United Kingdom.
- Appropriate Section 128 checks for individuals taking up management positions, including relevant trustees, governors and members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- Online searches as part of the shortlisting process, to identify any information that may be relevant to the individual's suitability to work with children and to support the school's recruitment due diligence.

To ensure that prospective employees are aware of the school's commitment to safeguarding and its expectations of staff, a link to Brentford School for Girls' Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be included in recruitment advertisements and application packs.

Teacher Status and Prohibition Checks

The school will verify Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), completion of statutory teacher induction where applicable, and whether an individual is subject to any prohibition, sanction or restriction preventing them from undertaking teaching duties. These checks will be completed through the Department for Education's *Check a teacher's record* service, as appropriate.

Additional Recruitment and Vetting Requirements

To maintain effective safeguarding arrangements and ensure compliance with statutory safer recruitment requirements, Brentford School for Girls will also implement the following additional recruitment and vetting procedures:

- **DBS Certificate Verification:** Where a DBS certificate is required, the school will ensure that the appropriate check is obtained before an individual takes up their appointment wherever possible. The original DBS certificate must be provided for verification by the school before the individual commences employment, or as soon as reasonably practicable afterwards, in accordance with KCSIE 2026. Where an individual is permitted to commence work in regulated activity with children before their DBS certificate has been received, all other required pre-employment checks must have been completed, an appropriate risk assessment and supervision arrangements must be in place, and a separate Children's Barred List check must be undertaken where legally permitted and required. Individuals may register for the DBS Update Service when applying for a new DBS check or within 30 calendar days of the certificate's issue date.
- **Commencing Employment Before Receipt of a DBS Certificate:** In exceptional circumstances where an individual is permitted to begin work in regulated activity before their DBS certificate has been received, the school will undertake a separate Children's Barred List check where appropriate, complete and retain a written risk assessment and ensure that suitable supervision arrangements remain in place at all times, in accordance with KCSIE 2026.
- **Changes of Role and Internal Appointments:** Where an existing member of staff or volunteer moves from a position that does not involve regulated activity into a role that does, the school will ensure that all relevant statutory pre-employment checks are completed before the individual begins their new duties. This will include an Enhanced DBS check and Children's Barred List check where required.
- **Vetting of Self-Employed Contractors:** Where self-employed individuals, including peripatetic music tutors and specialist sports coaches, are engaged to work within the school, appropriate DBS and safeguarding checks must be completed before they commence work. Where an individual is eligible for an Enhanced DBS check, this must be obtained through an appropriate umbrella body, registered agency or the school's DBS processing arrangements. The school will verify the original DBS certificate and complete the necessary identity, right-to-work and Children's Barred List checks, where applicable, before permitting the individual to undertake unsupervised work with students.

- **Volunteers Undertaking Regulated Activity:** Volunteers who undertake regulated activity with children on a regular basis, or who undertake relevant overnight activities, will be subject to the appropriate safer recruitment and vetting procedures, including an Enhanced DBS check with Children's Barred List information where legally required. The frequency and nature of the volunteer's duties will be assessed against the statutory definition of regulated activity. Volunteers who have not completed the required safeguarding and vetting checks will not be permitted to undertake regulated activity or be left unsupervised with students.

Volunteer Vetting and the Removal of the Supervision Exemption

Brentford School for Girls recognises that changes to the arrangements for supervised volunteers mean that volunteers undertaking regulated activity with children must meet the relevant statutory safer recruitment and vetting requirements. The school will ensure that all volunteer roles are assessed carefully to establish whether they meet the definition of regulated activity, in accordance with current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) requirements and *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026*.

- Volunteers who undertake teaching, training, instructing or supervision of children frequently, on more than three days within any 30-day period, or overnight, will be assessed against the statutory definition of regulated activity and will be required to undergo an Enhanced DBS check with Children's Barred List information where the relevant criteria are met.
- The school will assess the nature, frequency and responsibilities of each volunteer role to determine whether it constitutes regulated activity and identify the appropriate level of safeguarding checks required.
- Any existing volunteers whose roles become regulated activity from 1 September 2026, following changes to the arrangements for supervised volunteers, will be identified and the appropriate vetting checks obtained. This will include an Enhanced DBS check with Children's Barred List information or, where legally permitted, a standalone Children's Barred List check.
- Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not completed the required safeguarding checks be permitted to undertake regulated activity with children.
- Where a volunteer's role does not constitute regulated activity, the school will determine the appropriate level of supervision and vetting required, taking account of the nature of the role, the individual's contact with students and current statutory safeguarding requirements.

Brentford School for Girls will ensure that all volunteer arrangements are subject to appropriate safeguarding oversight and that the welfare and protection of students remain paramount.

Visitors, Contractors and Site Security

Verification of Suitability

Brentford School for Girls is committed to ensuring that all visitors, contractors and other adults attending the school site are subject to appropriate safeguarding arrangements.

- All visitors, including visiting speakers and professionals, must confirm their identity on arrival by presenting official photographic identification.

- Professionals attending the school in an official capacity, such as educational psychologists, social workers and school nurses, must provide written confirmation from their employing organisation that the appropriate DBS and safer recruitment checks have been completed.
- Contractors working on the school site must be subject to the appropriate safeguarding and DBS checks, where required. Any contractor who has not been appropriately vetted must not be permitted to have unsupervised contact with students.
- All visitors must sign in at Reception, be made aware of the names of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs), and receive the school's safeguarding information for visitors.
- Before external visitors, visiting speakers or representatives of external organisations are invited to address students, senior leaders must review the proposed content, materials and topics to ensure they are appropriate for the age and maturity of the students and consistent with the school's safeguarding responsibilities and Prevent duty.

Identification Lanyards and Visitor Badges

Brentford School for Girls operates a colour-coded identification lanyard and badge system to ensure that staff, governors, visitors and contractors can be readily identified while on the school site.
All adults on the school premises must wear their identification lanyard or visitor badge prominently and at all times. The system is as follows:

- **Black Staff lanyard:** Vetted, permanent members of school staff.
- **Green lanyard**: Governors and members of the Trust Board.
- **Green lanyard:** Vetted professional visitors and contractors for whom the relevant Enhanced DBS clearance has been confirmed and recorded, where required.
- **Red lanyard:** Unvetted visitors, parents and contractors. Individuals wearing a red lanyard must not have unsupervised contact with students and must be accompanied by an appropriately vetted member of staff at all times.

All staff have a responsibility to maintain site security and challenge any concerns. Any adult on the school premises who is not displaying an official school identification lanyard or visitor badge, or who is wearing a red lanyard without appropriate supervision, must be challenged promptly and directed to the main school Reception. Staff should report any concerns about an individual's identity or conduct to a senior member of staff.

Use of School Premises by External Organisations

Where the school premises are hired, rented or otherwise used by external organisations or individuals to provide activities for children, Brentford School for Girls will ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are established before the activity takes place.

The school will consider the proposed activity and assess its suitability, including its educational value and appropriateness for the age and maturity of the students. This assessment will include:

- The nature and content of the proposed activities.
- The suitability of the staff and volunteers delivering the activities, including whether DBS or other safeguarding checks are required.
- The arrangements for supervising children and ensuring their safety.

- The safeguarding policies and procedures that the external organisation has in place.
- The arrangements for reporting and responding to safeguarding concerns.

Where an allegation or safeguarding concern arises about an individual working for an external organisation using the school premises, the school will follow its safeguarding and allegations procedures. The school will also consider whether the matter needs to be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), in accordance with local procedures and statutory guidance.

Guidance for Staff Whose Children Attend Brentford School for Girls

1. Purpose of this Guidance

This guidance is intended to support staff members who are also parents or legal guardians of students at Brentford School for Girls. It aims to:

- Safeguard children whose parent or legal guardian is employed by the school.
- Protect staff members from actual or perceived conflicts of interest.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries between staff members and their children during the school day.
- Ensure that safeguarding concerns involving a staff member's child are managed impartially and transparently.
- Protect the integrity and reputation of the school and its safeguarding procedures.

This guidance applies to:

- All employees, including teachers, leaders, support staff and temporary staff, as well as volunteers.
- Any member of staff whose child attends Brentford School for Girls, regardless of whether the child is in their class, year group or phase.

Guiding Principles

The school recognises that many staff members choose for their children to attend Brentford School for Girls and that this can be beneficial for families and the wider school community. However, it is important to maintain clear boundaries between professional responsibilities and parental interests.

Staff should be guided by the following principles:

- The welfare of the child remains paramount.
- Professional responsibilities must take precedence over parental interests while staff are on duty.
- Safeguarding decisions must be made objectively and independently.
- Staff must avoid situations in which their personal interests could influence, or appear to influence, their professional judgement.

Maintaining Professional Boundaries

Staff members whose children attend the school are expected to:

- Treat their child in the same manner as any other student while carrying out their professional duties.
- Follow the same procedures as other parents in relation to attendance, communication, behaviour, complaints and educational concerns.
- Avoid using their position as a member of staff to access information that would not ordinarily be available to parents.
- Avoid discussing confidential school matters concerning other students with their child.
- Refrain from entering classrooms, pastoral areas or pupil record systems for parental purposes unless this has been authorised through the usual school procedures.

Where practicable:

- Staff should not be the primary teacher, tutor, assessor, investigator or decision-maker in matters directly concerning their own child.
- Alternative arrangements should be considered for assessments, disciplinary processes and safeguarding investigations involving their child.

Access to Information

Staff members must not:

- Access their child's school records using their staff account or professional permissions for parental purposes.
- Access safeguarding, SEND, behaviour, attendance or medical records relating to their child unless doing so is part of their authorised professional role and has been approved by the Executive Headteacher or Head of School.

Staff members who are also parents should receive information about their child through the same communication channels and procedures as other parents.

Safeguarding Concerns Involving a Staff Member's Child
Any safeguarding concern relating to a staff member's child must be reported and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

A concern must not be managed solely by:

- The parent who is employed by the school.
- A close colleague of the parent where their impartiality could reasonably be questioned.

Where a safeguarding concern involves a staff member's child:

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will consider whether a conflict of interest exists.
- If a conflict is identified, the matter will be managed by an alternative safeguarding lead, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) or the Executive Headteacher or an external safeguarding professional, as appropriate.
- Decisions made and actions taken will be clearly recorded.

The child's welfare must remain the overriding consideration throughout.

Concerns About a Child's Welfare or Parenting Capacity

Where concerns arise about the welfare of a child whose parent or legal guardian is employed by the school:

- Staff must report concerns through the usual safeguarding procedures, in the same way as they would for any other child.
- Personal relationships with colleagues must not influence whether or how concerns are reported.
- No member of staff should attempt to investigate concerns independently.

The school will follow local safeguarding partnership procedures and relevant statutory guidance where concerns meet the threshold for referral to external agencies.

Managing Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest, whether actual or perceived, may arise where a staff member:

- Is involved in safeguarding decisions concerning their own child.
- Has access to confidential information relating to their child.
- Could influence decisions concerning their child's attendance, behaviour, SEND provision, exclusions, complaints or safeguarding arrangements.

In these circumstances, the staff member should:

- Declare the conflict of interest to the appropriate senior leader or the DSL as soon as possible.
- Withdraw from relevant discussions and decision-making.
- Refrain from accessing records relating to the matter unless access is required as part of an authorised professional role.
- Follow any management arrangements put in place to ensure that the matter is handled impartially.

The DSL or Executive Headteacher/Head of School will ensure that the conflict and the actions taken to manage it are appropriately recorded.

Behaviour, Attendance and Complaints

Children of staff members are subject to the same school procedures and expectations as all other students, including:

- The same behaviour expectations.
- The same attendance procedures.
- The same sanctions and support processes.
- The same complaints procedures.

Where significant disciplinary action is being considered, the Executive Headteacher or Head of School may appoint an alternative senior leader to oversee the process to help ensure that it is fair, transparent and impartial.

Educational Decisions

Where reasonably practicable:

- Decisions concerning sets, classes, examinations, SEND provision, disciplinary measures or pastoral support involving a staff member's child should be reviewed by an independent member of staff.
- Staff members who are also parents must not use their employment position to seek to influence decisions or outcomes concerning their child.

Confidentiality

All staff must maintain confidentiality and handle information appropriately in relation to:

- The educational progress of a colleague's child.
- Safeguarding information.
- Medical information.
- Behaviour and attendance records.

Staff must not access, discuss or share confidential information unless they have an authorised professional reason to do so. Any breach of confidentiality may be dealt with under the school's relevant staff procedures and may result in disciplinary action.

Where a concern involves a potential conflict of interest, staff should not feel restricted by normal reporting arrangements and should use an appropriate alternative route to ensure that the concern is considered independently.

Monitoring and Review

The DSL and Executive Headteacher will:

- Review safeguarding cases involving staff members' children, where appropriate, to ensure that arrangements have been impartial and effective.
- Monitor any conflicts of interest that arise and consider whether further action is needed.
- Ensure that appropriate guidance and training are available to staff and governors.

This guidance will be reviewed annually alongside the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Staff Declaration

I understand my responsibilities as both an employee of Brentford School for Girls and a parent or legal guardian of a child attending the school. I agree to maintain appropriate professional boundaries, declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest, follow the school's safeguarding procedures and place the welfare of children above personal interests.

Employee name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Note: This document is written as staff guidance rather than a separate statutory policy. It should be read alongside Brentford School for Girls' Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Data Protection Policy and relevant staff procedures.

Elective Home Education and Withdrawal from School

Where a parent or carer indicates that they are considering withdrawing their child from Brentford School for Girls to educate them at home (elective home education), the school will seek to work collaboratively with the parent or carer and the local authority, alongside other relevant professionals where appropriate.

In line with Department for Education guidance, the school will, where possible, work with the local authority and relevant professionals to arrange a meeting with the parent or carer before a final decision is made. The purpose of the meeting is to ensure that the parent or carer has access to relevant information, has had the opportunity to discuss any concerns or difficulties affecting the child's education, and has considered what would be in the child's best interests.

This is particularly important where the child:

- Has special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Is known to children's social care or has an allocated social worker.
- Is otherwise vulnerable or may be at risk of becoming a child missing education.

Where a child has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, the school will liaise with the local authority so that the child's needs and provision can be considered. The local authority should work closely with the parent or carer and consider whether the EHC plan needs to be reviewed, including whether an early review is appropriate.

The school will work with the local authority to ensure that any proposed withdrawal is handled in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and the relevant Department for Education guidance. Where a pupil's name is deleted from the school's admission register, the school will notify the local authority in accordance with the statutory requirements.

The school will remain alert to any safeguarding concerns or risk that a child may not receive suitable education following withdrawal. Elective home education does not, in itself, mean that a child is missing education. However, children of compulsory school age who are not registered at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at school may be considered children missing education (CME). The school will therefore share relevant information with the local authority and cooperate with any reasonable enquiries or further action required to establish that the child's educational arrangements are appropriate.

Where concerns about a child's welfare, safety or vulnerability are identified, these must be considered separately and managed through the school's safeguarding procedures. Any necessary

referral to children's social care or other relevant agencies should not be delayed by discussions about elective home education.

Homelessness and the Risk of Homelessness

Being homeless or at risk of homelessness can have a significant impact on a child's safety, welfare, education and emotional wellbeing. Brentford School for Girls recognises the importance of identifying concerns at an early stage and working with the relevant local authority services and other agencies to ensure that children and their families receive appropriate support.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) should be familiar with the local authority's housing and homelessness services, including the relevant contact details and referral pathways, so that concerns can be raised and progressed promptly.

Indicators that a child or family may be at risk of homelessness include:

- Household debt or financial difficulties.
- Rent or mortgage arrears.
- Notice seeking possession or being asked to leave their accommodation.
- Domestic abuse or violence within the home.
- Anti-social behaviour or other circumstances that may place the family's accommodation at risk.
- A breakdown in family relationships or the loss of a family home.

Where appropriate, the DSL or DDSL will support or refer the family to the Local Housing Authority in accordance with local procedures. Staff should report any concerns about a child's circumstances to the DSL without delay. Contact with housing services does not replace a referral to children's social care where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm or may otherwise require support under the Children Act 1989. Safeguarding concerns must be addressed through the appropriate referral routes.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and Early Support

Under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, local housing authorities in England have duties to assess eligible applicants who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. This includes assessing their housing circumstances and support needs, and working with them to develop a personalised housing plan setting out reasonable steps to prevent or relieve homelessness.

The school will encourage families to seek advice and support from the Local Housing Authority at the earliest opportunity, rather than waiting until they have lost their accommodation. The DSL or DDSL may support families to access the appropriate services and will liaise with the local authority, where appropriate, to help ensure that the child's welfare and educational needs are considered.

Homelessness Among 16- and 17-Year-Old Students

Although homelessness will often arise in the context of a child living with their family, the school recognises that some students aged 16 or 17 may be living independently or may be at risk of homelessness because of family breakdown, exclusion from the family home or other circumstances.

Where a student aged 16 or 17 is homeless or at risk of homelessness, this must be treated as a safeguarding concern and referred promptly to the DSL. The DSL or DDSL will ensure that an appropriate referral is made to the local authority's Children's Services, in accordance with local procedures. Where a young person presents as homeless, Children's Services and the Local Housing Authority should work together to assess their needs. Children's Services must assess what duties may be owed to the young person under the Children Act 1989. In most circumstances, a homeless 16- or 17-year-old will be considered a child in need.
The school should not assume that a young person can make their own accommodation arrangements or that referral to housing services alone is sufficient. Staff should ensure that the young person is listened to, their wishes and feelings are considered, and they are supported to access appropriate advice and assistance. Where appropriate, the school will work with Children's Services, housing services and other relevant professionals to support the young person's safety, welfare and continued education.

Education and Ongoing Support
The school will remain mindful of the impact that homelessness, temporary accommodation or frequent changes of address can have on a student's attendance, punctuality, learning and emotional wellbeing.
Where a student's housing circumstances affect their ability to attend school regularly, the school will work with the student, their parent or carer and relevant professionals to identify appropriate support and promote regular attendance. Where a student moves or is at risk of losing access to education, the school will liaise with the local authority to help ensure that suitable education arrangements are maintained and that the student does not become missing from education.
Any safeguarding concerns arising from a student's circumstances must continue to be managed through the school's safeguarding procedures, with referrals to Children's Social Care made where appropriate.

Harmful Sexual behaviour, sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools

We will respond to all signs, reports and concerns of harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), child-on-child sexual harassment and sexual violence. This includes incidents occurring outside of the school premises, and/or online.
Sexual violence refers to specific sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 involving:
▪ Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents

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

▪ Sexual assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. Sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act

of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault)

▪ Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party)

CONSENT

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another and can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity, and each time the activity occurs. A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity, the age of consent is 16, and sexual intercourse without consent is rape. HSB can occur:

- Between 2 children of any age and sex
- Through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children
- Online and face to face (both physically and verbally)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school. If a victim reports an incident, it is essential that staff make sure they are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Challenging inappropriate behaviours
- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- Challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them
- Recognising the intersection of misogyny/misandry and harmful sexual behaviour. It's important not to dismiss issues that may seem minor at first, such as derogatory language, as behaviours can escalate into more severe forms of child-on-child abuse

Filtering, Monitoring and Online Safety

Brentford School for Girls uses Impero and Smoothwall to support the safeguarding and welfare of students and to help provide a safe environment in which they can learn. These systems are used to

filter access to inappropriate or harmful online content and to monitor activity on the school's IT systems, enabling potential safeguarding concerns to be identified and addressed.

The school will ensure that its filtering and monitoring arrangements are appropriate to the age and needs of its students and reflect the level of risk within the school. These arrangements will be reviewed regularly, taking account of relevant safeguarding risks, the effectiveness of the systems, how students use the school's IT facilities and the proportionality of any restrictions or associated costs.

The school's filtering and monitoring arrangements form part of its wider, whole-school approach to online safety. This includes educating students about online risks, promoting safe and responsible use of technology, providing appropriate staff training and ensuring that concerns identified through filtering or monitoring are acted upon promptly. The school's approach to online safety and the use of mobile technology is set out in its relevant policies, including the ICT Policy and E- Safety Policy.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the Department for Education's filtering and monitoring standards:

- The DSL has lead responsibility for understanding the school's filtering and monitoring systems and processes, including how these support the identification and response to safeguarding concerns.
- The senior leader responsible for filtering and monitoring will work with the DSL and IT support to oversee the effectiveness of the systems and ensure that responsibilities are clearly allocated.
- The effectiveness of filtering and monitoring arrangements will be reviewed at least annually. This review will include checks that filtering is working appropriately on all internet-connected devices in relevant locations, and records of these checks will be maintained.
- The school will consider the age and needs of its students, those who may be at greater risk of harm, how frequently students access the school's IT systems and the proportionality of costs in relation to safeguarding risks.
- Filtering systems will be configured to block harmful and inappropriate content, while avoiding unnecessary restrictions that could unreasonably affect teaching, learning or the delivery of online safeguarding education.
- Monitoring arrangements will be proportionate and appropriate to the school's safeguarding risks. Any concerns identified through monitoring will be reported and addressed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Brentford School for Girls recognises that safeguarding and child protection work involves handling sensitive and personal information. All staff, volunteers and governors must understand their responsibilities in relation to confidentiality, information sharing and data protection. The welfare and safety of the child must always be the primary consideration.
Information about a child or their family must be handled sensitively and shared only with those who need it for a legitimate professional purpose. However, confidentiality must never be used as a reason to withhold information where sharing is necessary to safeguard or promote a child's welfare.

Responding to a Disclosure

Where a student shares information about abuse, neglect or another safeguarding concern and asks a member of staff or volunteer to keep it secret, they must:

- Explain, in a way that is appropriate to the student's age and understanding, that they cannot promise to keep the information confidential.
- Reassure the student that information will only be shared with people who need to know in order to help keep them or another person safe.
- Listen carefully, take the concern seriously and avoid making promises that cannot be kept.
- Pass the information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) as soon as possible, in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Staff and volunteers must not discuss safeguarding information with colleagues, parents or others unless this is appropriate and authorised as part of their professional responsibilities.

Information Sharing with Other Professionals

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to share relevant safeguarding information with the DSL or DDSL and, where appropriate, with other professionals and agencies involved in protecting children.

This may include:

- The local authority's Children's Social Care service.
- The police.
- Health professionals and other relevant health services.
- The local authority's education and safeguarding services.
- Other schools, colleges and education providers.
- Relevant safeguarding partners and organisations supporting the child and family.

Data Protection and Lawful Information Sharing

The school will handle and share personal information in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and relevant statutory safeguarding guidance.

All staff should understand that:

- Data protection legislation does not prevent the sharing of information where this is necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child.
- Information may be shared without consent where there is a lawful basis to do so and sharing is necessary to protect a child from harm or to support their welfare.
- Consent should not be sought where doing so could place a child at increased risk, cause an unsafe delay or prejudice a safeguarding response.
- Where special category personal data is shared, the appropriate lawful basis under Article 6 of the UK GDPR and an applicable condition under Article 9, together with the relevant provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018, must be identified.
- Only information that is relevant, accurate, necessary and proportionate should be shared, and it must be transferred securely to the appropriate person or agency.
- Decisions about sharing information, including decisions not to share, should be recorded with the reasons for the decision.

The school must also consider whether information should be withheld where disclosure could result in serious harm to a child or another person. For example, where a child is living in a refuge or other emergency accommodation, the school must consider whether sharing their personal information could put them or another person at risk. Advice should be sought from the DSL and, where necessary, the school's Data Protection Officer or legal adviser.

Recording and Managing Confidential Information
Staff and volunteers must:

- Keep safeguarding information confidential and share it only with those who need it to carry out their professional responsibilities.
- Follow the school's procedures for recording, storing and transferring safeguarding information securely.
- Refer requests for confidential safeguarding information to the DSL or an appropriate senior leader.
- Avoid discussing individual students or safeguarding cases in public areas or with people who are not authorised to receive the information.
- Ensure that any concerns, discussions, decisions and actions are recorded accurately and securely, including the rationale for decisions about whether information should be shared or withheld.

The DSL is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding information is managed appropriately and that relevant information is shared with other agencies when necessary to protect a child and promote their welfare.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR must not be used as a reason to delay or prevent necessary safeguarding information sharing. Staff should seek advice from the DSL or DDSL if they are uncertain about whether information should be shared. However, uncertainty about information sharing must never prevent or delay action where a child may be at risk of harm.

Definitions of the Four Categories of Abuse

The following definitions are based on the Department for Education's Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 statutory guidance. They are intended to help staff recognise possible signs of abuse and understand the different ways in which children may experience harm.
Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm includes physical and emotional ill-treatment, as well as the impact on a child of witnessing the ill-treatment of others. This is particularly relevant in cases of domestic abuse, where children may see, hear or experience its effects.
Children may be abused within their family, in an institutional or community setting, or by people known to them and, more rarely, by others. Abuse may take place entirely online, or technology may be used to facilitate abuse that occurs offline. Children may be abused by adults or by other children. Children may also cause harm to family members, including through behaviour sometimes described as child-to-parent or child-to-carer abuse.
There are four recognised categories of child abuse:

1. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve causing physical harm to a child. It can include:

- Hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding.
- Drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical injury or harm.
- Fabricating the symptoms of illness in a child or deliberately inducing illness.

Physical abuse may be a single incident or part of a repeated pattern of behaviour.

2. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, which can cause severe and lasting adverse effects on their emotional development.

It may involve:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate, or that they are valued only when meeting another person's needs.
- Preventing a child from expressing their views, deliberately silencing them or making fun of what they say or how they communicate.
- Imposing expectations that are inappropriate for the child's age or stage of development. This may include interactions beyond their developmental capabilities, overprotection, restricting opportunities for exploration and learning, or preventing normal social interaction.
- Causing a child to see or hear the ill-treatment of another person.
- Serious bullying, including cyberbullying, which causes a child to feel frightened, threatened or in danger.
- Exploiting or corrupting a child.
- Verbal abuse, including persistent criticism, belittling, humiliation or name-calling.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all forms of child maltreatment, although emotional abuse can also occur on its own.

3. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they understand what is happening. It does not necessarily involve physical violence.

Sexual abuse may include:

- Physical contact, including assault by penetration, such as rape or penetration with an object.
- Non-penetrative acts, including masturbation, kissing, rubbing or touching outside clothing.
- Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or producing sexual images, watching sexual activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- Grooming a child in preparation for sexual abuse, including through the internet or other forms of technology.

Sexual abuse may take place online, and technology may be used to facilitate abuse that occurs offline.

Staff must understand that sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult men. Women can also perpetrate sexual abuse, as can other children and young people.

The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding concern in schools and is addressed separately within this policy under child-on-child abuse.

4. Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in serious impairment of their health or development.
Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example as a result of maternal substance misuse.
Following a child's birth, neglect may include:

- Failing to provide adequate food, clothing or shelter, including excluding a child from the home or abandoning them.
- Failing to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger.
- Failing to provide appropriate supervision, including leaving a child with unsuitable or inadequate caregivers.
- Failing to ensure that a child receives appropriate medical care or treatment.
- Failing to respond to a child's basic emotional needs.

Neglect may have a significant impact on a child's physical health, emotional wellbeing, development, education and ability to form safe relationships.

Signs and Symptoms of Abuse and Other Safeguarding Concerns

The following signs and symptoms may indicate that abuse or neglect has taken place, although they may also arise for other reasons. The possibility of abuse or harm should always be considered. This is not an exhaustive list, and indicators may be associated with more than one category of abuse or safeguarding concern.
Further guidance on recognising signs and symptoms of abuse can be found in Chapter 4 of the London Child Protection Procedures.

Physical Abuse

- Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns, bruising, bite marks, fractures or scars.
- Inconsistent, multiple and/or improbable explanations for observed physical injuries, or refusal to explain injuries.
- Unexplained delay in seeking medical treatment.
- Parent(s) or carer(s) appearing uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury.
- Refusal to undress for PE.
- Self-destructive tendencies.
- Aggression towards others.
- Fear of physical contact, including shrinking back when touched.
- Admitting to being punished, where the punishment appears excessive.
- Fear of a suspected abuser being contacted.

Emotional Abuse

- Physical, mental or emotional development that appears delayed.
- Sudden speech disorders.
- Continual self-depreciation, such as saying, "I'm stupid", "I'm ugly" or "I'm worthless".
- Overreaction to mistakes.
- Extreme fear of new situations.
- Inappropriate responses to pain, such as saying, "I deserve this".
- Attention-seeking behaviour.
- Extremes of passivity or aggression.

Sexual Abuse

- Being overly affectionate or demonstrating sexual knowledge or behaviour that is inappropriate for the child's age.
- Itching or pain in the genital area.
- Extreme reactions, such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses or anorexia.
- Personality changes, such as becoming insecure or unusually clingy.
- Becoming isolated or withdrawn.
- Inability to concentrate.
- Becoming worried or distressed about clothing being removed.
- Suddenly producing sexually explicit drawings.
- Trying to be exceptionally well-behaved or perfect, or overreacting to criticism.

Neglect

- Constant hunger.
- Poor personal hygiene.
- Constant tiredness.
- Clothing that is inadequate or in a poor condition.
- Emaciation.
- Untreated medical problems.
- Lack of social relationships.
- Compulsive scavenging.
- Destructive tendencies.

Children Who Are Absent from Education

There are many circumstances in which a child may become absent from education. However, some children may be particularly vulnerable to harm when they are absent from school or their whereabouts are unknown. Staff should remain alert to the circumstances of children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect.
- Are at risk of forced marriage or female genital mutilation (FGM).
- Come from Gypsy, Roma or Traveller families.
- Come from families of service personnel.
- Go missing or run away from home or care.
- Are supervised by the youth justice system.
- Cease to attend school.
- Come from new migrant families.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Indicators of child criminal exploitation may include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions.
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation.
- Experiencing changes in their emotional wellbeing.
- Misusing drugs or alcohol.
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly returning home late.

- Regularly missing school or being absent from education.
- Disengaging from or not participating in education.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Grooming and sexual exploitation can be difficult to identify. Warning signs may be mistaken for typical teenage behaviour or development. Staff must therefore remain alert to possible indicators, including:

- Inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour.
- Repeated sexually transmitted infections or, in girls, repeated pregnancies, abortions or miscarriages.
- Having new possessions, such as clothes or mobile phones, that they cannot reasonably afford, or developing expensive habits involving alcohol or drugs.
- Visiting hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends.
- Getting into or out of different cars driven by unknown adults.
- Going missing from home or care.
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends.
- Associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation.
- Truancy, exclusion, disengagement from school or withdrawing from education altogether.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or personality, including becoming chaotic, aggressive or sexualised in their behaviour.
- Drug or alcohol misuse.
- Becoming involved in criminal activity.
- Injuries resulting from physical assault, physical restraint or sexual assault.

Child-on-Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education sets out the statutory guidance for schools on responding to reports of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Where there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL or DDSL should make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

In all cases, the best interests of the child must be the primary consideration. Brentford School for Girls will respond to reports in accordance with its safeguarding procedures and the principles set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

The school recognises the importance of distinguishing between developmentally appropriate sexual behaviour and behaviour that may be inappropriate, problematic, abusive or violent. Staff should use professional curiosity and seek advice from the DSL or DDSL where they have concerns about a student's behaviour or the behaviour of another child towards them.

The school may use Hackett's continuum of sexual behaviours to support the assessment of concerns. This framework identifies a range of behaviours from normal, inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent (Hackett, 2010). Further information is provided in the relevant safeguarding appendices.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Potential indicators that a student may be at risk of, or may have undergone, FGM include:

- A girl or young woman experiencing difficulty walking, sitting or standing.
- Spending longer than usual in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.

- Spending long periods away from the classroom during the school day because of bladder or menstrual problems.
- Frequent urinary or menstrual problems.
- Prolonged or repeated absences from school.
- A prolonged absence from school followed by noticeable changes in behaviour, such as withdrawal or depression, which may indicate that the student has recently undergone FGM.
- Being particularly reluctant to undergo routine medical examinations.
- Confiding in a professional about FGM or concerns relating to it.
- Asking for help but being unable or unwilling to explain the problem clearly, perhaps due to embarrassment or fear.

Staff must report any concerns about FGM to the DSL or DDSL immediately and follow the school's safeguarding procedures. Staff must also be aware of the specific legal duties relating to FGM, including the mandatory reporting duty where applicable.

Preventing Radicalisation

There is no single way of identifying a child who may be susceptible to radicalisation or involvement in terrorism. Radicalisation can happen quickly or over an extended period. Staff should remain alert to changes in students' behaviour, attitudes, relationships and use of online content that may indicate a safeguarding concern.

Government guidance, including the Educate Against Hate website and information from the NSPCC, identifies possible indicators that a student may be at risk of radicalisation. These may include:

- Refusing to engage with, or becoming abusive towards, peers who are different from themselves.
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories or developing feelings of persecution.
- Changes in friendship groups or appearance.
- Rejecting activities they previously enjoyed.
- Adopting a new religious identity or belief system. This should not, in itself, be regarded as an indicator of radicalisation.
- Isolating themselves from family and friends.
- Speaking as though repeating a scripted speech or set of views.
- Being unwilling or unable to discuss their views.
- Developing a sudden disrespectful attitude towards others.
- Increased levels of anger.
- Becoming increasingly secretive, particularly about internet use.
- Expressing sympathy for extremist ideologies or groups, or justifying their actions.
- Accessing extremist material online, including through social media platforms.
- Possessing extremist literature.
- Having contact with extremist recruiters, or seeking to join extremist organisations.

Children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation can also have low self-esteem or be experiencing bullying, discrimination or social isolation. However, these indicators may also be associated with normal adolescent development or other circumstances. Staff should use their professional judgement, remain curious and seek advice from the DSL or DDSL if they are concerned about a student's behaviour or circumstances.

Staff should also recognise that external events may influence the feelings, views and behaviour of young people. These may include tensions within the local community, events in a country of origin for migrant families, or significant national and international events. Staff should be alert to the possible impact of such events on students and be prepared to support them in understanding and contextualising what they may be seeing or hearing.

Any concerns about possible radicalisation must be reported to the DSL or DDSL in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures. The school will consider the appropriate response, including whether advice or a referral through the local authority's Prevent arrangements is required.