Safeguarding and Child Protection 2026 - 2027

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Chair of Governors	Alice Vince
Safeguarding Link Governor	Gabriella Watkins
Key Safeguarding Personnel	
Name	**Role**
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Hayley Fassam, Kerry-Anne Booth & Chrissy Byrne	**Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)**
Michelle Clark	**Designated Teacher for Cared For and Previously Cared For Children/young people**
Hayley Fassam	**Special Education Needs and Disability Coordinator (SENDCo)**

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Introduction

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children/young people is the responsibility of all adults in whatever capacity they hold to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children/young people attending Lowther Endowed School and Little VIPs Day Care.

All schools must have regard to statutory guidance Keeping Children/young people Safe in Education (2026) and Working Together to Safeguard Children/young people (2026) which sets out multi-agency responsibilities and processes, to safeguard and protect children/young people Westmorland and Furness Safeguarding Children/young people Partnership (W&FSCP).

Keeping Children/young people Safe in Education (2025) defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children/young people, everyone under the age of 18, as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children/young people and young people as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting them from maltreatment.
- Preventing the impairment of mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable children/young people to have the best outcomes.

Part One: Governance

The Role and Responsibility of the Governing Body

Provides strategic leadership for the delivery of robust safeguarding arrangements which are compliant with statutory guidance.

To meet its statutory obligations the governing body has:

- Appointed a safeguarding link governor to take lead responsibility for the settings safeguarding arrangements.
- The safeguarding link governor will access appropriate safeguarding training to advise and support the governing body in their safeguarding responsibilities, in addition:

    - The full governing body has accessed appropriate safeguarding training including its responsibilities for online safety and its obligations under the Data Protection Act (2018) and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) in protecting personal information and providing access to official information.
    - The link governor will undertake appropriate, bespoke, training in relation to their role and responsibilities which includes meeting at least termly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to ensure oversight of safeguarding activity and ensure relevant safeguarding policies remain current and compliant.
    - The governing body has adopted the national governor association (NGA) code of conduct.
    - The governing body will undertake an annual audit to ensure it is fulfilling its safeguarding responsibilities that is presented to a full governing body meeting annually.

The Designated and Deputy Safeguarding Lead (DSL and DDSL)

The designated safeguarding lead is a member of the senior leadership team, in addition the setting has a deputy safeguarding lead(s), trained to the same level as the DSL, to ensure:

- The delivery of effective day-to-day safeguarding arrangements and governance, which includes online safety arrangements.
- Providing support and guidance on matters relating to safeguarding and child protection to staff, volunteers, supply staff and contractors.
- Fulfilling our statutory (legal) responsibilities to identify children/young people who may be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, child protection, through working with other agencies and following the multi-agency procedures as set by the Westmorland and Furness Safeguarding Children/young people Partnership (W&FSCP) including:

    - identifying concerns early and providing Early Help/ Family Help to prevent escalation
    - consulting and sharing information appropriately with agencies, including Children/young people's Social Care, in accordance with the Data Protection Act

(2018) and UK GDPR (2018), regardless of who raised the concern – other children/young people/young people, members of the public, parents or relatives

- working with key professionals, including the SENCo, attendance leads and designated teacher for cared-for and previously cared-for children/young people, to safeguard vulnerable children/young people/young people
- promoting a safe learning environment through education on online safety, relationships education, positive behaviour and bullying
- supporting parents and carers to keep children/young people/young people safe online
- ensuring adequate DSL/DDSL cover outside core hours and during school holidays
- inducting new staff and signposting safeguarding policies and procedures
- ensuring visitors, supply staff and contractors receive key safeguarding and health and safety information and know how to report concerns
- reviewing the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring systems
- Ensuring the RHSE programme covers online harm, sharing images, deep fakes, pornography, generative AI and misogynistic influencers and when and where to seek help.
- managing the transfer of safeguarding records between schools when children/young people/young people move including sharing information with relevant staff and sharing a summary of current safeguarding concerns with the next schools.

The full responsibilities of the DSL and DDSL are set out in **Appendix C** of Keeping Children/young people Safe in Education (2025)

Legislative Framework and Guidance

All action taken by Lowther Endowed School and Little VIPs Day Care will be in accordance with:

- **Legislation:** Children/young people Act 1989 and 2004; Education Act 2002 and 2011; Childcare Act 2006; Education and Inspection Act 2006; The Human Rights Act 1998; Equality Act 2010 including our public sector equality duty.
- **Statutory guidance**: Keeping Children/young people Safe in Education (2025) sets out the framework for safeguarding arrangements in settings; Working Together to Safeguard Children/young people (2023) sets out the multi-agency arrangements for safeguarding and the role of all educational settings to co-operate and contribute to those arrangements and the Westmorland and Furness Safeguarding Children/young people Partnership procedures details how agencies will work together to safeguard and protect children/young people and young people as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children/young people (2023).
- **Department for Education (DfE) guidance and advice** that all settings must follow or have due regard to the following:
  - Information sharing advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children/young people, young people, parents and carers (May 2024).
  - Non-statutory advice what to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (2015) provides more information on understanding and identifying abuse and neglect,

- Non-statutory advice, the use of reasonable force (2013), covers the broad range of actions used by school-based staff when using physical contact e.g., guiding a pupil to safety by the arm or restraining pupils to prevent violence or injury,
- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children/young people and young people in education settings (2022),
- The Teacher Standards (2012) which sets out the responsibilities of the teaching profession to safeguard children/young people's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession,
- Specific advice and guidance in relation to range of safeguarding issues e.g., behavior, bullying, online safety, medical needs and attendance as reference throughout this policy.

Safeguarding policies and procedures

Effective safeguarding policies and procedures:

- Should be transparent, clear, and easy to understand for staff, children/young people, parents, and carers and along with others public documents available on the school website. We have provided hyperlinks to key documents which can be accessed by the reader that provides more guidance and background information.
- Support children/young people should be able to report, any form of abuse or neglect, child on child abuse, including bullying and be confident that their concerns will be treated seriously, they will be listened to, appropriate action taken, and they will be supported throughout.
- Should be underpinned by effective policies and procedures including:

  - The staff Code of Conduct
  - Positive Behaviour Management Policy, including bullying prevention and the use of reasonable force
  - Prevent Policy
  - Online Safety, AI and Appropriate Use Policy, including monitoring and filtering
  - Mental Health and Wellbeing Policies
  - Supporting pupils with medical conditions
  - Safer Recruitment procedures including the definitions of regulated activity (Refer to part 3 of KCSIE)
  - Managing Allegations and Low-Level Concerns Policy
  - Attendance, Children/young people Missing Education and Elective Home Education Policy
  - Equality Policy and objectives, including schools approach to supporting children/young people/young people who are questioning their gender
  - Mobile Phone Policy
  - Child-on-Child Abuse and Sexual Violence and Harassment Policy
  - Education Other Than at School (EOTAS) / Section 19 Policy

Staff training

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and all school staff are part of a wider safeguarding system for children/young people. As such, staff are expected to regularly undertake training to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to

effectively carry out their roles. Staff working within maintained schools are expected to complete the core, mandatory training as listed in the table below.

Core and Mandatory Training

Annual Safeguarding Update incorporating changes to KCSIE	All School Staff/ Volunteers and Governors	Delivered by DSLs	Training material provided by Local Authority	Annually
Level 2 Safeguarding Children/young people (Online)	School staff, incorporating early years staff	Online Delivery:	Virtual College: https://wfscp.org.uk/learning-and-development/e-learning	On appointment and every 2 years
WFSCP Working Together to Safeguard Children/young people: Level 3	DSLs and Deputy DSLs	Face to Face Delivery	https://wfscp.org.uk/learning-and-development/face-to-face	Every 2 years
DSL Induction	New DSLs and Deputy DSLs	Face to Face	Delivered by Education Safeguarding Advisor	On appointment
Prevent	All School Staff/ Volunteers and Governors	Online Delivery	You can access this training via the government site on Prevent duty training - GOV.UK under "Prevent duty training" or via the e-learning module offered by Virtual College entitled: Radicalisation and Extremism (Prevent). https://wfscp.org.uk/learning-and-development/e-learning	Every 2 Years
Safer Recruitment	For those staff/governors with recruitment responsibilities	Online Delivery	Virtual College: https://wfscp.org.uk/learning-and-development/e-learning	Every 2 years
Family Help Training	DSLs and Deputy DSLs	Online or in person	Family Help Partnership Training Offer: https://wfscp.org.uk/learning-and-development/face-to-face	Once

Supplementary Training

Further training on domestic abuse, substance use, neglect, trauma and contextual safeguarding training is available by visiting: https://wfscp.org.uk/learning-and-development/face-to-face

- The Annual Safeguarding Update, incorporating KCSIE changes is delivered annually by the DSL. Staff unable to attend will receive updates from the DSL or deputy DSL to ensure awareness of current guidance relevant to their role
- The DSL will provide regular updates to school staff on key safeguarding issues impacting on the welfare of children/young people/young people attending the setting or issues within the wider Westmorland and Furness area, through regular briefings and targeted training.
- Supply teachers, trainee teachers, volunteers, visitors and contractors will be provided, when they sign in, with accessible information that sets out their responsibilities to report any concerns about a child/young person or the conduct of any adult working in or on behalf of the setting.

Quality assurance

- The designated safeguarding lead will review this policy annually.
- The designated safeguarding lead will complete an annual audit of safeguarding activity, including an audit of online safety and risk, and submit a report to the full governing body.
- The designated safeguarding lead and safeguarding link governor will meet termly to discuss challenges and safeguarding activity.
- The governing body will complete their own audit of safeguarding arrangements with a focus on their own safeguarding responsibilities, effectiveness and impact in meeting their statutory responsibilities.
- The school will undertake the bi-annual section 11, Children/young people Act 2004, audit of safeguarding arrangements coordinated by the Westmorland and Furness Safeguarding Children/young people Partnership (W&FSCP).

Part Two: Identifying vulnerable children/young people in need

What all staff should know

All staff working at the setting:

- should know who and how to contact the designated and deputy safeguarding lead(s), this information is available in the staff handbook, in the staff room, staff information boards, information displayed in classrooms etc.
- should know who the chair of governors is and how to contact them.
- staff working directly with children/young people and young people must read Keeping Children/young people Safe in Education (2026) Part One **Part one: information for all school and college staff** and follow reporting procedures must access, read and understand this policy annually, access appropriate safeguarding training as identified by the designated safeguarding lead and whole school annual update training
- should follow the school's procedures and discuss/report concerns about a child immediately or as soon as practicable to the designated or deputy safeguarding lead and follow the procedure at **Appendix One.**
- must adhere to the school's staff code of conduct which endorses the principles set out in guidance for safer working practice for those working with children/young people and young people in education settings (2022) published by the Safer Recruitment Consortium, endorsed by the DfE.
- must be aware of the policy on managing allegations and low-level concerns regarding staff, volunteers, supply staff and contractors, as set out in **Part 4** of this policy, including access to the Whistleblowing Advice Line
- will receive role-appropriate online safety training including how to keep themselves online e.g., using social media platforms and communication with children/young people/young people, parents and carers
- will be aware of the positive behaviour management policy, including bullying, cyberbullying and discriminatory bullying
- will understand the importance of attendance and the impact of persistent absence and children/young people/young people missing education
- should maintain confidentiality about staff, children/young people/young people and matters affecting the reputation of the setting and under no circumstances disclose any information about children/young people/young people outside their designated authority to do so
- will be given proportionate and confidential information about children/young people/young people on a need-to-know basis by the designated safeguarding lead in order to ensure the child/young person's safety and welfare

Responding to concerns

General advice and guidance

NB the term 'staff' refers to all adults irrespective their role, within the setting.

- staff should recognise that children/young people/young people live in different circumstances, including care arrangements, poverty, challenging behaviour and SEND, and ensure personal beliefs do not affect professional judgement
- some children/young people/young people experience trauma directly through abuse or indirectly through domestic abuse, parental mental ill health or other adverse experiences
- some children/young people/young people are particularly vulnerable, including those who are cared for or previously cared for, young carers, children/young people in alternative provision, those with mental health needs, those at risk of exploitation and LGBTQ+ children/young people experiencing prejudice
- some children/young people/young people may already be known to Children/young people's Social Care, police or health services and have plans such as Early Help, Child in Need, EHCP or Child Protection Plans
- staff should act in the child's best interests, promote wellbeing and listen to what children/young people/young people communicate through words and behaviour
- procedures for reporting concerns are set out in **Appendix One**

Best practice to be followed by all staff

- if a child/young person makes a disclosure, listen carefully, inform the DSL/DDSL promptly and make a factual record including the date, time, location and disclosure details using the child/young person's words wherever possible. You should not promise confidentiality, but reassure the child/young person that you will only tell people who can help and support them.
- a child or young person should never be asked to provide a written account of a disclosure or allegation
- staff should feel confident raising concerns about poor or unsafe practice as outlined in **Part 4**
- the DSL/DDSL is responsible for referrals to Children/young people's Social Care in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children/young people (2026) and W&FSCP procedures

Early Help/ Family Help

Early Help/ Family Help is support provided where a child/young person or family:

- has additional needs
- has emerging needs
- requires support beyond the setting's resources and would benefit from a multi-agency response but is not at risk of significant harm

Any child/young person may benefit from Early/ Family Help, particularly those who:

- are disabled or have health conditions
- have SEND, with or without an EHCP
- where needs are unclear and these cannot be met from within our own resources alone and they would benefit from a multi-agency response, but not where there is a risk of significant harm
- are young carers
- are at risk of anti-social or criminal behaviour, gangs, organised crime or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- have experienced repeated suspensions, are at risk of permanent exclusion, attends alternative provision or a pupil referral unit
- are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- are at risk of radicalisation

- have a parent in custody or affected by parental offending
- live in families affected by substance misuse, mental ill health or domestic abuse
- misuse alcohol or drugs
- are at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse, including FGM or forced marriage
- are privately fostered

The Westmorland and Furness multi-agency threshold guidance sets out the local criteria for action, the process for assessment and the level of services to be provided. Further information can be accessed via the Westmorland and Furness Families Information website.https://fid.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/kb5/westmorlandandfurness/directory/home.page

Child in Need and in Need of Protection

Westmorland and Furness council has a statutory duty to support and promote the wellbeing of certain groups of children/young people in their area as set out int the W&FSCP local protocol for assessment to determine what services to provide and/or action to take, in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children/young people (2023) namely:

- Under section 17, Children Act 1989, local authorities are under a general duty to provide support for children/young people who are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health or development will be significantly impaired without the provision of services, or the child is disabled

- Under section 47, Children Act 1989, to make enquires where there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and decide if any action must be taken.

Children referred to Children's Social Care, who meets one or both the above thresholds, should have an individual assessment to identify their needs and to understand the impact of any parental behaviour on them as an individual. Children/young people's social care have to give due regard to a child's age and understanding when determining what (if any) services to provide under section 17 (child in need) and before making decisions about action to be taken to protect individual children/young people under section 47 (child protection)

The W&FSCP has published guidance notes on the purpose of child in need meetings and the child in need plan

Abuse, Neglect and exploitation

The definitions of abuse and neglect refer to the maltreatment of a child, whereby an individual, either adult or another child o inflicts harm or fails to prevent harm; it can occur within the family, institution or the community. It is important to recognise that children/young people can be vulnerable to abuse in a range of social contexts, through the different relationships they form within their friendship groups, neighbourhoods or online which can feature violence and abuse, known as contextual safeguarding, experiencing or being harmed outside their families.

Not all concerns that come to the attention of staff or the designated or deputy safeguarding leads meets the legal threshold for statutory intervention under section 47 of the Children/young people Act 1989 by children/young people's social care, namely that a child or young person is suffering or at risk of significant harm.

Therefore, it is important that staff recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and the range of issues that can impact on a child and take appropriate action to safeguard and protect them.

Definitions of Abuse and Neglect

The following are the statutory definitions of abuse and neglect as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children/young people (2023). Abuse is any form of maltreatment of a child through inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Harm includes non-physical harm such as witnessing the ill treatment of others such as seeing hearing or experiencing domestic abuse. Abuse can also take place in institutions and community, perpetrated by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online and be instigated by both adults or other children/young people or young people.

Abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, so it is important that all staff maintain an open mind and professional curiosity as to what might be happening for individuals or groups of children/young people.

The ultimate responsibility to assess and determine the type and category of abuse rests with Children/young people's Social Care; our responsibility is to understand the categories of abuse, the impact on the welfare and development of our children/young people and where we have concerns, to take appropriate action as early as possible.

Physical Abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child
Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children/young people. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children/young people frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children/young people. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children/young people in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children/young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children/young people. The sexual abuse of children/young people by other children/young people is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.
Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: • provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment) protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger • ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers) or • ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

Part 3 Additional safeguarding responsibilities

Children with a Disability or Complex Health Needs

Identifying abuse and neglect can be more challenging for children with additional needs, both online and offline. Factors may include:

- assumptions and lack of professional curiosity about indicators such as behaviour, mood or injury
- being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
- involvement in child criminal exploitation
- communication difficulties that affect reporting abuse or neglect
- cognitive understanding, being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction, then repeating the content/behaviours in the setting and not understanding the consequences of doing so

Staff should be particularly vigilant in safeguarding children/young people with SEND and/or medical needs and discuss concerns with the DSL/DDSL, who will liaise with the SENCo, relevant college lead or Children's Social Care as appropriate.

Further information is available from:

- W&FSCP Website
- Statutory guidance SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years
- Supporting children at school with medical needs (2015)

Cared for and previously cared for children and young people

The most common reason for children/young people becoming cared for is as a result of abuse and/or neglect and they will be subject of a legal order e.g., an interim or full care order or under a voluntary arrangement with consent of parents, often called voluntary care; they will have an allocated social worker and have a detailed, statutory, care plan that is reviewed at regular intervals.

Children/young people who have previously been a cared, i.e., they may have been returned home, the care order discharged, and a special guardianship order (SGO) made in place of a care order. For some they may remain potentially vulnerable and require ongoing support to reach their full potential.

All statutory agencies have a responsibility to work together as corporate parents for this group of children/young people and it important to note that some children/young people are place have moved to Westmorland and Furness to live with carers from different local authorities, but they remain the responsibility of the original authority.

The designated safeguarding lead and the designated teacher for cared for and previously cared for children are jointly responsible for this group of children/young people; the designated safeguarding lead to ensure the cared for child/young person is safeguarded and the designated teacher to promote their educational achievement; both have access to detailed information about the child/young person’s legal status; their social worker and contact details; contact with birth parents or those with parental responsibility; care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the placing authority. It is the responsibility of the designated teacher to liaise with the virtual school head for Westmorland and Furness or the virtual head for the placing authority.

Statutory guidance on the role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children can be accessed here

(*The preferred terminology in W&F Council is "Cared For" children and young person rather than looked after and previously looked after. This is in line with the voice of cared for children who have highlighted they do not like the term looked after. Guidance refers to looked after and previously looked after and to the role of the designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children*)

Children who are absent from education:
When children/young people are repeatedly absent from education, especially for prolonged periods, this can be a potential and vital indicator of underlying safeguarding issues; early intervention is essential to identify the reason for their poor attendance which can be because of underlying safeguarding risks such as child criminal or sexual exploitation, involvement in county lines or mental health, substance abuse or medical/health needs
Guidance to support pupils with medical conditions at school can be accessed DfE Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school . Guidance relating to arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs (2023) can accessed here

Attendance: As a setting we recognise and prioritise attendance as a pivotal part of our safeguarding responsibilities. In the majority of cases, children/young people can be supported by the setting, but where there are multiple issues requiring an additional multi-agency response the setting will make appropriate referrals and seek to identify and provide more intensive whole family support through the provision of early help or where children/young people are persistently absent work with the school attendance support team and virtual school head to develop more formalised attendance support as set out in the W&F Attendance Policy and supporting documents.

Children missing education: the setting has a statutory responsibility to co-operate with the local authority to ensure children /young people that are compulsory school age are safe and receiving a suitable education, which includes notifying the local authority when a child/young person

- commences or leaves our school at a non-standard transition point
- is permanently excluded and to provide a suitable education from day 6
- misses ten school days or more without permission.

(See statutory guidance and W&F Attendance Policy)

Alternative Provision:
When a student is educated via an AP, the students' registered setting must ensure that written communication is provided to confirm that "full, safer recruitment steps have been taken on all staff and of arrangements that might put a child at risk – such as new staff joining the AP and the setting must ensure that they are aware of the location of their students at all times during school hours.

Placements are reviewed at least half termly to ensure the safety of students and that their needs are met, with the potential that the placement is ended if any concerns are not addressed.

Domestic Abuse and Operation Encompass
Domestic abuse Involves a wide range of behaviours that may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents or behaviour, including but not limited to, physical, emotional, psychological and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people

who can be victims of domestic abuse through hearing and/or witnessing domestic abuse at home or through experiencing domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). The impact of domestic abuse can be far reaching and have a detrimental and long-term impact in relation to their health, wellbeing, including their physical and emotional development and educational outcomes.

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass: an initiative that involves the police and schools working together to provide emotional and practical help to children and young people when police respond to an incident of domestic abuse, and they are in present in the household. The police will inform [Any School] before the commencement of the school day of any incident that has taken place to ensure the setting is able to put in place appropriate support. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures for example making a referral to children's social care where there are concerns for a child or young person's welfare.

Further information, guidance and resources can be accessed from

- NSPCC - signs and the effect of domestic abuse
- Refuge what is domestic abuse on children
- Information about how to access specialist support services and getting help for children/young people who may be experiencing domestic abuse in their own relationships
    - Operation Encompass (includes information for schools on the impact of domestic abuse on children

The procedures for schools to follow, in the event of an Operation Encompass referral can be found in Appendix 5.

Child-on-Child Abuse, Sexual Violence, Sexual Harassment and Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Children/young people can abuse other children/young people, at setting, in the community or online, and may involve a range of abusive behaviour i.e., physical, emotional or sexual through, but not limited to Sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour. This is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and alleged perpetrator. It is important that they receive timely, evidence-based support.

Child to Parent/Care-Giver Abuse

Children/young people may cause harm to adults, often called child to parent or care giver abuse.

Sexual violence involves offences as set out in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 whereby a child or young person commits an offence of:

Rape: which includes penetration of the vagina, anus or mouth, without consent (see below)
Assault by Penetration: of the vagina or anus by a child/young person with their body or anything else and the penetration is sexual without consent
Sexual Assault: intentionally touching another person and the touching is sexual, without consent and involves a very wide range of behaviour for example a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent
Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: this could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party

Consent: means having the freedom and capacity to choose, a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity: the age of consent is 16 for both male and female: sexual intercourse without consent is rape and consent to any sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom and consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs.
Further information about consent can accessed here

Sexual harassment involves the 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of setting and can violate a child's/young person's dignity, resulting in them feeling intimidated, degraded or humiliated and create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Sexual harassment can include but is not limited to sexual comment, including sexual stories, lewd comments, sexual remarks about clothes and appearance or calling someone sexualised names; sexual "jokes" or taunting; physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes and up skirting which is a specific criminal offence and online sexual harassment.

It is important that all staff are aware of inappropriate sexualised conduct that normalises inappropriate behaviours and provides for an environment that may lead to sexual violence; by downplaying behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter" or "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" creates a culture that normalises such behaviour and attitudes which can lead to an unsafe environment for children/young people

It may also include taking and sharing consensual and non-consensual nude and semi-nude images or video's, often referred to as sexting. The taking and sharing of nude photographs of those aged under 18 is a criminal offence. Recently updated UKCIS advice (March 2024) provides extensive advice and guidance on this issue.

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected, to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent behaviour that is developmentally inappropriate. The umbrella term is "harmful sexual behaviour" (HSB), and it can occur online or face-to-face or simultaneously between the two. When considering harmful sexual behaviour consideration of the ages of the children/young people and their stage of development are critical factors e.g., whether one is older by more than two years or one is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, e.g., where they are disabled or smaller in statue. Addressing inappropriate behaviour and timely intervention helps prevent problematic, abusive or violent behaviour in the future. Children/young people displaying harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced their own abuse and trauma and sometimes have special educational needs that impacts on their understanding of sexual norms and acceptable behaviour.

School is aware of it's critical role and the importance of:

- Recognising the escalatory nature of misogyny and the importance of early identification and support to minimise the risk of harmful sexual behaviour
- Taking a safeguarding approach in response to all incidents involving the sharing of nudes or semi-nude images regardless of whether they're consensual or not.

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation has produced a HSB toolkit and the NSPCC offers free and independent advice about HSB along with a HSB framework

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and County Lines
Involves an individual or group taking advantage of a child/young person and involves an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child/young person into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs, for the benefit and gain of the perpetrator or gang, which often involves the threat and/or the use of violence towards the victim. CCE and CSE can affect both males and females and often involves them being trafficked for the purpose of exploitation. A child/young person may identify as being part of this group, but are a victim.

CCE and CSE may constitute modern slavery, and further information is available in the Modern Slavery statutory guidance. In accordance with this guidance, a relevant child protection and modern slavery referral should be completed where a potential victim of CCE or CSE is identified.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) involves children/young people being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines (see below), working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others. They become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators threaten them and their families with violence; entrap and coerce them into debt; they may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or they carry a knife for protection from others.

Their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they experience, and their behaviour considered to be a “positive choice” i.e., that they have agreed or consented to their abuse.

Whilst the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys and the indicators may not be the same, they too are at risk of criminal exploitation and both may be a higher risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE).

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is child sexual abuse:

It can be a one-off occurrence (opportunistic) or a series of incidents over time which is often linked to complex and organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. CSE definition and guide for practitioners sets out potential vulnerabilities, indicators of abuse and appropriate action to take in response

The home office has produced a disruption toolkit to support frontline practitioners to safeguarding children/young people from sexual and criminal exploitation.

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks who exploit children/young people and vulnerable adults to move, store and sell drugs and money through coercion, intimidation, violence or threats of violence, including sexual violence, which often involves the use of weapons to ensure compliance. Children/young people can be targeted and recruited at school, including special schools, FE colleges and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units/alternative provision, children’s homes and care homes or via social media platforms.

In addition The Children’s Society has produced a county lines an criminal exploitation toolkit.

Serious Violence
All staff should be aware of the indicators which may indicate children/young people are at risk from or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from setting; a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups; a significant decline in educational performance; signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing or signs of assault or unexplained injuries; unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children/young people have been approached by or are involved with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation. Serious violence can often peak in the hours just before or after setting.

The Home office has issued guidance in relation to ending gang violence and county lines exploitation, a violent and exploitative form of drug distribution.

Staff should report any concerns about a child carrying or using a weapon (or expressing intent to do so) to the DSL or deputy. The DSL should assess the risk and take immediate steps to ensure safety and consider actions de-escalate peer conflict where possible.

Children/young people with Family Members in Prison
Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children/young people are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders, NICCO provides addition information and resources to support children/young people

Children in the Court System
Some children may be required to give evidence in criminal proceedings as victims or witnesses. The child and family court advisory support service (Cafcass) have produced information and guides to support children and young people

Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents
Child abduction can be committed by parents or family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends or acquaintances) and more rarely strangers. In addition, community safety incidents in the vicinity of a setting can raise concerns amongst children/young people and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children/young people in conversation. However, it is it is important that the curriculum helps to build children's/young people's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at: www.actionagainstabduction.org and www.clevernevergoes.org

Homelessness
Poses a real risk to a child/young person's welfare. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a legal duty on local councils to provide those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness with meaningful help, including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The new duties shift the focus to early intervention and encourages those at risk to seek support as soon as possible before they are facing a homelessness crisis. Children social care are the lead agency in these circumstances and further information can be accessed here

Online Safety
The role played by technology is a significant and recurrent component of safeguarding e.g., abuse and neglect, criminal and child sexual exploitation, our Prevent Duty, child on child abuse (including bullying) and can be a platform that facilitates harm. The breadth of issues

classified within online safety are considerable and ever revolving but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- content: exposure to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, misinformation/disinformation ("fake news") and conspiracy theories.
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with others
- conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of or causes harm
- commerce: risks associated with gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing or financial scams

In addition, children/young people with particular skills and interest in computer and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into Cybercrime, criminal activity involving the use of computers or the internet that includes illegal hacking, making a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic and making, supplying or obtaining malware or viruses to commit further offences. Additional advice is available from the national crime agency website and KCSiE 2026 includes guidance on meeting Cyber Security Standards and reference's guidance on Generative AI.

The setting takes every reasonable step to provide a safe online environment for pupils to limit exposure to online risks within our own IT system through filtering and monitoring systems, which are regularly reviewed to ensure effectiveness and comply with the DfE filtering and monitoring standards in schools and colleges (2024).

However, online safety is not just about filtering and monitoring but about safeguarding children/young people to keep themselves and others safe online is through the curriculum and ensuring they are equipped to navigate the digital world. Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) provide details of a range of resources available to schools/colleges

Bullying Including Cyberbullying
The Behaviour Management Policy sets out procedures for preventing and managing bullying and cyberbullying. Further guidance and advice is available includes preventing and tackling bullying (2017), Cyberbullying advice for headteachers and school staff (2014) and advice for parents

Child and Adolescent Mental Health
The impact of abuse and neglect or other traumatic adverse childhood experiences can have a long-lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Mental health issues can have a detrimental impact on a child/young person's behaviour, attendance and progress at school and may be compounded by SEND.

Mental health problems may develop into safeguarding concerns, including self-harm, suicidal ideation and risk of suicide.

Staff should be vigilant to warning signs including significant changes in behaviour, difficulty sleeping and physical signs of self-harm.

Support, information and resources available to schools and colleges includes:

Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges (updated 2024) with links to curriculum teaching and learning resources, to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among children and young people.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem, but staff are well placed to observe children/young people on a daily basis and identify behaviour that suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Mental health support teams (MHSTs) provide additional capacity for early support to meet the mental health needs of children and young, delivering evidence-based interventions, help mental health leads in schools to develop a whole setting approach, provide advice and liaise with external specialist services. More information is available here.

Further information is available on the Families Information and Youngminds

Private Fostering
Relates to a child or young person under 16 years (18 years if they have a SEND) is cared for by someone who is not the child's parent or person with parental responsibility or a relative for a period of 28 days. Close relatives are defined as stepparents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts (whether of full blood, half blood or marriage/affinity. The setting has a statutory responsibility to notify children's social care of any private fostering arrangements that may come to our attention in order for children's social care to undertake an assessment to ensure the needs and welfare of the child/young person are being met and the adults caring for them have access to advice and support. The CSCP procedures set out the responsibility of the setting to notify children's social care.

Honour Based Violence – Female Genital mutilation (FGM), Forced Marriage and Breast Ironing
Are cultural practices, motivated to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community. All forms of so-called honour-based violence are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be escalated to children's social care and/or the police.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is abuse and comprises of procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia and other injuries to the female genital organs, the practice is illegal in the UK and its illegal for a child or young person to be taken from the UK abroad for the purposes of FGM. FGM has long-lasting and harmful consequences, and it is imperative that if staff have any concerns that FGM has taken place or may take place that they refer their concerns to the designated or deputy designated safeguarding lead. There is a specific legal duty on teachers, mandatory reporting, whereby an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher report this to the police. See W&FCSP website for reporting procedure details.

Forced marriage is not to be confused with an arranged marriage which is consensual, forced marriage is a crime and involves individuals entering into a marriage without the full and free consent of one or both parties. A forced marriage often involves, threats of or actual violence, other forms of coercion and children/young people with SEND can be particularly vulnerable to forced marriages especially when they are transitioning between child and adult services. It is illegal to coerce, use violence or force someone into marriage against their free will. The Forced Marriage Unit has published Multi-agency guidelines and CSCP procedures can be accessed here

Breast ironing is physical abuse and involves young pubescent girls' breasts being ironed, massaged, flattened and/or pounded down over a period of time (sometimes years) in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely. In many cases, the abuser thinks they are doing something good for the child by delaying the effects of puberty and the practice is designed to make teenage girls look less "womanly", prevent

pregnancy and rape, enable the girl to continue her education, prevent dishonour being brought upon the family if the girl begins sexual relations outside of marriage or deter unwanted attention.

Prevent Duty, Radicalisation and Channel Panel
As a part of our wider safeguarding duties the setting has a duty to protect children/young people from being exposed to extremist ideology.

The Prevent Duty Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) places a duty on settings to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". The designated and deputy safeguarding leads, senior leaders and governors/trustees in settings, including those providing childcare, must be familiar the Prevent duty guidance (2024).

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. that challenges the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and belief. Although there is no single way of identifying whether a child/young person is more or less likely to be susceptible to extremist ideology, possible indicators such as background and exposure to specific influences e.g. family and friends, specific vulnerability e.g. SEND, children/young people who are socially isolated or have unfettered access to online influences on social media and the internet within the home or on mobile phones can be major factors in their radicalisation. Get help for radicalisation concerns (2024) provides guidance and signposts to resources to support setting's and the London Grid for Learning has a number of resources including act early stories, educational activities and lessons to promote critical thinking.

As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children/young people's behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, which may include the designated or deputy safeguarding lead making a referral to the Channel programme.

The channel programme focuses on providing support at an early stage for children/young people identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Support is accessed via the multi-agency channel panel which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are at risk of being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from the setting may be asked to attend the channel panel to help with this assessment.

Where there are concerns about a child/young person and they are moving to a new setting the designated safeguarding lead will determine whether to share any information with the new setting in order for appropriate support to be put in place or those who are already receiving support through the channel programme for that support to continue.

Further guidance and resources, including curriculum resources, can be access via Educate against hate

Part Four

Managing allegations and low-level concerns in relation to staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors

At our school we adopt and implements the principles of safer recruitment to ensure that our procedures and processes are robust in order to deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children/young people from applying to work at our setting securing employment or undertaking volunteering opportunities in our setting.

The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009 require governing bodies of maintained schools to have at least one member of the recruitment panel to have completed safer recruitment training. All staff and governors who are engaged in the recruitment of staff have completed safer recruitment training.

We are committed to promoting an open and transparent culture of ongoing vigilance, whereby staff feel confident and are supported to report any concerns about the conduct or behaviour of staff, volunteers, contractors and supply staff, such concerns should be reported to the Head/Principal.

Part 4 of Keeping Children/young people Safe in Education (2026) sets out in full the statutory guidance for settings to manage safeguarding concerns or allegations against those working in or on behalf of **our school** in a paid or unpaid capacity, i.e. members of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors.

In addition, Working Together to Safeguard Children/young people (2026) sets out the role of the Local Authority Designated Officer, (LADO) who provides management and oversight of allegations against people who work with children/young people in accordance with Westmorland and Furness Safeguarding Children/young people Partnership's multi-agency procedures and the setting's policy for managing allegations and low level concerns.

High profile public enquiries and serious case reviews (now called safeguarding practice reviews) have identified barriers for staff within in organisations to report concerns, the NSPCC operate a whistleblowing advice line to support individuals when

- They have concerns as to how child protection issues are being handled within the setting or
- Have concerns relating to the conduct and behaviour of individuals.

The Whistleblowing advice Line can be reached on **0800 028 0285**, more information is set out at **Appendix Three**. As part of our approach to ongoing vigilance, all staff and visitors are made aware of how to access the whistleblowing helpline.

Duty of care

There are two aspects to consider when an allegation is made:

- The welfare of the child.
- Investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation.

What staff should do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an individual(s)

If you have concerns relating to an individual's conduct or behaviour, whether they be a colleague, member of the management or senior leadership team, governor or a visitor, you should refer your concerns to Headteacher following the procedure set out at below. If concerns relate to the headteacher or principal, then this should be reported directly to the chair of governors who should liaise directly with the local authority designated officer (LADO).

Thresholds for the management of allegations

The statutory guidance is set out in two parts:

Concerns or allegations that meet the "Harm Threshold"

Concerns that relate to the quality of care or practice that may indicate a person poses a risk of harm, to children/young people. This part of the guidance applies where it is alleged that anyone working in a setting that provides education for persons under 18 years of age, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child/young person.
- Behaved towards children/young people in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm.
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children/young people, including behaviour that may have happened outside of the setting.

The procedure for managing allegations or concerns that meet the harm threshold is set out below.

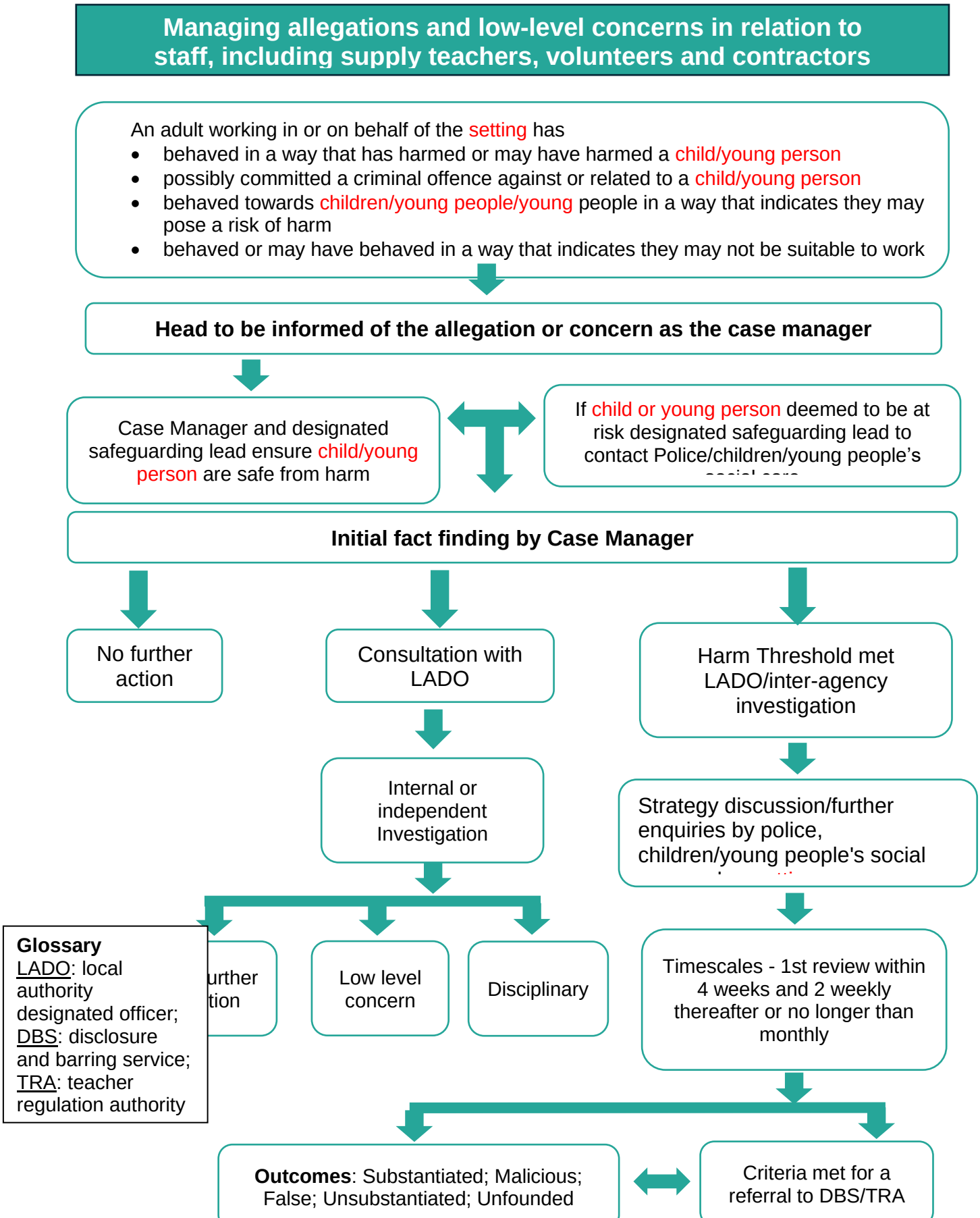
Low-Level Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

Relate to concerns, no matter how small, even if no more than a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt', that an adult working in or on behalf of the setting may have acted in a way that:

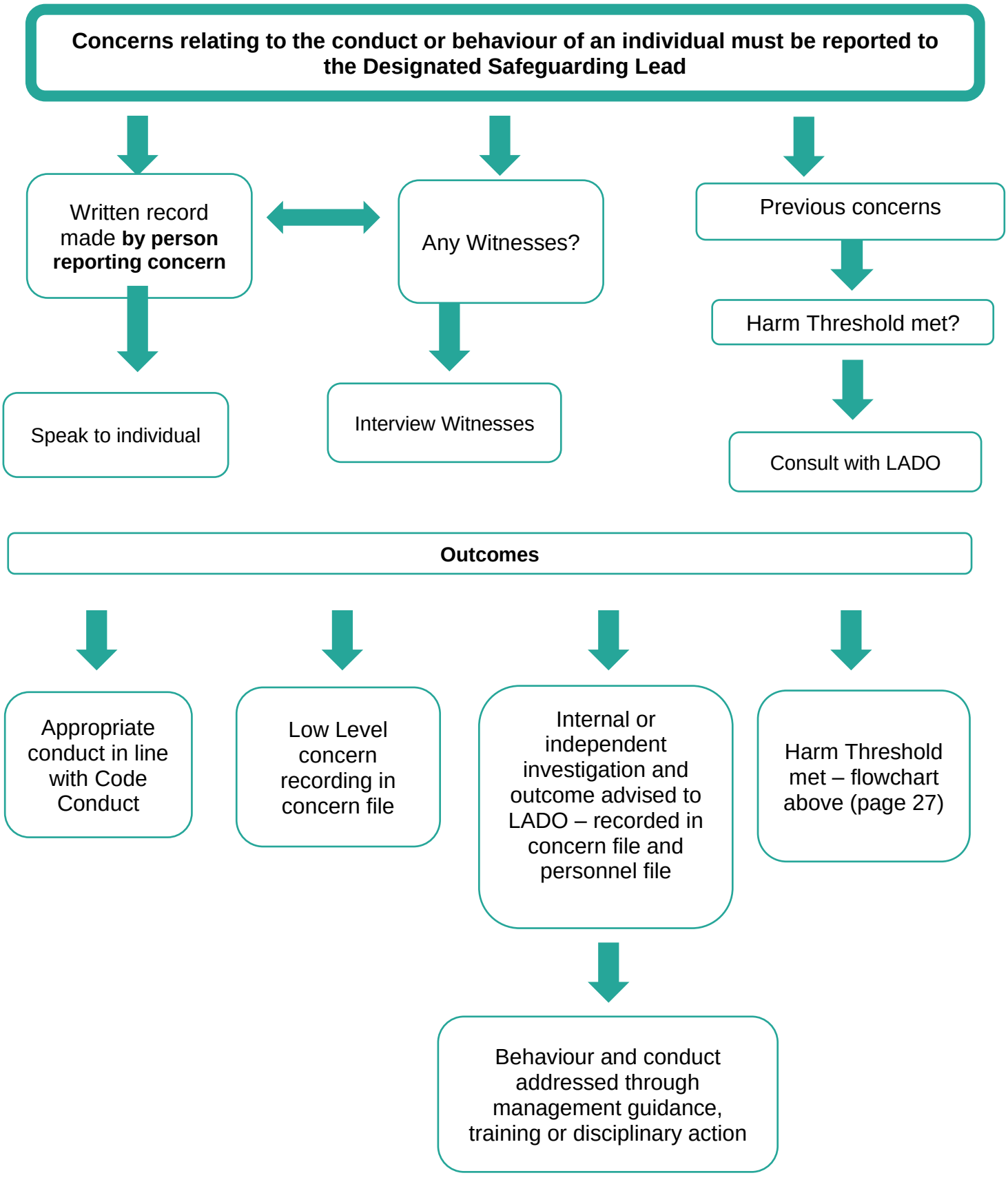
- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and;
- Does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum and may involve, but not limited to, being overly friendly with children/young people, having favourites, acting in a way that is contrary

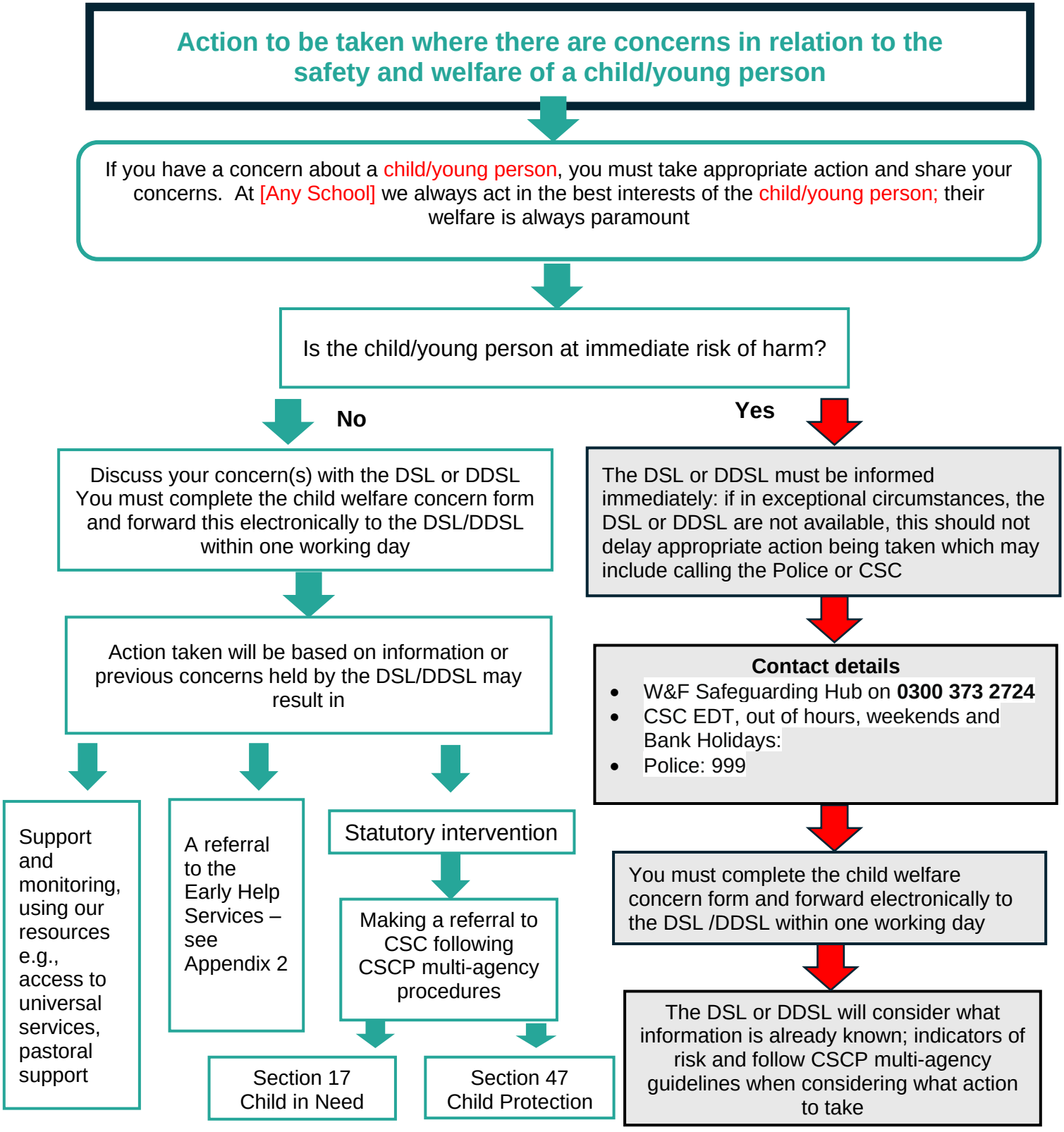
to setting policy, taking photographs of children/young people on personal mobile phones, engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, humiliating children/young people or young people, from the unintentional or inconsiderate behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, but may ultimately be intended to enable abuse



Low level concerns



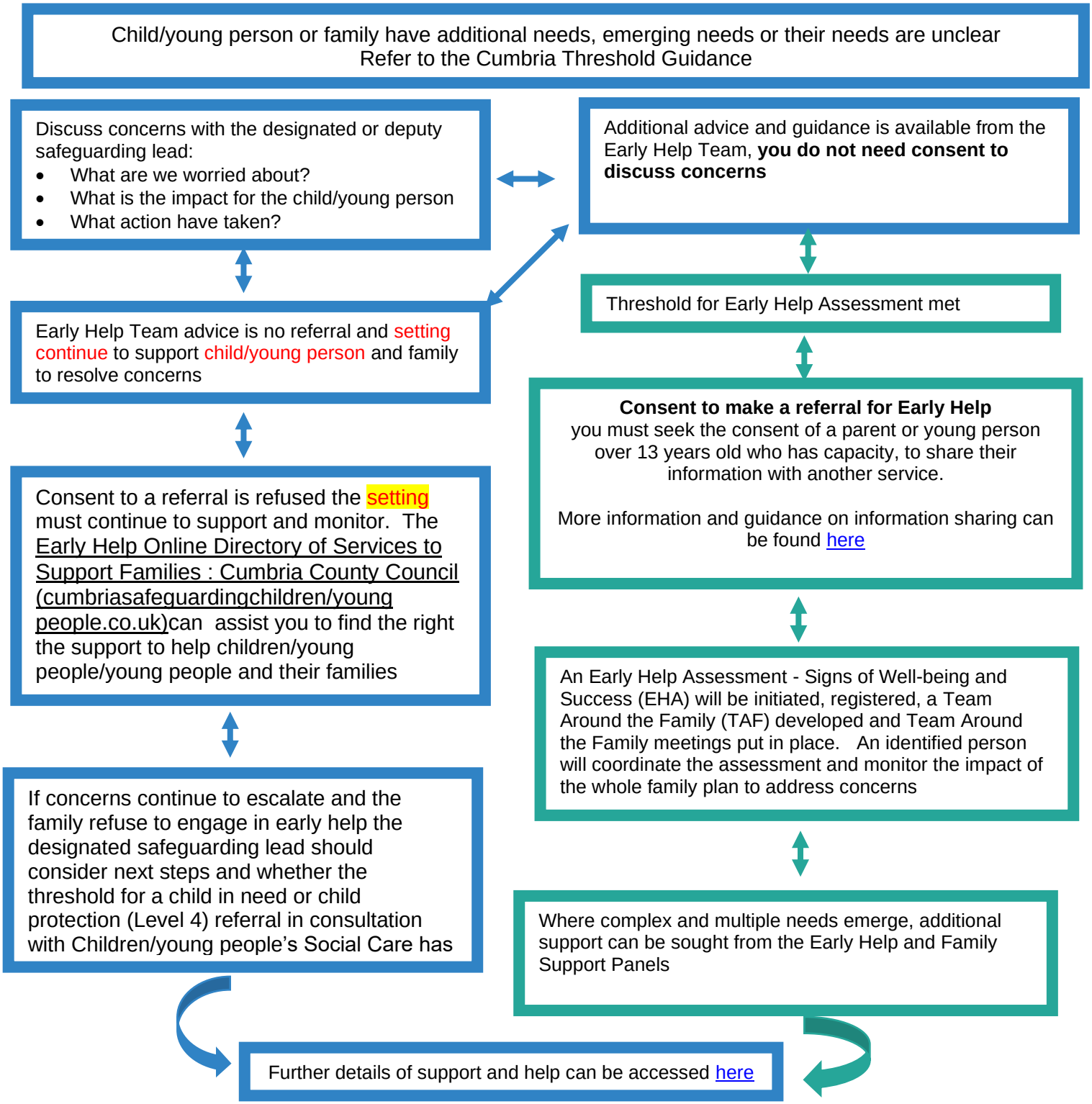
Appendix One: What to do if you have a concern



Glossary
DSL: Designated Safeguarding Lead and DDSL: Deputy Safeguarding Lead
CSC: Children/young people's Social Care
CSCP: Cumbria Safeguarding Children/young people Partnership
W&F: Westmorland and Furness Council
EDT: Emergency Duty Team

Appendix Two: Early Help Pathway

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges and relies on local organisations and agencies working together



Appendix Three: NSPCC Helpline

Dedicated Whistleblowing Advice Line

What is whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is when someone reports wrongdoing on the basis that it is in the public interest for the concern to be brought to light. This is usually something they've seen at work but not always. The situation or incident that needs reporting might have happened in the past, be happening now, or be something the whistleblower is concerned may happen in the near future.

Contact the Whistleblowing Advice Line if:

- Your organisation or another organisation does not have clear safeguarding procedures to follow.
- Concerns are not dealt with properly or may be covered up.
- A concern that was raised has not been acted upon.
- You are worried about being treated unfairly.

You can contact the Advice Line about an incident that happened in the past, is happening now, or you believe may happen in the future.

If you think an organisation is putting children/young people at risk, even if you're not certain, call the Whistleblowing Advice Line to talk through your concerns. You don't have to share your details, and if you do you can ask for them not to be shared with other agencies.

How to contact the Whistleblowing Advice Line

The Whistleblowing Advice Line is available from 8am-8pm Monday to Friday and 9am-6pm at the weekend.

Call 0800 028 0285 Email help@nspcc.org.uk

Appendix Four: Child Welfare/Concern Record

Child/Yong Person Welfare/Concern record						
Details of person completing this form			Role:			
Date of incident/concern/disclosure		Location of event/incident:				
		Time or lesson				
Name of child/young person		DOB:		NCY		
Record of concern (include antecedents, behaviours and consequences; record any relevant dates or times and include details of other pupils involved and other staff present at the time)						
Immediate action taken, including when shared with the designated or deputy safeguarding lead						
Date this record made:						