



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

September 2024

Document Control

Changes History

Version	Date	Amended by	Recipients	Purpose
1.0	July 2022	Neil Maslen, Director of Education	Speech and Language UK's Board of Trustees All Speech and Language UK Staff	To create a Charity wide safeguarding policy.
2.0	July 2023	Neil Maslen, Director of Education	Speech and Language UK's Board and staff	To update Speech and Language UK's safeguarding policy
3.0	September 2024	Neil Maslen, Director of Education	Speech and Language UK's Board and staff	Minor technical updates to reflect WTTSC 2023 and KCSIE 2024

Approvals

This policy requires the following approvals:

Board	Chair	CEO	Date Approved	Version	Date for Review
*				1	July 2023
*				2	September 2023
*				4	July 2025

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Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding Trustee:	Roy Blatchford
Speech and Language UK's Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Neil Maslen
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Safeguarding Statement

Speech and Language UK recognises our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse, neglect and exploited and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice. Child protection forms part of our schools' safeguarding responsibilities as well as that of all staff who work for Speech and Language UK. This Safeguarding policy underpins and guides our procedures and protocols to ensure its pupils and staff are safe.

Key Personnel

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Speech and Language UK's Safeguarding Lead	Neil Maslen	neil.maslen@speechandlanguage.org.uk	07384783883*
Dawn House School Designated Safeguarding Lead	Philip Chandler	mailto:Philip.chandler@dawnhouse.org.uk	01623 795361
Meath School Designated Safeguarding Lead	Sian Vaux	sian.vaux@meathschool.org.uk	01932 872302

*Out of hours contact

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined 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 impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework

Child Protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of Speech and Language UK e, full or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity, including Trustees and members of the School Advisory Boards.

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

Parents refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents and LA corporate parents.

School refers to any setting with children or young adults, i.e early years, colleges etc.

1. Introduction

Safeguarding legislation and guidance

The following safeguarding legislation and guidance has been considered when drafting this policy:

- Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 (Independent schools only, including academies and CTCs)
- Non-maintained Special School Regulations 2015
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 / Protection of Freedoms act 2012
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Teacher Standards 2012
- Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2023
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024
- Information Sharing 2018
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- Charity Commission: Safeguarding and Protecting People for Charities and Trustees, 2017

Linked Speech and Language UK Policies

The following Speech and Language UK policies are aligned with this policy and apply to all members of staff:

- Managing Allegations
- Whistleblowing
- Safer Recruitment
- Staff Code of Conduct
Staff Disciplinary Policy
- Complaints Policy

2. Policy Principles

The welfare of the child is paramount.

We are committed to safeguarding children and young people and we expect everyone who works for Speech and Language UK to share this commitment.

If any staff member has a concern about a child, they should:

- (if it relates to a child's school or childcare setting and this is known) report it using the school or setting's procedures
- (if it is not an Speech and Language UK school) also report it through the Speech and Language UK concern form Speech and Language UK's Concern form in appendix 8 or using this link. This includes any concerns that have arisen through use of other Speech and Language UK activities e.g. the enquiry line or website or external events.

Any Speech and Language UK member of staff working regularly in a partner school or setting with children should ensure that they familiarise themselves with that school's safeguarding procedures and who the named person is (the DSL) so that they can report concerns quickly if they occur.

All our staff must take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them. We will always act in the best interest of the child.

- All children regardless of age, gender, culture, language, race, ability, sexual identity or religion have equal rights to protection, safeguarding and opportunities.
- We recognise that all adults, including temporary staff, volunteers, Trustees and members of the School Advisory Boards, have a full and active part to play in protecting children from harm and have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- We believe that our schools should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical, mental wellbeing and moral development of the individual child.
- We have a duty to provide pupils and staff involved in child protection issues with appropriate support and supervision.

3. Policy Aims

- To demonstrate Speech and Language UK's commitment with regard to safeguarding and child protection to children, young people and families using our schools, programmes and other services
- To support children's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected and feel confident to and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to.
- To raise the awareness of all staff of the need to safeguard children, and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure our schools, contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those children.
- To ensure that all staff operate according to contextual safeguarding principles
 - This means that assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety or welfare. This can include factors outside the school or setting and can occur between children outside the school or setting.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies and Local Authorities.
- To ensure that all staff working for us who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications, and a satisfactory DBS check (according to guidance), and a single central record is kept for

audit within each school and centrally.

4. Values

Supporting children

- We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.
- We recognise that schools may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn as well as exhibiting signs of mental health problems.
- We understand the impact on a child's mental health, behaviour and education when experiencing difficulties, abuse and/or neglect.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Speech and Language UK's Senior Management Team will ensure that:

- Child protection, safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations policies and procedures, including the staff code of conduct are consistent with Speech and Language UK's and statutory requirements, are reviewed annually by the Senior Management Team and Board of Trustees. The Director of Fundraising, Marketing and Communications will ensure that the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy is publicly available on the website or by other means.

Line Managers will ensure that:

- The staff they line manage are aware of and understand the procedures and have levels of knowledge and skills commensurate to the nature of their direct involvement with children and young people.
- Line Managers must work with the Safeguarding Lead for their workplace to resolve issues.

Speech and Language UK's Safeguarding Lead will ensure that:

- The Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff.
- There is a Trustee for safeguarding who is named in the policy, along with appropriate contact details.
- Sufficient time, training, support, resources, including cover arrangements where necessary, is allocated to staff.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern that the child's wishes, and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.
- Systems are in place for children to express their views and give feedback which operate with the best interest of the child at heart.
- All staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle-blowing procedures.
- They liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), before taking any action

and on an ongoing basis, where an allegation is made against a member of staff, supply staff or volunteer; and

- Anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- They hold ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and child protection in the charity and is a member of the SMT.
- Is responsible for ensuring that Speech and Language UK has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff (including the Senior Management Team), supply staff, volunteers and against other children and that a referral is made to the DBS if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have had they not resigned.
- Speech and Language UK's Director of Education will liaise with the relevant local authority on Child Protection issues and in the event of an allegation of abuse made against staff in the Charity.
- Acts as a source of support and expertise in carrying out safeguarding duties for the whole charity.
- Will have the necessary knowledge and understanding to recognise possible children at risk of contextual and/or familial abuse or exploitation.
- Will take a lead in assessing the risks and issues in the wider community when considering the well-being and safety of its pupils
- Will ensure that all staff are familiar with the contextual safeguarding issues that pose a risk to all children in the school, and specifically to groups or individuals.
- Encourages a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings.
- Is appropriately trained with updates every two years and will refresh their knowledge and skills at regular intervals but at least annually.
- Will refer a child if there are concerns about possible abuse, to the LA, and act as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns. Enquiries must be followed up in writing, if referred by telephone.
- Will keep detailed, accurate written records as appropriate, of all concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
- Will provide oversight of the reporting system to ensure that it is used appropriately and effectively.
- Will liaise with the Local Authority, its safeguarding partners and work with other agencies and professionals in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- Engage with internal and external safeguarding reviews.
- Speech and Language UK will always act in a way that adheres to the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA), specifically, articles 3, 8, 14 and protocol 1.
- Speech and Language UK will not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity or sexual orientation in accordance with the Equality Act
- Will ensure that any identified weaknesses in Child Protection are remedied immediately.

Speech and Language UK's Head of People is responsible for:

- Ensuring that Speech and Language UK operates a safer recruitment procedure that includes statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children and disqualification by association regulations and by ensuring that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel who has completed safer recruitment training. Implementing a training strategy for employees to ensure that the policy and procedures are implemented throughout the organisation.
- Ensuring that appropriate policies for staff behaviour / code of conduct / managing allegations against staff are in place to safeguard children and young people.

- Liaising with partner agencies, Speech and Language UK Chief Executive, Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or school Principals as appropriate in relation to any allegations of abuse made against staff or volunteers / visitors and, where required, making referrals to the Disclosure & Barring Service or other regulatory bodies such as HCPC, NCTL.
- Monitoring the Disclosure & Barring Service updates, training policies and alerting the Director to any shortfalls in implementation.

Speech and Language UK's Designated Trustee will ensure that

- In the event of an allegation, in respect of child protection, being made against the Chief Executive, the Chair of Trustees (or their nominated Trustee) is responsible for liaising with external agencies including the local authority and for taking on the 'case manager' role with support from the Director of People.

All Speech and Language UK Staff:

- Understand that it is everyone's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and that they have a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.
- Consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.
- Will be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploited both familial and contextual; and recognise that contextual harm can take a variety of different forms.
- Know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse through delivery of 'Working together to Safeguard Children', and 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'.
- Complete any necessary recording as required by Speech and Language UK, the school or local authority.
- Will refer any safeguarding or child protection concerns to the DSL or if necessary where the child is at immediate risk to the police or the Local Authority.
- Will be aware of the Case Resolution protocol or the duty to report concerns if the DSL fails to do so without reasonable cause.
- Will help to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- All school staff must read Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022) Part 1 and Annex A.
- Staff should report all concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for their workplace. For Speech and Language UK central staff this should be done using this [form](#).
- Where there are concerns about the way in which safeguarding is carried out, staff should refer to Speech and Language UK's Whistleblowing Policy.

6. Confidentiality

- Speech and Language UK recognises that in order to effectively meet a child's needs, safeguard their welfare and protect them from harm the school must contribute to inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and share information between professionals and agencies where there are concerns.
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and that the Data Protection Act 2018⁸ is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would place a child at risk of harm.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets, which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.
- However, we also recognise that all matters relating to child protection are personal to children and families. Therefore, in this respect they are confidential and the DSL will only disclose information about a child to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis.
- We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to the Local Authority with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation.

7. Child Protection Procedures

- Abuse, neglect and exploited are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in the family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate off line abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.
- Abuse, neglect and exploited may also take place outside of the home, contextual safeguarding, and this may include (but not limited to), sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, radicalisation.
- Further information about the four categories of abuse; physical, emotional, sexual and neglect, and indicators that a child may be being abused can be found in appendices 1 and 2.
- Any child in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "It could happen here".
- There are also a number of specific safeguarding concerns that we recognise pupils may experience;
 - child missing from education
 - child missing from home or care
 - child sexual exploitation (CSE)
 - child criminal exploitation (CCE)
 - bullying including cyberbullying
 - domestic abuse
 - drugs
 - fabricated or induced illness
 - faith abuse
 - female genital mutilation (FGM)
 - forced marriage
 - gangs and youth violence
 - gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)

- mental health
 - private fostering
 - radicalisation
 - youth produced sexual imagery (sexting)
 - teenage relationship abuse
 - trafficking
 - child on child abuse
 - upskirting
 - serious violence
- Staff must be aware that behaviours linked to drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger and that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse.
 - We also recognise that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are complex and are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. Staff are aware that in most cases multiple issues will overlap one another.

If staff are concerned about a child's welfare

- If staff notice any indicators of abuse/neglect or signs that a child may be experiencing a safeguarding issue they should record these concerns using Speech and Language UK's Record of Concern [form](#). They may also discuss their concerns with the DSL but the details of the concern must be recorded.
- Speech and Language UK recognises that the signs may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent moving out, a pet dying, a grandparent being very ill or an accident occurring. However, they may also indicate a child is being abused or is in need of safeguarding.
- In these circumstances staff will try to give the child the opportunity to talk. It is fine for staff to ask the pupil if they are OK or if they can help in any way.
- Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff remains concerned they should discuss their concerns with the DSL in the school they are in, or Speech and Language UK's DSL
- If the pupil does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below regarding a pupil making a disclosure.

If a child discloses to a member of staff

- At all times Speech and Language UK's staff, if in a school, should follow the school's safeguarding procedures.
- We recognise that it takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, guilty or scared, their abuser may have threatened that something will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults or believe that what has happened is their fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.
- They may feel embarrassed, humiliated or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, and/or sexual orientation or language barriers.
- A child who makes a disclosure may have to tell their story on a number of subsequent occasions to the police and/or social workers. Therefore, it is vital that their first experience of talking to a trusted adult is a positive one.

During their conversation with the child staff will;

- listen to what the child has to say and allow them to speak freely;
- remain calm and not overreact or act shocked or disgusted – the pupil may stop talking if she/he feels that she/he are upsetting the listener;
- reassure the child that it is not their fault and that they have done the right thing in telling someone;
- not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how difficult it is for the pupil and allow them time to talk;
- take what the child is disclosing seriously;
- ask open questions and avoid asking leading questions;
- avoid jumping to conclusions, speculation or make accusations;
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who is being abused;
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing sooner. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about it when it started' may be the staff member's way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean they have done something wrong; and tell the child what will happen next.
- If a pupil talks to any member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing the staff member will let the child know that they will have to pass the information on – staff are not allowed to keep secrets.
- The member of staff should write up their conversation as soon as possible on the school's CPOMS system or Speech and Language UK's record of concern form, staff should make this a matter of priority. The record should include the name of the member of staff; the date and should also detail where the disclosure was made and who else was present.

Making a referral

- Concerns about a child or a disclosure should be immediately raised with the DSL in the school or Speech and Language UK's DSL who will help decide whether a referral to the Local Authority or other support is appropriate in accordance with local protocols.
- If a referral is needed, the DSL should do this rapidly and have the necessary systems in place to enable this to happen. However, anyone can make a referral and if for any reason a staff member thinks a referral is appropriate and one hasn't been made they can and should consider making a referral themselves.
- The child (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.
- If after a referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the designated safeguarding lead (or the person that made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed, and most importantly the child's situation improves.
- Where necessary concerns should be escalated to the LA head of service by the DSL or Principal.
- If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's MASH and/or the police immediately. Anybody can make a referral.
- Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible.

Supporting our Staff

- We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSLs and to seek further support as appropriate.

8. Children who are particularly vulnerable

Speech and Language UK recognises that some children are more vulnerable to abuse, neglect and exploited and that additional barriers exist when recognising abuse for some children.

We understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions or child protection procedures which fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances.

In some cases possible indicators of abuse such as a child's mood, behaviour or injury might be assumed to relate to the child's impairment or disability rather than giving a cause for concern. Or a focus may be on the child's disability, special educational needs or situation without consideration of the full picture. In other cases, such as bullying, the child may be disproportionately impacted by the behaviour without outwardly showing any signs that they are experiencing it.

The children Speech and Language UK work with will also find it harder to disclose abuse due to communication barriers or not being aware that what they are experiencing is abuse.

Any child may benefit from early help, but all school staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- has a social worker
- is a looked after child, or has been previously looked after
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- is a privately fostered child;
- has an imprisoned parent;
- is experiencing mental health, wellbeing difficulties.

At Speech and Language UK we recognise that children who have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges.

These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration.
- These children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children.
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

9. Radicalisation and Extremism

- As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, schools have a duty to 'prevent people being drawn into terrorism'. This has become known as the 'Prevent Duty'.
- Where staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalised, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead has received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism and is able to support staff with any concerns they may have.

Recognising Extremism

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent.)
- secretive behaviour
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- advocating violence towards others

When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the DSL. They should then follow normal safeguarding procedures. If the matter is urgent the Police must be contacted by dialling 999. In non-urgent cases where police advice is sought then dial 101. The Department of Education has also set up a dedicated telephone helpline for staff and governors to raise concerns around Prevent (020 7340 7264).

10. Allegations against staff

Allegations or concerns about an adult working in the school whether as a teacher, supply teacher, other staff, volunteers or contractors

- At Speech and Language UK we recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children, including Trustees, members of the School Advisory Boards, volunteers, supply teachers and agency staff. Any concerns about the conduct of other adults in one of our schools should be taken to the Principal without delay; any concerns about the Principal should go to the Director of Education who can be contacted by emailing or calling on the number in the contact section.
- Any concerns related to the Director of Education should be directed to the CEO, and concerns regarding the CEO should be referred to the Safeguarding Trustee. Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff, supply teachers, volunteers or contractors in other settings should be reported to the Principal/Headteacher of that school.
- Concerns may come from various sources, for example, a suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.
- The Principal/Headteacher has to decide whether the concern is an allegation or low-level concern. The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (see below).

Allegations

- It is an allegation if the person* has:
 - behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
 - behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (also includes behaviour outside the school).

(*Person could be anyone working in the school or a college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors.)

- Allegations should be reported to the LADO and the Speech and Language UK's Director of Education 'without delay'
- Before contacting the LADO, schools should conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation.
- The LADO's role is not to investigate the allegation, but to ensure that an appropriate investigation is carried out, whether that is by the police, children's social care, the school or college, or a combination of these.

Low-level Concerns

- Concerns may be graded Low-level if the concern does not meet the criteria for an allegation; and the person* has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. Example behaviours include, but are not limited to:
 - being over-friendly with children;
 - having favourites;

- An adult acting in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct.
- The schools will follow their Local Authority procedures for managing allegations against staff, procedures set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and Speech and Language UK's Managing Allegations policy and procedures, and will work with the Director of Education at all times.
- All low-level concerns and allegations concerning adults working with children must be recorded using the record of concern form or following the school's procedures.. Retention and sharing of this information will be in line with Speech and Language UK's Data Retention Policy, and in consultation with the Head of People.
- Suspension of the member of staff, against whom an allegation has been made, needs careful consideration, and the DSL will seek the advice of the LADO and Speech and Language UK's Head of People in making this decision.
- In the event of an allegation against one of our Principals, the decision to suspend will be made by Speech and Language UK in consultation with the CEO and Safeguarding Trustee and with advice as above.
- Staff, parents, Trustees and members of the School Advisory Board are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing including content placed on social media sites.

11. Whistleblowing

- We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues, poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding arrangements. If it becomes necessary to consult outside the school, they should speak in the first instance, to the LADO following the Whistleblowing Policy.
- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk
- Whistle-blowing regarding the Principal should be made to the Director of Education whose contact details are readily available to staff.
- Whistleblowing regarding a member of SMT (excluding the CEO) should be made to the CEO.
- Concerns regarding the CEO should be made to the Chair of Trustees
- Concerns regarding a member of the Board of Trustees should be made to the Safeguarding Trustee and/or the Chair of Trustees. If the concern is about the Chair, then the Vice Chair should be contacted.

12. Confidentiality, sharing information and GDPR

- All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.
- Staff should be proactive in appropriately sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to local

authority children's social care.

- Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL, Line Manager or the Principal. They will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) emphasises that any member of staff can contact children's social care if they are concerned about a child. The contact details are contained within this document.
- Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and HM Government Information Sharing and Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, July 2018.
- Information sharing is guided by the following principles:
 - necessary and proportionate
 - relevant
 - adequate
 - accurate
 - timely
 - secure

- Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.
- Documents should be retained with reference to Speech and Language UK's Data Retention Schedule.