

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy



This policy sets out Moorlands Primary School Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures.

Signed by Head Teacher

Signed by Chair of Governors

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Review period: Annual

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Important Contacts.....	3
1. Aims.....	4
2. Legislation and Statutory Guidance.....	5
3. Definitions.....	6
4. Roles and Responsibilities.....	7
4.1 The Governing Board.....	7
4.2 The Headteacher.....	7
4.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs.....	8
4.4 All School Staff and Volunteers.....	8
4.5 The Moorlands Inclusion and Pastoral Team.....	9
5. Professional Boundaries and Staff Behaviour.....	10
5.1 Staff Behaviour Policy and Boundaries.....	10
5.2 Whistleblowing and Reporting Professional Concerns.....	10
6. Information Sharing.....	11
7. Recognising and Reporting Concerns.....	12
7.1 Action in Immediate Danger.....	12
7.2 Southampton City Council 'Conversation Model'.....	12
7.3 Targeted Early Help and Family Help.....	12
7.4 Action upon Disclosure of Abuse.....	13
8. Online Safety and the Use of Mobile Technology.....	14
8.1 The Four Key Categories of Risk (The 4Cs).....	14
8.2 School Environment: Mobile Phone-Free by Default.....	15
8.3 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Provision.....	16
8.4 Technical Safeguards: Filtering and Monitoring.....	16
8.5 Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Safeguarding.....	17
9. Notifying Parents or Carers.....	17
10. Pupils with Special Educational Needs, Disabilities or Health Issues.....	18
11. Pupils with Medical Conditions.....	18
12. Young Carers.....	19
13. Pupils with a Social Worker.....	19
14. Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children.....	19
15. Pupils who are Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual.....	20
16. Pupils who are Questioning Their Gender.....	20
16.1 Supporting Pupils Questioning Their Gender.....	20
16.2 Involving Parents and Carers.....	20
16.3 Considering Requests for Support with Social Transition.....	21
16.4 Rules on Single-Sex Spaces.....	21
16.5 Rules on Single-Sex Sports.....	21
17. Complaints and Concerns about School Safeguarding Policies.....	22
18. Record-Keeping.....	22
19. Training.....	22
19.1 Staff and Volunteers.....	22
19.2 The DSL Team.....	23
20. Monitoring Arrangements.....	23
21. Links with Other Policies.....	23
Statutory Child Protection Appendices.....	24
Appendix 1: Types of Abuse.....	24
Appendix 2: Safer Recruitment and DBS Checks – Policy and Procedures.....	25
Appendix 3: Allegations Made Against Staff.....	26
Appendix 4: Specific Safeguarding Issues.....	27

Important Contacts

Role / Organisation	Designated Contact Name	Contact Details
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Sarah Roughton (Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion)	dsl@moorlandsprimary.net Tel: 02380 464404
Deputy DSL(s)	David Parkin Rachel Wright Peter Reed Gemma Waring Nicole Henneberg Rebecca Austin	dsl@moorlandsprimary.net (Shared multi-user inbox monitored continuously during school hours)
Safeguarding Link Governor	Louise Rankin	clerk@moorlandsprimary.net
Chair of Governors	Louise Rankin	clerk@moorlandsprimary.net
Southampton Children's Social Care	Children's Resource Centre / MASH	023 8083 3336 (Emergency Out of Hours: 023 8023 3344)
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Gemma Swan (Southampton City Council)	023 8091 5535 / 07500 952 037 lado@southampton.gov.uk
Channel / Prevent Helpline	Home Office / DfE National	020 7340 7264 counter.extremism@education.gov.uk
NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline	National Helpline	0800 028 0285 help@nspcc.org.uk
Out of Hours School Contact	Emergency Safeguarding Duty Duty Mobile	07475 546715 (For out of hours child protection emergencies)
After School Club Emergency	Activity Lead Duty Mobile	07303 122440 (Active after 4:30pm during clubs)

1. Aims

Moorlands Primary School is deeply committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its pupils. We operate in accordance with Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which places a statutory duty on our governing board to ensure that our school's functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Our primary child protection aims are:

- Create a safe, supportive, and completely inclusive learning environment where pupils feel secure, are treated with absolute respect, and feel confident to voice concerns and disclose any form of harm.
- Ensure all staff, volunteers, contractors, and governors understand their statutory responsibilities to remain highly alert to the signs of abuse and neglect, maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here' at all times.
- Ensure all staff are properly trained in identifying and reporting safeguarding issues, and that the school's reporting systems are well-promoted, easily understood, and easily accessible to children.
- Work in close, proactive collaboration with other agencies, including Southampton City Council Children's Social Care, the local health services, and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary.
- Prevent unsuitable people from working with pupils through the rigorous application of safer recruitment procedures in accordance with statutory guidelines.
- Ensure all allegations of abuse made against staff, volunteers, or other pupils are dealt with professionally, seriously, and expeditiously, following local and national multi-agency protocols.

2. Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy is a statutory requirement and has been developed in strict accordance with national legislation and the Department for Education's (DfE) statutory guidance. We have a legal duty to comply with this guidance, and our child protection procedures directly reflect the arrangements agreed and published by our three local safeguarding partners (the Local Authority, the Integrated Care Board, and the Chief Officer of Police).

The key legislative and statutory foundations of this policy include:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026:** The core statutory guidance for schools on safeguarding children and safer recruitment, which we must have regard to by law.
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026:** The statutory guide to multi-agency working to help, protect, and promote the welfare of children, defining local threshold criteria and referral assessment models.
- **The Education Act 2002 (Section 175):** Establishes the legal duty on governing bodies of maintained schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.
- **The Crime and Policing Act 2026:** Abolished the 'supervision exemption' for regular volunteers in educational establishments, redefining 'regulated activity' to mandate Enhanced DBS and barred list checks for all regular volunteers.
- **The Children Act 1989 and The Children Act 2004:** The primary legislative framework for child protection and child welfare in England, establishing duties under Section 17 (children in need) and Section 47 (child protection enquiries).
- **The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty):** Places a statutory duty on our school to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and extremism.
- **The Equality Act 2010:** Establishes legal duties to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation across protected characteristics, allowing schools to take positive action to address specific disadvantages.
- **The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED):** Requires the school to actively promote equality, protect disabled children, and remain alert to the disproportionate vulnerabilities of specific pupil cohorts to abuse and bullying.
- **Operation Encompass Statutory Guidance:** Places a statutory duty on all police forces to share notifications of domestic abuse incidents affecting school-aged children with the school's DSL.
- **The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS):** Governs the welfare, safeguarding, and device use restrictions (mobile phones and cameras) for pupils in our Nursery and Reception classes.
- **The School Premises (England) Regulations 2012:** Mandates the strict provision of single-sex toilet, changing, and washing facilities to ensure the privacy, dignity, and safety of pupils.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following statutory definitions apply:

- **Child:** Refers to anyone under the age of 18, as defined by the Children Act 1989.
- **Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children:** Encompasses all actions taken to: protect children from maltreatment; prevent impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; ensure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and take action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- **Child Protection:** The specific multi-agency activities and processes undertaken to respond to a concern that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm due to abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- **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. It can involve physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, neglect, child-on-child abuse, child-to-parent abuse, or online abuse.
- **Family Help:** The 2026 multi-agency term encompassing both non-statutory targeted early help and support services, as well as statutory support delivered under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989, to provide rapid, targeted intervention as soon as problems emerge.
- **Nude or Semi-Nude Images:** Images or videos showing a child in an intimate or explicit state. Under KCSIE 2026, this terminology replaces the outdated terms 'sexting' or 'youth-produced sexual imagery.' This explicitly includes self-generated content, shared content (consensual or non-consensual), and AI-generated or manipulated intimate images ('deepfakes').

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Governing Board

- The Governing Board of Moorlands Primary School holds ultimate strategic responsibility for ensuring that the school's safeguarding arrangements are effective, fully compliant with the law, and meet all statutory requirements. The board will:
 - Evaluate, approve, and ratify this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy at least once every academic year, holding the Headteacher to account for its implementation.
 - Ensure the school contributes to multi-agency working in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and local Southampton partnership arrangements.
 - Appoint a senior board member (or link governor)—currently Louise Rankin—to monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding policies and training. This link governor must always be a different person from the DSL to maintain objective oversight.
 - Ensure that the school has a robust policy in respect of the use of restrictive physical interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in accordance with national guidance, reflecting that 'no contact' policies are not legally viable.
 - Ensure the school maintains appropriate technical cyber-security systems and technical filtering and monitoring standards on all devices and networks.
 - Conduct a formal, written review of the school's technical filtering and monitoring effectiveness at least once every academic year, with the review carried out by the SLT member responsible for technology with support from the DSL.

4.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day operational management of safeguarding and child protection within Moorlands Primary School. This includes:

- Working in partnership with the Governing Board to ensure this policy is implemented consistently across the entire school site.
- Ensuring the DSL is a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and is given sufficient time, funding, training, and resources to discharge their duties effectively.
- Ensuring there are robust cover arrangements in place for periods when the DSL is absent or unavailable.
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against other members of staff, volunteers, or contractors, in close liaison with the LADO.
- Fostering a whole-school culture of open communication, transparent practice, and high vigilance, where safeguarding is treated as everyone's responsibility.

4.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead is Sarah Roughton (Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion). Sarah is supported by six trained Deputy DSLs: **David Parkin, Rachel Wright, Peter Reed, Gemma Waring, Rebecca Austin and Nicole Henneberg.** Together, they form our DSL Team, ensuring that there is always comprehensive safeguarding cover during school hours.

The DSL takes lead responsibility for all safeguarding and child protection matters across the school. The DSL will:

- Manage referrals of suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation to Southampton Children's Social Care, the Channel programme, the police, and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- Liaise with local authority case managers and Designated Officers (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases involving staff or volunteers.
- Act as the central source of support, advice, and safeguarding expertise for all school staff, particularly in relation to complex cases and early help.
- Ensure child protection files are kept secure, confidential, and up to date, and that they are transferred securely to a child's new school within 5 working days for in-year transfers.
- Act as the 'Key Adult' for Operation Encompass and Public Protection Notices (PPN), ensuring police alerts are processed confidentially and mapped to the child's secure files.
- Ensure that the DSL cover arrangements are robust. In the event of the DSL's absence, a Deputy DSL will act as cover, with access to our shared confidential safeguarding mailbox (dsl@moorlandsprimary.net) to ensure immediate response to emergencies.

4.4 All School Staff and Volunteers

All staff members and volunteers have a direct statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. All staff must:

- Read and understand Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 in full, as well as this school safeguarding policy, annually.
- Be able to identify the early indicators and signs of abuse, neglect, extra-familial harm, radicalisation, and technology-assisted abuse.
- Speak to the DSL (or a Deputy) immediately regarding any safeguarding concern, no matter how small, and record the concern on the school's secure digital platform.
- Attend mandatory child protection and online safety training at induction, and receive regular safeguarding updates (at least annually).
- Understand that they must never promise a child that they will keep a secret or not tell anyone about a disclosure of abuse, as this is never in the child's best interests.

4.5 The Moorlands Inclusion and Pastoral Team

Our specialized Inclusion and Pastoral Team works in close partnership with the DSL to ensure that vulnerable pupils with SEND or emotional difficulties receive rapid, coordinated support:

- **Acorn Building SENCo (Reception to Year 3):** Miss Cummerson coordinates SEND provision, communication adjustments, and early intervention for our younger pupils, ensuring additional barriers to recognizing abuse are minimized.
- **Oak Building SENCo (Years 4 to 6):** Miss Buckfield coordinates SEND provision and transition support for our older pupils, maintaining high vigilance for extra-familial and online exploitation risks.
- **Pastoral & Emotional Support Lead:** Mrs Deadman Rose is a qualified ELSA, Behaviour Support, and Thrive Practitioner who delivers targeted interventions using the Thrive approach to support emotional regulation.
- **Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs):** Mrs Nash and Miss Cummins provide bespoke, short-term social and emotional support to pupils experiencing temporary or long-term challenges, acting as trusted adults for pupils to share worries.

5. Professional Boundaries and Staff Behaviour

To maintain a safe, professional, and transparent environment, Moorlands Primary School enforces strict professional boundaries and expected behaviours. This section must be read in conjunction with our school Staff Code of Conduct and our Whistleblowing Policy.

5.1 Staff Behaviour Policy and Boundaries

All adults working in our school are expected to act as role models and maintain absolute professional integrity. Key boundaries include:

- Under no circumstances are staff, volunteers, or contractors permitted to use personal mobile devices, personal smartwatches, or personal cameras in any area where Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) children are present.
- The taking of photographs or video recordings of pupils on personal devices is strictly prohibited. Any digital photography for tracking, assessment, or school news must be carried out exclusively on school-owned devices.
- Staff must keep personal mobile phones stored in their lockers or personal bags outside of early years learning spaces.
- Staff must never communicate with pupils or parents/carers via personal social media accounts, personal messaging applications, or personal mobile numbers. Official school channels (such as the school email or school-approved platforms) must be used exclusively.

5.2 Whistleblowing and Reporting Professional Concerns

Moorlands Primary School maintains a culture of openness, safety, and transparent practice. All staff are empowered and have a clear duty to raise concerns about the conduct of colleagues immediately:

- Any concern or allegation that a member of staff, trainee teacher, volunteer, or contractor has behaved in a way that has harmed (or may have harmed) a child, committed a criminal offence, or behaved in a way indicating they pose a risk of harm to children, must be reported directly to the Headteacher, David Parkin, without delay.
- Where the concern or allegation involves the Headteacher, it must be reported directly to the Chair of Governors, Louise Rankin, via clerk@moorlandsprimary.net.
- In the event of a conflict of interest, or where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue internally, concerns can be reported directly to the Southampton LADO, Gemma Swan (023 8091 5535), or via the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line (0800 028 0285).

6. Information Sharing

Effective and timely information sharing is critical to ensure that safeguarding risks are identified, assessed, and responded to before harm escalates. Moorlands Primary School operates in accordance with the principles set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, which states that practitioners should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible.

Our core principles for information sharing are:

- **Safety and Welfare First:** The safety and welfare of the child must always be our primary, overriding consideration. Professional differences or concerns regarding consent must never compromise a child's protection.
- **Lawful, Necessary, and Proportionate:** We share information in a timely and proportionate manner. Where special category personal data must be shared, the Data Protection Act 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if obtaining consent is not possible, cannot be reasonably expected, or would place the child at increased risk of harm.
- **No Secrets Promised:** Staff must never promise a child that they will keep a disclosure of abuse a secret. They must make clear that they have a duty of care to share this information with the DSL to ensure the child receives help and support.
- **Secure Child Protection Files:** We maintain comprehensive, chronological, and highly secure digital safeguarding records. These files are kept confidential, stored securely, and are separate from the pupil's general academic records.
- **Secure File Transfer:** When a pupil leaves Moorlands Primary School, the DSL is responsible for ensuring their child protection file is transferred securely to the new educational setting as a matter of priority. The transfer must take place within 5 working days for in-year transfers, or within the first 5 days of a new term. The DSL will also consider whether it is appropriate to share relevant safeguarding information with the new setting in advance of the pupil's departure.

7. Recognising and Reporting Concerns

7.1 Action in Immediate Danger

If a member of staff, volunteer, or contractor believes that a child is in immediate danger or requires immediate protection, they must call the emergency services on **999 immediately**. Anyone is legally empowered to make an emergency referral. The staff member must notify the DSL, Sarah Roughton, as soon as possible after contacting the police.

7.2 Southampton City Council 'Conversation Model'

Where a concern does not involve immediate danger but highlights that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the DSL will make a formal safeguarding referral to Southampton Children's Social Care. Moorlands Primary School adheres strictly to the **Southampton City Council 'Conversation Model' for referrals**.

This is a discussion-based process where the DSL engages directly with Children's Social Care professionals to clarify concerns, evaluate risks in accordance with the local threshold document, and determine the most appropriate multi-agency response. This collaborative approach ensures that referrals are handled with speed, clarity, and consistency.

Contact for Social Care Referrals: 023 8083 3336 (Southampton City Council Children's Social Care)

7.3 Targeted Early Help and Family Help

In line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, we recognize that some children and families require more targeted support than that offered at the universal level, but do not meet the threshold for significant harm. In these circumstances, the school will facilitate a **Family Help assessment** to identify multi-agency needs and coordinate targeted support services.

Family Help models bring together local practitioners and the school to deliver early, evidence-based intervention, supporting family networks and preventing issues from escalating into child protection concerns.

7.4 Action upon Disclosure of Abuse

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue or abuse to you, you must:

- Listen carefully and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely without interruption, and never ask leading or diagnostic questions.
- Reassure them that they are being taken seriously, and that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Explain gently that you cannot keep this information a secret, and that you must speak to the DSL to make sure they are safe.
- Record the disclosure immediately in writing, using the child's exact words, noting the date, time, setting, and any physical injuries. Do not attempt to investigate.
- Report the concern and hand over your written record to the DSL, Sarah Roughton, immediately.

8. Online Safety and the Use of Mobile Technology

At Moorlands Primary School, we recognise that safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material is a critical aspect of our statutory duty of care. Technology is a highly significant and rapidly evolving component in many contemporary safeguarding, mental health, and wellbeing issues, with risks frequently overlapping concurrently online and offline.

Our whole-school approach to online safety is fully integrated into our wider safeguarding regime, staff training, and curriculum planning. We aim to protect and educate our entire school community—including pupils, staff, volunteers, and governors—in the safe, responsible, and critical use of digital technology.

8.1 The Four Key Categories of Risk (The 4Cs)

Our online safety procedures and curriculum are built around identifying, mitigating, and educating pupils on the four primary areas of digital risk:

- **Content:** Being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful material. This includes, but is not limited to, pornography, physical or sexual violence, racism, misogyny, misandry, self-harm, suicide, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news), and conspiracy theories.
- **Contact:** Being subjected to harmful or unsolicited online interactions with other users or interactive software. This includes peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising, cyberflashing, and contact with adults posing as children with the intent to groom, coerce, or exploit the child for sexual, criminal, financial, or other purposes.
- **Conduct:** Online behaviour by pupils or others that increases the likelihood of, or directly causes, harm. This includes online bullying, harassment, and the consensual or non-consensual making, sending, and receiving of explicit, nude, or semi-nude images and videos (including those generated, altered, or manipulated using Artificial Intelligence).
- **Commerce:** Commercial risks that exploit children, such as online gambling, age-inappropriate advertising, phishing, identity theft, data misuse, and online financial scams or blackmail.

8.2 School Environment: Mobile Phone-Free by Default

In accordance with statutory Department for Education (DfE) expectations, Moorlands Primary School operates as a **mobile phone-free environment by default** during the school day. We believe this policy is vital to protect the learning environment, reduce peer-on-peer distraction, and minimise opportunities for cyberbullying, digital harassment, and the unsupervised capture of digital media.

Pupil Policy and Practical 'Hand-In' Routine:

- Pupils are strongly discouraged from bringing personal mobile phones or smart devices to school.
- Where a pupil must bring a mobile phone to school (for example, for personal safety when walking to and from school independently), **the device must be handed directly to their class teacher immediately upon entering the school building.**
- The class teacher will secure all handed-in devices in a designated, locked storage location within the classroom.
- Devices will remain securely locked away and will not be accessible to pupils at any point during the school day, including lessons, registration, breaktimes, and lunchtimes.
- Devices will be returned directly to pupils at the end of the school day as they prepare to leave the premises.

Confiscation and Sanctions:

- Any unauthorised possession or use of a mobile phone by a pupil during the school day will result in immediate confiscation. The device will be transferred to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and held in the school office. It will only be returned directly to the pupil's parent or carer.
- In line with the statutory DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance, school staff have a clear legal power to search a pupil's person and belongings, and to confiscate, examine, or erase data on a pupil's mobile phone or smart device where there is a reasonable ground to suspect that the device contains material that has been, or is likely to be, used to cause harm, commit an offence, or breach school discipline.

8.3 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Provision

Moorlands Primary School maintains early years provision. In strict compliance with Section 3 of the EYFS Statutory Framework, we enforce the following rules regarding mobile phones and cameras in our early years setting:

- Under no circumstances are staff, volunteers, governors, or visitors permitted to use personal mobile phones, smartwatches, or personal cameras in any area where EYFS children are present or being cared for.
- Staff must keep their personal mobile phones switched off and stored in their lockers or personal bags outside of the early years learning spaces.
- Any digital photography, recording, or observation of EYFS pupils for educational, assessment, or tracking purposes must only be carried out using official, school-owned devices (such as school iPads) that are subject to technical monitoring and filtering.
- Visitors to the EYFS setting, including parent helpers, must be briefed on induction and are strictly prohibited from using personal mobile devices or taking photographs.

8.4 Technical Safeguards: Filtering and Monitoring

We are committed to doing everything we reasonably can to limit pupils' exposure to online risks from the school's IT network and school-owned devices.

- Annual Technical Review: We conduct a formal review of the effectiveness of our filtering and monitoring provision at least once every academic year. This review is led by the member of the Senior Leadership Team responsible for filtering and monitoring, with the active technical support of our IT service provider and our DSL, Sarah Roughton.
- System Checks and Logs: The review includes technical verification that filtering is working appropriately on all internet-connected devices in all school locations, and a written record of these checks is maintained.
- AI Compliance: Our filtering and monitoring requirements apply comprehensively to any school-approved or accessed Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools.
- Over-blocking Safeguard: While maintaining strict blocks on harmful and inappropriate material, the school ensures that 'over-blocking' does not unreasonably restrict our ability to deliver high-quality online safety and wider education within the curriculum.

8.5 Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Safeguarding

- **Generative AI Risks:** Moorlands Primary School recognises that while Generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT, Google Gemini, and image-creation software) offer educational benefits, they also present significant safeguarding risks. These include the facilitation of online bullying, automated grooming, and the creation of AI-generated intimate images ('deepfakes' or 'deep nudes') using a child's likeness.
- **Zero-Tolerance and Response:** The school maintains a zero-tolerance approach to any pupil or staff member using Generative AI to access harmful content, bully peers, or create, alter, or manipulate intimate or inappropriate imagery of others.
- **Referral and Action:** Any incident involving the creation, sharing, or possession of AI-generated intimate images of children under 18 will be treated as a severe child protection issue and a criminal offence. Staff must report such incidents immediately to the DSL, Sarah Roughton, without viewing or copying the imagery. The school will respond with a formal safeguarding protocol, and referrals will be made to children's social care and the police as legally required.

9. Notifying Parents or Carers

Where appropriate, we are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to protect and support their children. The DSL will normally discuss any safeguarding concerns, suspicion, or disclosure about a child with their parents or carers at an early stage, keeping them fully informed of any proposed actions.

However, there are rare and compelling exceptions to this rule:

- If the school has reasonable cause to believe that notifying the parents or carers would directly increase the risk to the child (for example, placing them at risk of significant harm, forced marriage, or FGM), or would jeopardize a police investigation, we will discuss this with Southampton Children's Social Care before making any contact.
- In the case of allegations of child-on-child abuse, we will notify the parents or carers of all children involved. The DSL will meet with the victim's parents/carers to discuss the support plan, and separately with the alleged perpetrator's parents/carers to outline the protective restrictions being put in place, ensuring compliance with data protection laws.

10. Pupils with Special Educational Needs, Disabilities or Health Issues

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), or certain complex medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised or reported. Moorlands Primary School recognises that these children are disproportionately vulnerable to abuse, both online and offline.

Key barriers and safeguards include:

- **Communication Barriers:** Pupils may have speech, language, or communication difficulties that prevent them from verbalizing harm, or they may use non-verbal communication systems that require staff to be highly trained and observant.
- **Dependency and Care Needs:** Disabled children may be dependent on multiple adults for their intimate or personal care, increasing opportunities for abuse and making it more difficult to recognize inappropriate touch.
- **Lack of Understanding:** A child may not understand that what is happening to them is abuse, or they may mistake inappropriate behaviour for normal affection or care.
- **Liaison and Support:** Any concern or report of abuse involving a pupil with SEND requires immediate, close liaison between the DSL and AHT for Inclusion (Sarah Roughton) and our Phase SENCos (Miss Cummerson and Miss Buckfield). We will provide extra pastoral support, communication aids, and tailored safety education to support these children effectively.

11. Pupils with Medical Conditions

Moorlands Primary School is committed to supporting pupils with complex medical conditions, including severe allergies, asthma, and diabetes, in line with statutory DfE guidance. Our policy establishes clear boundaries regarding medical safeguarding:

- **Non-Referral Boundary:** An incident relating to the day-to-day management of a child's medical condition or an accidental allergen exposure does not, in itself, warrant a referral to local safeguarding partners or children's social care.
- **Neglect Referrals:** The school will make a formal child protection referral where an incident or pattern of behaviour highlights that a child might be at increased risk of neglect, abuse, or exploitation due to their medical condition—for example, if parents persistently fail to provide essential life-saving medication, ignore clinical advice, or withhold treatment in a manner that causes significant harm.

12. Young Carers

The school recognizes that some of our pupils hold significant caring responsibilities at home for parents, siblings, or other family members with disabilities, chronic illnesses, or mental health needs. We recognise that these caring duties can have a severe impact on a child's attendance, academic attainment, physical wellbeing, and emotional health.

Early identification is essential. The school will actively identify young carers at the earliest opportunity, work in partnership with local support networks (such as Southampton Young Carers), and provide targeted in-school pastoral care and flexible learning adjustments to ensure they are protected and supported. Identified young carers are recorded on the school's MIS system.

13. Pupils with a Social Worker

Pupils who have or have had a social worker are among our most vulnerable cohorts. Moorlands Primary School recognises that experiences of trauma, neglect, and domestic adversity can leave children highly vulnerable to further harm, while simultaneously creating severe barriers to attendance, classroom engagement, and emotional regulation.

The DSL and all school staff will work in close cooperation with children's social workers and the Virtual School Head (VSH). Where we are aware that a pupil has an allocated social worker, the DSL will ensure that this context is considered in all school-level decisions, particularly in relation to attendance checks, behaviour sanctions, and pastoral support plans, to ensure the child's best interests are prioritized.

14. Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children

We are committed to promoting educational achievement and ensuring the robust safeguarding of looked-after children (LAC) and previously looked-after children (PLAC).

We have appointed our Assistant Headteacher, Sarah Roughton, as our Designated Teacher for LAC and PLAC. In this role, she works in close liaison with Virtual School Heads across local authorities to monitor attendance, oversee Personal Education Plans (PEPs), and ensure that school staff are sensitive to the unique emotional, mental health, and safeguarding needs of care-experienced pupils.

15. Pupils who are Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual

The school recognises that a child being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not, in itself, a risk factor for harm. However, we remain highly alert to the fact that these pupils (and pupils perceived to be LGB) can face an increased risk of homophobic or biphobic bullying, social isolation, and mental health challenges.

Moorlands Primary School maintains a zero-tolerance approach to any form of homophobic, biphobic, or transphobic language or behaviour, which is sanctioned strictly in accordance with our Behaviour Policy. We offer safe, confidential pastoral spaces and support to ensure all LGBTQ+ pupils feel safe and celebrated.

16. Pupils who are Questioning Their Gender

16.1 Supporting Pupils Questioning Their Gender

We are conscious of the significant increase in children questioning their gender, and we recognise the potential vulnerabilities of these pupils, including the possibility of complex mental health and psychosocial needs. Moorlands Primary School aims to be a respectful, safe space where bullying of any kind is never tolerated.

In line with statutory guidance, the school will take a cautious, supportive approach. We recognize that young children may go through periods of questioning their gender and that flexibility is vital. All cases involving gender-questioning pupils will be led by the DSL, Sarah Roughton.

16.2 Involving Parents and Carers

Where a child who is questioning their gender requests support or changes to how they are treated at school (social transition), the school **will engage parents and carers as a matter of priority**. Parents' and carers' views carry great weight and will be treated with importance.

In the rare circumstances where involving parents/carers would put the pupil at greater risk of harm than not involving them, the DSL will determine the appropriate course of action to safeguard the child first, in consultation with local children's social care. If a child confides in a member of staff about their feelings but does not request any school changes, there is no reason to break confidence unless a related safeguarding or mental health risk is identified.

16.3 Considering Requests for Support with Social Transition

The school will not initiate any action regarding social transition. Where a pupil or parent requests social transition support (such as changes to names, pronouns, or uniforms), we will take a careful, structured approach, ensuring that our decision-making process is fully documented and recorded.

In making decisions, the school must comply with its distinct but interacting obligations under safeguarding legislation and equality and human rights law, ensuring that any assessment is informed by the welfare and best interests of the child and other children. Because social transition is an active clinical intervention, primary schools must exercise extreme caution. In line with the findings of the Cass Review (April 2024), we recognise that early clinical involvement is vital and that full social transition for pre-pubertal primary children is a highly complex step that should be agreed very rarely.

16.4 Rules on Single-Sex Spaces

To comply with our safeguarding duties, our obligations under the School Premises (England) Regulations 2012, and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, **pupils are not allowed into toilets, changing rooms, or showers designated for the opposite biological sex, with no exceptions.**

If a gender-questioning child does not want to use facilities designated for their biological sex, the school will seek to provide alternative, self-contained individual facilities that can be secured from the inside, ensuring that these arrangements do not compromise the safety, privacy, comfort, or dignity of that child or any other children.

16.5 Rules on Single-Sex Sports

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the school may teach and play certain competitive sports or games in single-sex groups where the physical strength, stamina, or physique of the average girl would put her at a disadvantage relative to the average boy (and vice-versa).

Where single-sex sports are implemented for safety or fairness, there are no exceptions, and pupils must not be allowed to participate in sports designated for the opposite biological sex. The school will ensure physical education remains fully inclusive and safe.

17. Complaints and Concerns about School Safeguarding Policies

Moorlands Primary School is committed to transparent, collaborative practice. If a parent, carer, or member of the public has a complaint or concern regarding the school's child protection and safeguarding policies, procedures, or their implementation, they should contact the school office. Complaints will be handled in accordance with our standard Complaints Policy, or referred immediately to the LADO where the complaint involves allegations against a member of staff.

18. Record-Keeping

Robust, accurate, and secure record-keeping is a vital component of our safeguarding framework. Moorlands Primary School maintains comprehensive, chronological, and highly secure digital safeguarding records on our protected system. All concerns, discussions, decisions, and their rationale must be clearly recorded in writing by the DSL or the reporting staff member.

All child protection records are kept strictly confidential, held securely, and are fully compliant with the Data Protection Act 2018, the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, and the UK GDPR. Safeguarding files are separate from general academic records and are only accessible to the DSL Team.

19. Training

19.1 Staff and Volunteers

- All school staff, volunteers, and trainee teachers must receive a comprehensive child protection and online safety induction upon joining the school, ensuring they understand their roles, the school's reporting systems, and our mobile phone restrictions.
- All staff must undergo mandatory child protection training at least once every academic year, supplemented by regular safeguarding updates (such as briefing emails, staff meetings, and e-bulletins) throughout the term.
- Staff training must include a thorough understanding of the school's technical filtering and monitoring processes on school networks and devices.
- All staff are required to read and understand Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 in full.

19.2 The DSL Team

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (Sarah Roughton) and all Deputy DSLs must undergo formal, advanced child protection and multi-agency safeguarding training at least once every two years.
- In addition to formal biennial training, the DSL Team's knowledge and skills must be updated at regular intervals, and at least annually, to keep pace with emerging online risks, local threshold shifts, and lessons learned from child safeguarding practice reviews.

20. Monitoring Arrangements

This Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is reviewed and updated at least once every academic year (as a minimum) by the DSL, Sarah Roughton, in conjunction with our Governing Board and the local safeguarding partners. The review ensures the policy is updated to reflect any changes in national legislation, statutory guidance, local threshold updates, and school-level operational adjustments.

The policy is made available publicly via the Moorlands Primary School website (www.moorlandsprimary.com) and is included in all job application packs to confirm our absolute commitment to safer recruitment.

21. Links with Other Policies

To ensure a consistent, whole-school approach to safeguarding, this policy must be read and implemented alongside the following school policies:

- School Behaviour Policy (including sanctions, exclusion procedures, and anti-bullying measures)
- Staff Code of Conduct / Staff Behaviour Policy
- School Whistleblowing Policy
- Online Safety Policy (including Acceptable Use Agreements for staff, volunteers, and pupils)
- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions Policy
- School Attendance Policy (detailing procedures for children missing from education)
- Complaints Policy

Statutory Child Protection

Appendices

The following statutory appendices are based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026, the statutory framework Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, and local HIPS multi-agency procedures. These appendices form a legally binding part of Moorlands Primary School's child protection arrangements.

Appendix 1: Types of Abuse

Abuse is 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. All staff must be highly familiar with the four main categories of abuse, as well as new expanded definitions for 2026:

- **Physical Abuse:** May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, or otherwise causing physical injury to a child. This includes fabrications or inductions of illness (FII) where caregivers present a child as having physical or psychological illnesses that do not exist.
- **Emotional Abuse:** The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on their emotional and behavioural development. Under KCSIE 2026, this is explicitly updated to include persistent verbal abuse, as well as witnessing domestic abuse or the ill-treatment of others. It can also include child-to-parent abuse or caregiver abuse where a child is subjected to persistent hostility or rejection.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, including physical contact (such as penetration with an object, intercourse, or touching) or non-contact activities (such as exposing children to pornography, or online exploitation). Sexual abuse can take place online, with perpetrators using digital platforms to groom, coerce, or sexually exploit children.
- **Neglect:** The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. This can include failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, warmth, or medical care, as well as failure to protect children from physical or emotional harm.

Appendix 2: Safer Recruitment and DBS Checks – Policy and Procedures

Moorlands Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils, and we adopt robust recruitment procedures that deter, identify, and reject people who are unsuitable to work with children. Our safer recruitment steps are based on Part Three of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026.

Our pre-appointment vetting procedures for new staff include:

- Identity Verification: We verify a candidate's identity, right to work in the UK, and academic or professional qualifications.
- Enhanced DBS Certificate with Barred List: We obtain an Enhanced DBS check including children's barred list information for all individuals who will be engaging in regulated activity.
- Teacher Record Checks: We utilize the DfE's 'Check a teacher's record' system to verify qualified teacher status (QTS), completion of teacher induction, and check for any prohibition or section 128 directions.
- DBS Update Service: Subscribers to the DBS Update Service must show their original paper certificate, and we will carry out online checks with their consent, verifying their identity against the certificate.

Major Vetting Change for Volunteers (The Crime and Policing Act 2026):

Under the Crime and Policing Act 2026, the 'supervision exemption' from regulated activity for volunteers has been completely abolished. This means that any person volunteering in our school in a role that involves teaching, training, instructing, or supervising children frequently (on more than 3 days in a 30-day period) or overnight is legally in **regulated activity**. Where this applies, the school **must** obtain an Enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information. Unchecked volunteers must never be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

- EYFS Provision Check: Where a volunteer or staff member works within our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting, they must not be permitted to begin work until the school has received and verified their enhanced DBS certificate including children's barred list information, with no exceptions.

Appendix 3: Allegations Made Against Staff

Section 1: Allegations meeting the Harm Threshold

This section applies when a concern or allegation is made that a member of staff, trainee teacher, volunteer, or contractor has behaved in a way that has harmed a child, committed a criminal offence, or behaved in a way indicating they pose a risk of harm to children. This procedure applies both to school-level activities and to incidents occurring in the individual's private life (transferable risk).

The Case Manager (the Headteacher, or the Chair of Governors where the allegation is about the Headteacher) will lead the response:

- **Initial Action:** The person receiving the allegation must record key details immediately (time, date, setting, and what was said) and notify the Headteacher without delay.
- **LADO Consultation:** The Case Manager must contact the Southampton Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), within one working day. No internal investigation should take place prior to this consultation.
- **Suspension Rationale:** If immediate suspension is considered necessary, the Case Manager must agree and record the rationale with the LADO, including why alternative working arrangements were rejected. Written confirmation of suspension must be provided to the individual within 1 working day.
- **Support for Staff:** We will provide a named school contact and access to confidential counselling to support any individual facing an allegation.
- **Trainee and Supply Staff:** If an allegation is made against supply teachers, trainee teachers, or contracted staff, we will cooperate closely with the employment agency or business, and we will not decide to stop using their services without first finding out the facts and consulting with the LADO.

Section 2: Concerns that do not meet the Harm Threshold (Low-Level Concerns)

Moorlands Primary School enforces a robust Low-Level Concerns Policy to foster an open, transparent staff culture and prevent concerns from escalating. A 'low-level concern' is any concern—no matter how small, and even if it seems an oversight or double-meaning—that a member of staff has behaved in a way that is inconsistent with our Staff Code of Conduct, but does not meet the harm threshold.

- **Reporting LLCs:** All low-level concerns must be shared with the Headteacher or the DSL to ensure proper oversight.
- **Decision Maker:** The Headteacher is the ultimate decision maker in respect of low-level concerns, and will maintain confidential, secure records to identify potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour.
- **LADO Escalation:** If a pattern of concerns indicates that an individual's behaviour has moved from a low-level concern to meeting the harm threshold, the Case Manager will refer the matter to the LADO immediately.

Appendix 4: Specific Safeguarding Issues

Staff must remain vigilant to specific, complex safeguarding issues, utilizing local HIPS procedures and toolkits to guide intervention:

- **Child Exploitation & Extra-Familial Harm:** Involves Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE). The school operates in accordance with the HIPS Child Exploitation & Extra-Familial Harm Strategy, using the Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework (CERAF) to identify and refer pupils. To share non-urgent intelligence with the police, staff will utilize the Community Partnership Information (CPI) sharing form on the Safe4Me portal.
- **County Lines & Local Drug Networks:** Perpetrators exploit vulnerable children to transport and sell drugs across local authority borders. Staff must look out for warning signs, including persistent unexplained school absences, possession of unexplained cash or luxury items, and changes in peer groups, completing an inter-agency referral form (IARF) where CCE is suspected.
- **Domestic Abuse & Operation Encompass:** In accordance with our statutory duty, police forces notify the school's DSL of domestic abuse incidents affecting any household containing our pupils. This applies to all connected children, whether physically present or not. Sarah Roughton, as the Key Adult, will review the notifications, ensure files are updated, and coordinate appropriate pastoral support. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding referrals.
- **Serious Violence Duty:** Under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, we cooperate with safeguarding partners to prevent and reduce serious violence. The school responds to children found in possession of bladed articles or knives in line with the Government's expectations of a swift, robust, and supportive multi-agency intervention, reducing the risk of reoffending.
- **Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB):** Includes peer-on-peer sexual harassment and sexual violence. The school maintains a zero-tolerance approach and will utilise the Southampton Child on Child Abuse Toolkit. Medical assessments for children who may have experienced direct contact sexual abuse will follow the Pan-HIPS Child Sexual Abuse Response Pathway, using the HIPS Child Protection Medical Request Form, which can only be formally referred by the police or social care.
- **Harmful Practices Linked to Faith or Culture:** Includes Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Forced Marriage, and Honour-Based Abuse (HBA). FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of female genitalia. Since October 2015, teachers have a mandatory reporting duty to call the police on 101 if they discover that FGM has been carried out on a pupil under 18. Where honour-based abuse or forced marriage is suspected, the school will act swiftly to activate local safeguarding protocols, utilizing the Forced Marriage Unit (020 7008 0151, fm@fco.gov.uk) and the single-opportunity window of disclosure.