

Athelstan Primary School

Safeguarding Policy

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In conjunction with the DFE Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education", Sept 2026, and "Working Together To Safeguard Children", March 2026, Athelstan Primary School fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support pupils in school.

The aim of this policy is to safeguard and promote our pupil's welfare and safety, protecting vulnerable children from harm, abuse or neglect by fostering an honest, open, caring and supportive climate. The pupil's welfare is of paramount importance.

Definition

The following definition of safeguarding for the purpose of this policy, in line with KCSIE (2026), is :
Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing the impairment of children's mental health and physical health or development
- ensuring the children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action enable all children to have the best outcomes

Our school fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support pupils in schools. We commit to safeguarding and its aim to create a culture of vigilance.

There are three main elements to our Safeguarding policy:

Prevention:

This includes, but is not limited to, creating a safe, supportive and inclusive environment where children feel valued, respected, and able to speak out if they are worried or concerned. Prevention includes teaching pupils about staying safe through the curriculum, promoting positive relationships, supporting emotional wellbeing, helping children understand healthy behaviours both online and in the real world, as well as recognising children who may be at risk of harm.

Protection:

This includes, but is not limited to, recognising and responding promptly to safeguarding concerns. Effective protection requires accurate record keeping, information sharing with relevant agencies, and working collaboratively with children, families and external professionals to safeguard children's welfare. This is supported by ensuring staff are appropriately recruited and trained.

Support:

This includes, but is not limited to, providing a child-centered approach, ensuring welfare is at the forefront of decision making, accessing early support, providing pastoral, emotional and mental health support and interventions, and providing targeted assistance for children who may be vulnerable or experiencing difficulties, including those who may have been abused, or face adverse childhood experiences.

This policy applies to teaching staff, non-teaching, support and volunteer staff, and anyone else who is responsible for, or is in contact with, children in our school.

SCHOOL COMMITMENT

We recognise that high self esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with trusted adults help all children, and especially those at risk of, or suffering from, abuse, ACE's or have SEN. Our school will therefore:

- Work with partner agencies through Operation Encompass.
- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, and given appropriate support and encouragement to talk.

- Ensure children are listened to.
- Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty. Ensure children are actively encouraged to use their emotion token before morning register and after the afternoon register, to support their mental health and wellbeing.
- Include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for RSHE, Citizenship and Healthy Minds, which help equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from all forms of abuse; ensure children understand the definition and signs of child-on-child abuse; ensure children understand Online Safety.
- Help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.
- Ensure that wherever possible, every effort will be made to establish supportive, effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies. This will ensure that the child's wider environment is factored in to establish how all areas of a child's life may impact on the child's safety, (ie; contextual safeguarding).
- To ensure families are involved in decision making, empowering families to develop plans to support and safeguard vulnerable children.
- To remain professionally curious.
- Ensure that mobile phones and other communicative devices brought to school by children are handed directly to their teacher (or member of staff at the Breakfast Club) at the beginning of the school day. They are kept securely by the teacher and are given out again to the child at the end of the day. Sheffield Safeguarding Policy on 'Online Safety' is addressed by teachers within the curriculum. The devices are handed in at their own risk, school will not accept any responsibility for theft or damage or mix up with devices.
- Keep staff up to date with the "Prevent" duty guidance and report to Governors appropriately.
- Highlight our "Zero-Tolerance Bullying" approach, providing pupil voice opportunities around peer abuse.
- We have scrutinised our Child on Child Abuse approach to encompass new thinking; we have separately trained staff and have risk assessments in place should we need to use them. Together, the DSL, FSW will support the year group leader to put the risk assessment into practice. We have adopted the notion that this can happen at our school; having this in our minds means we can suitably identify and support those pupils.
- Ensure victims and perpetrators of child-on-child abuse are properly safeguarded and supported.
- To take a trauma-informed approach to safeguarding.
- Work with parents and carers to maximise attendance at school.

FORMS OF ABUSE

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

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

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved or inadequate. It may include verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling, or name-calling, as well as not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may

involve physical contact, or non-penetrative acts. They may also include non-contact activities. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter; protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision; ensure schooling; or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Signs of abuse may display as, but are not limited to: seeing physical signs; disclosure; sudden change in behaviour; change in self esteem; absences from school.

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse) and that it can happen both inside and outside of school, and online. All staff should be clear as to the schools policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse, and the important role they have to play in both prevention and response.

STATUTORY DEFINITION FOR CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION.

(February 2017) www.gov.uk

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 or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage, and/or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge, such as having images of themselves shared on social media by another person/persons.

Schools have available resources to help support the protection of children in this area. These include, but are not limited to, Guidance from the Home Office on preventing youth violence and gang involvement; Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults; county lines guidance.

POTENTIAL SYMPTOMS OF CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Children rarely self-report CSE therefore it is important that practitioners are aware of potential indicators of risk, including:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc without plausible explanation
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections
- Evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers)
- Frequenting areas known for sex work
- Concerning use of internet or other social media
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being

Practitioners should remain open to the fact that child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these risk indicators being obviously present.

Practitioners should be alert to the fact that some risk assessments have been constructed around indicators of face-to-face perpetration by adults and may not adequately capture online or peer-perpetrated forms of harm. It is also important to remember that risk assessments only capture risk at the point of assessment and that levels of risk vary over time, and that the presence of these indicators may be explained by other forms of vulnerability rather than child sexual exploitation.

Potential Vulnerabilities

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

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and or sexual abuse
- lack of safe / stable home environment now or in the past (domestic abuse or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality for example,
- recent bereavement or loss
- social isolation or social difficulties
- absence of a safe environment to explore sexually
- economic vulnerability
- homelessness or insecure accommodation status
- connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited
- family members or other connections involved in adult sex work
- having a physical or learning disability
- being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories)
- sexual identity

More information can be found in: Child Sexual Exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners (dfE 2017) .

Child Sexual Exploitation is now combined with Child Criminal Exploitation, as Child Criminal and Sexual Exploitation.

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

Warning signs:

- acquisition of money, clothes, and/or electronics (mobile phones, tablets etc) without plausible explanation
- gang association and/or isolation from peers & social networks
- unexplained absences from school, college or work
- leaving home or care without explanation
- persistently going missing
- returning late and/or being found out-of-area
- excessive texts, phone calls, multiple handsets
- returning home under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- inappropriate sexualised behaviour or sexually transmitted infections for age evidence or suspicions of physical or sexual assault
- unexplained injuries
- relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups
- multiple callers (unknown adults or peers)
- frequenting areas known for sex work
- concerning use of internet/other social media
- increasing secretiveness around behaviours
- self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being
- carrying weapons
- parental concerns
- decline in academic results & performance

COUNTY LINES

The UK government defines county lines as:

a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK; using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

County line’s activity and the associated violence, drug dealing and exploitation has a devastating impact on young people, vulnerable adults and local communities.

FGM AND THE LAW

FGM is child abuse and is against the law in the UK. The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 makes it illegal to:

- perform FGM in the UK
- assist or arrange for anyone to carry out FGM abroad on girls who are British Nationals or habitual UK residents
- assist a girl to carry out FGM on herself

FGM carries a penalty of up to 14 years in prison.

FGM protection orders (FGMPOs)

An FGM protection order (FGMPO) is a civil order used to protect those who are vulnerable to FGM, and prevent it from taking place. It gives the courts flexibility in stipulating conditions around safeguarding the welfare of the protected person. This means a court can put provisions in place to facilitate the safe return of girls who have been taken outside the UK for the purpose of FGM.

An FGMPO can be obtained through three issuing family courts. Breaching an FGMPO can carry a penalty of up to five years in prison.

Female genital mutilation refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non medical reasons.

Risk Factors for FGM Include;

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

Warning signs

There are a number of indicators a girl could have been subjected to FGM. Examples can be:

- significant changes in behaviour
- absenteeism from school, particularly after a trip to an FGM practising country
- spending long periods of time out of the classroom
- spending longer than usual going to the toilet
- avoiding going to the toilet
- discomfort when sitting down
- avoiding physical exercise and PE classes
- frequent menstrual or urinary infections
- difficulty walking, sitting or even standing may look uncomfortable
- talking about pain or discomfort between the legs

Children are often unaware that FGM is going to take place. Unfortunately this means there may be few warning signs before it happens. However, sometimes children are made aware in advance, which can lead to a change in their behaviour, such as seeking advice or help from professionals and friends. More details

can be found at:

<https://www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/caa/child-abuse/female-genital-mutilation-fgm>

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR REPORTING FGM.

Regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales must report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s to the police (Home Office, 2016).

The national FGM helpline on 0800 028 3550.

KCSIE (2026) Paragraph 42: Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) there is specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police".

The mandatory reporting procedures say:

It is recommended that you make a report orally by calling 101, the single non emergency number.

Where there is a risk to life or likelihood of serious immediate harm, professionals should report the case immediately to the police, including dialling 999 if appropriate.

In most cases "reports under the duty should be made as soon as possible after a case is discovered and best practice is for reports to be made by the close of the next working day.

HONOUR-BASED ABUSE (HBA)

The CPS and Home Office adopt the following definition of Honour Based Violence (HBV):

"Honour-based" violence is a crime or incident which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practises such as breast ironing. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such.

Where staff are concerned that a child might be at risk of HBA, they must contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead as a matter of urgency.

Since February 2023, the age of consent for marriage in England is 18. The Marriage and Civil Partnership (minimum age) Act 2022 means that 16 and 17 year olds may not marry or enter a civil partnership, even if they have parental consent.

Any concerns that a child may be getting married should be referred to the DSL.

PRIVATE FOSTERING

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

A close family relative is defined as a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins. It is a legal requirement that private fostering arrangements involving a child under 16 (or under 18 if they're disabled) must be reported to the Local Authority to ensure that they will be looked after properly and that both parents and the foster carers understand their roles and responsibilities. Therefore, we at school have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority when we are aware of a private fostering arrangement. School staff should notify the DSL when they become aware of a private fostering arrangement. The DSL will speak to the family of the children involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The Local Authority will work with the child, parents and the private foster carers to ensure that the best possible arrangements are in place for the child.

ONLINE SAFETY

The Sheffield Safeguarding Policy on 'Online Safety' is addressed by teachers within the curriculum. We also have a number of additional policies to support online safeguarding which outline our commitment to keeping children safe online:

- Online Safety Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- AI Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Acceptable Use Policies for KS1, KS2 and SEND pupils

When children use the school's network to access the internet, they are protected from inappropriate content by our filtering and monitoring systems, which are regularly reviewed for their effectiveness.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) outlines the four areas of risk for online safety:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories,
 - contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes,
 - conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, including those generated using AI and online bullying, and
 - commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.
- If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group

FILTERING AND MONITORING

We make sure that any school devices used away from the school site are also subject to monitoring and filtering procedures.

Each year our Designated Safeguarding Lead, along with our IT team and governor review our filtering and monitoring procedures to ensure that they effectively prevent access to harmful or inappropriate content. They also ensure that the systems we have in place to report any difficulties with the systems are understood by staff and reports are managed appropriately.

FRAMEWORK

Schools do not operate in isolation. The welfare of children is a corporate responsibility of the entire local authority, working in partnership with other public agencies, the voluntary sector and service users and carers. All local authority services have an impact on the lives of children and families, and local authorities have a particular responsibility towards children and families most at risk of social exclusion.

The school recognises that providing Family Help (formerly known as Early Help) is an essential part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Family Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any stage in a child's life, to prevent concerns from escalating and to improve outcomes for children and families. Staff are expected to identify children who may benefit from Family Help and to discuss concerns promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. Where appropriate, the school will work in partnership with families and other agencies to assess need, coordinate support and contribute to Sheffield's Family Help processes. This may include signposting to local services, participating in multi-agency meetings and completing a Family Help Assessment where appropriate. The school recognises that effective Family Help relies on strong relationships with children, families and partner agencies and aims to provide support at the earliest opportunity before statutory intervention becomes necessary.

Child protection is the responsibility of all adults, especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership.

The Local Authority Child Protection Policies and Procedures, and the 'Toolkit' will be used and followed in all cases. There is also a policy relating specifically to Athelstan Primary School. These are all stored centrally on Google Drive for access by staff and copies of policies and procedures are displayed in relevant areas around the school. A copy is available for parents in a file which is located in the central reception area.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. There are, however, key people within schools and the LA who have specific responsibilities under Child Protection procedures. The names of those carrying these responsibilities for the current year are listed on the cover sheet of this document.

The Acting Headteacher is the designated teacher whose role includes the following responsibilities, with the support of the Family Support Worker and DDSLs:

- Attending Child Protection conferences
- Managing referrals
- If we have concerns about a child and parents/carers are not contactable then the school will send a letter by registered mail. If there is no contact following the letter we will refer to other agencies.
- Liaising with other institutions, supporting multi-agency collaboration
- Giving advice to colleagues; providing updates and briefings as appropriate
- Working with South Yorkshire Police and Sheffield City Council to ensure the project Operation Encompass works efficiently.
- Organising/conducting in service training
- DSL/DDSLS/FSW will maintain the vulnerable children's matrix. All staff will familiarise themselves with the matrix and check for updates.
- Respond to any behaviour concerns.
- Respond and action any Child on Child abuse and risk assessments
- Monitor children who have low attendance, and follow policies for any concerns.

The Acting Headteacher and Family Support Worker are all Deputy Child Protection Liaison Officers.

There is a nominated Safeguarding Governor for Athelstan Primary School, who monitors and oversees this area of school life. Confidentiality is always maintained.

The LA Safeguarding Children Service is available to give advice and run INSET for staff or individuals.

OUT OF SCHOOL PROVIDERS

We ensure that any out of school providers who come onto school premises meet the guidance outlined by the DFE After School Clubs, Community activities and tuition: safeguarding guidance for providers (DFE. September 2023)

Whilst the out of school provider is responsible for their own safeguarding and child protection policies, we endeavour to ensure good communication and information sharing, therefore the school may refer any concerns they have about the provider to the local authority.

ALTERNATIVE PROVISIONS

Where the school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and must be satisfied that the placement meets the pupils needs.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance remains a significant safeguarding concern. If children arrive late, they report to the main office where the Administration staff will amend the register. Notification of absence is required each day of absence, unless a date of return is confirmed, by either a telephone call or letter to school. If we have not had any contact by the second day of absence, we will consider a home visit and, where school has further concerns for a child's safety or welfare, we will contact the police to undertake a 'safe and well' visit.

If the school does not receive notification, the Administration staff will contact the parent/carers during the morning. The school follows the guidance from Sheffield Attendance and Inclusion Services and the Department for Education's expectation of a '**support first**' approach to attendance. We recognise that poor attendance is often a symptom of wider needs or barriers faced by children and families. Our first response is therefore to work in partnership with pupils, parents and carers to understand the reasons for absence and to provide appropriate support to improve attendance wherever possible.

At the weekly Attendance Strategy Group meetings, registers are reviewed to identify significant patterns of absence or persistent absence. Where concerns are identified, a member of the group will make early contact with parents/carers to discuss the concerns, understand any barriers to attendance and agree appropriate support. This may include signposting to services, pastoral support, Family Help, reasonable adjustments where appropriate, or other interventions to help remove barriers to regular attendance.

If attendance concerns persist despite support being offered, a School Attendance Panel (SAP) meeting will be arranged to review progress and consider any further support that may be required. This could include the use of a Parenting Contract, which is designed to work collaboratively with parents and carers to improve their child's attendance. Where there are safeguarding concerns or evidence that a child's educational needs are being neglected, the school may make a referral to Children's Social Care under the Education Neglect criteria.

Where all reasonable support has been provided and there is still no sustained improvement, the school will work with Sheffield Attendance and Inclusion Services to consider the use of statutory interventions, including Penalty Notices or prosecution, in line with local authority and Department for Education guidance.

Further details can be found in the Attendance Policy, which is available on our website.

Attendance Strategy Group minutes are used to inform the School Self-Evaluation Process.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

In line with the government guidelines, parents are to give school **at least two emergency** contact numbers. If parents and carers do not give emergency numbers and school consistently are not able to contact the parent or carer, school will contact other agencies for support.

PROCEDURES

Where there is reason to believe that a child is suffering, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm, the school will follow the procedures set out by the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership.

The school's information document and the leaflet *Information for Parents/Carers* explain the school's safeguarding duties and responsibilities to parents and carers.

The Governing Body will receive an anonymised annual safeguarding report, together with the termly *Vulnerability Report from the Headteacher*, presented at each Full Governing Body meeting. The governing body's discussions and any agreed actions will be recorded in the meeting minutes and submitted to the Sheffield Safeguarding Team where appropriate.

TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Our school will ensure that all members of the safeguarding team and nominated governor for Safeguarding, as well as the governing body attend training relevant to their role. Staff will be trained in staff meetings and any issues, which arise, will be prioritised. An audit of training for all staff will be maintained. The designated members of staff will have training every two years, with refresher updates regularly, where appropriate. Yearly refreshers are attended by the safeguarding team. All staff will receive and be able to access Child Protection training relevant and appropriate to their role. This will include training in procedures to follow, signs to note and appropriate record keeping. All staff, whether paid or unpaid, have access to appropriate training in order that they are able to react appropriately should an incident occur. All staff will be trained to recognise and respond to situations where a child may be considered to be at risk.

The Interim Executive Headteacher and Acting Headteacher ensure that members of the Safeguarding Team have appropriate time and resources made available to them to enable them to fulfil their duties in this sensitive area. The Safeguarding Team also have access to half termly Supervision, delivered by the Sheffield Safeguarding Link Advisor.

PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. Staff will be aware that they can never guarantee confidentiality to a child and that the member of staff must convey to the child that they have to inform the Safeguarding Lead who may then

need to contact other people about the issue. The class teacher will be informed that there are concerns about a child in their class but confidentiality will be maintained.

Some staff may know families outside of school. Children and families we work with will only be discussed on a professional basis and should be carried out in conjunction with the staff handbook.

RECORDS AND MONITORING

Accurate, timely, and secure record keeping is essential to effective safeguarding and child protection practice. The school recognises the importance of recording all safeguarding concerns relating to a child, maintaining appropriate confidentiality, and sharing information with relevant agencies where necessary. Safeguarding concerns are recorded and managed using the school's secure electronic recording system.

Records must be factual, accurate, and objective, reflecting observations and disclosures without opinion or embellishment. Any member of staff who has a safeguarding concern must record it promptly to ensure it is reviewed and acted upon in a timely and appropriate manner.

Where appropriate, the Designated/Deputy Safeguarding Lead will assess the need for Family Help, referral to Children's Social Care, or involvement from other agencies. Information will be shared in line with statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures.

Children identified as being at risk of harm or requiring additional safeguarding support will be monitored appropriately, with clear, accurate, and up-to-date records maintained. These records will be shared with relevant agencies where appropriate to support the child's safety and wellbeing.

ATTENDANCES AT CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES

Where necessary, DSL, one of the DDSLs or FSW, will attend a Child Protection Case Conference. When whole staff training takes place, staff will be briefed as to the purpose and procedure of these conferences. They will also receive advice on how to produce relevant, concise and professional reports. If the school has made a referral, the DSL/DDSL/FSW will support staff to maintain a working relationship with parents/carers throughout the process. At Child Protection Case Conferences and subsequent meetings, the safeguarding staff member will give views on all aspects of the child's life, not just education.

SUPPORTING PUPILS AT RISK

Our school recognises that children who are abused, who witness violence, or have experienced adverse childhood experiences may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Whilst at school, their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant and there may even be moves to consider fixed or permanent exclusion from school. It is also recognised that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others (peer abuse). Any forms of bullying or abuse are acted upon accordingly. This requires a considered, sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support. Intervention by the safeguarding team may be needed to support the child in school. This school will endeavour to support pupils through:

- a) the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
- b) open opportunities for children to express their voice/concerns; we use emotion scales across school to provide pupils with an opportunity at the beginning of the day to share how they are feeling.
- c) the school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- d) the implementation of our school behaviour policy.
- e) Risk assessment around child-on-child abuse.
- f) a consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the child displays. This is vital to ensure that all children are supported within the school setting.
- g) regular liaison with other professionals and agencies that support the pupils and their families.
- h) following the statutory guidance as set out in the new Information Sharing Duty (September 2026)
- i) a commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's interests to do so.
- j) the development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other related policies in school, which you can find at: <https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/scsp>

We recognise that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who work, in any capacity, with children with profound and multiple difficulties, sensory impairment and / or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. At Athelstan we provide pastoral support and attention for these children along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place.

It is important to recognise that children living in households where there is domestic abuse, substance misuse, or parental mental health difficulties may be particularly vulnerable and may require additional support and/or safeguarding intervention.

SAFE SCHOOL, SAFE STAFF

If necessary, the DSL/DDSL/FSW will accompany the member of staff when talking to a child.

The DSL/DDSL/FSW, Business Manager and numerous members of the Senior Leadership Team have completed their 'Safer Recruitment' training.

Police checks are now standard practice in helping to ensure that 'safe' staff are recruited into school. The Single Central Record is kept up to date in line with new policies and requirements. DBS checks and section 128 checks are completed for all Governors and recorded on the Single Central Record and in line with any updates from KCSIE 2026.

PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW IF A MEMBER OF STAFF IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE WELFARE OR SAFETY OF A CHILD

Supply teachers are handed a copy as they sign in.

- Contact the DSL/DDSL/FSW as soon as possible and follow the procedure. A delay can significantly hinder the response of other agencies. A member of the team is available at all times.
- Record the information on CPOMS, selecting the 'Cause for Concern' category.
- Do not interrogate or ask the child leading questions but do make simple inquiries and record in detail. Limit how many staff speak to the child, ie where possible the adult listening to the child, or observing the child, then onto the DSL, DDSLs or FSW. Include the circumstances, date and time when the information was received.
- Do not contact the parents/carers.

Report all allegations no matter how insignificant they may appear. The DSL/DDSLs/FSW will add the documented information to any previous records. The child involved may be 'At Risk' and may have a Key Worker who will be contacted. She/he will seek advice, where appropriate. If a pupil demonstrates that they will only confide in their class teacher then immediate help should be sought in order to supervise their class. If an allegation is made about the DSL/DDSLs/FSW, the Executive Headteacher will be informed immediately.

Where, following an assessment of a situation, it is considered immediate protective action is required, a child protection referral will be made by the DSL or DDSL. **This referral will be by telephone to the Social Care Safeguarding Hub.**

PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW IF AN ALLEGATION IS MADE AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

Members of staff are advised to never put themselves in a vulnerable position where an allegation can be made against them.

The procedures followed by the school if such an allegation is made are as follows:

All allegations should be:

- Dealt with by the Interim Executive Head Teacher or Acting Headteacher, even if not the employer (including leading investigations e.g. where supply agencies are involved)
- Responded to quickly, fairly & consistently, protecting the child or young person whilst supporting the person subject to the allegation
- Systematically recorded by the LADO & Case Manager, detailing all decisions & actions

SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

Whilst in the care of School, the children will be supervised at all times. There are some variations to supervision. For example,

- toilet breaks ie inside the toilet area
- pupils taking notes round school,
- pupils carrying out jobs around school

There are, however, always staff around at these times. Children will not be left unsupervised in classrooms, outdoor spaces etc. Residential trips have risk assessments in place. On a residential trip there would always be two members of staff that enter into the children's sleeping area. SEN children have their own plans in place, which may include personal care.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or in the event of Public Health Advice.

Date	Sept 2026 - approved by governors as part of Strategic Committee
Review	Sept 2027