Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Southfields Primary School

September 2026

Policy last reviewed: July 2026

Reviewed by: Mrs Lucy Ledbrooke

Agreed by governors:

Shared with staff: September 2026

Frequency of review: Annually

Date of next review: July 2027

Head Teacher: Mr James Gale

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Lucy Ledbrooke

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mr James Gale HT & Mr John Marsh DHT

Named Governor for Safeguarding: Kirsty Woolaston

Chair of Governors: Kirsty Woolaston

Designated Lead for Children Looked After and Previously Looked After: Mrs Debbie Rock

LAC PEP Co-Ordinator: Mrs. Lucy Ledbrooke

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1 Definitions

1.1 'Safeguarding' is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) as;

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

1.2 'Child Protection' is the intervention that occurs when children have been significantly harmed or are at risk of significant harm.

1.3 'Child' refers to everyone under the age of 18.

1.4 'Parent' refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role for example adoptive parents, stepparents and foster carers.

1.5 'Staff' or 'members of staff' refers to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff, governors, volunteers and trustees working in or on behalf of **Southfields Primary School.**

1.6 Within this policy, we use the term 'victim', although it is recognised that not everyone subjected to abuse would consider themselves to be a victim or would want to be described in this way. We also recognise the importance of not using the terminology of 'perpetrator' in relation to children in cases where the behaviour can be harmful to both parties. The appropriate use of terminology will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

2 Introduction

2.1 We recognise that safeguarding, child protection, and promoting the welfare of children is an essential part of our duty of care to all students. As such, all staff and governors have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. We understand that safeguarding, child protection and promoting the welfare of all children is a "shared" responsibility and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children. We recognise that our school is part of a wider safeguarding system for children and work closely with other agencies to promote the welfare of children. We maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and will consider what is in the best interests of each child in line and upholding the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010.

2.2 The purpose of this policy is to;

Promote safeguarding and child protection and to demonstrate **Southfields Primary School.**

- commitment to keeping children safe;

- Provide all members of staff with the information required to meet their safeguarding duty and protect children from harm;

Provide stakeholders with clear information relating to **Southfields Primary School.**

- safeguarding and child protection procedures;
- Ensure that staff understand, can recognise and can respond to the indicators of abuse, exploitation or neglect;
- Ensure that all staff are aware of their mandatory reporting duty in relation to Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003; and
- Ensure that children are protected from maltreatment or harm.

2.3 **Southfields Primary School** is committed to the following principles;

- All children have the right to be protected from harm.
- Children should feel safe and secure and cannot learn unless they do so.
- All staff are responsible for keeping children safe and have a responsibility to act if they think a child is at risk of harm.
- All staff take on a responsibility to promote children's welfare
- Providing support to families and/or children as soon as a problem emerges is essential to improving outcomes for children and families.

2.4 Safeguarding aims

2.4.1 The safeguarding aims of **Southfields Primary School** in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (**September 2026**) are to;

- work to identify children who are suffering or likely to suffer abuse, exploitation or neglect and act to protect them;
- work with relevant services and agencies to ensure that children are protected from harm;
- provide a learning environment for children which is safe and secure;
- teach children how to keep themselves safe and provide structures for them to raise concerns if they are worried or at risk of harm;
- support children's mental health and wellbeing;
- ensure that we adhere to safer recruitment guidance and legislation, deal promptly with allegations of abuse against staff and take bullying and harassment seriously;
- train staff effectively in all safeguarding issues (including online safety) and in their responsibilities for identifying and protecting children that are or may be at risk of harm;
- have a designated safeguarding lead and designated deputies, who will provide support to staff, students and families;
- recognise that all children may be vulnerable to abuse, but be aware that some children have increased vulnerabilities due to special educational needs or disabilities or particular protected characteristics (LGBTQ**A**+, **Gender questioning**, etc);

- maintain a robust recording system for any safeguarding or child protection information;
- ensure that everyone in **Southfields Primary School** understands the safeguarding procedures; and to
- regularly review policies and procedures to ensure that children are protected to the best of our ability.

2.5 This policy adheres to the following documents;

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)
- Working together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Children's and wellbeing and schools bill (2026)
- Any other relevant legislation for your setting.

2.6 We continue to work closely with the Local Authority and the Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership to safeguard children across the city.

2.7 Please note that there are a number of other documents (statutory and non-statutory) that inform our policy and practice. A list of these can be found in Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026).

2.8 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies;

Behaviour and Discipline Policy

Attendance Policy

Anti-Bullying

Online Safety Policy

Links to these policies can be found in Appendix A. – list not exhaustive).

2.9 Scope

2.9.1 This policy applies to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff, governors, volunteers and trustees working in or on behalf of **Southfields Primary School**. All references in this document to 'staff' or 'members of staff' should be interpreted as relating to the aforementioned unless otherwise stated.

2.9.2 To avoid duplication, this policy reflects the principles and requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026). **Southfields Primary School** will use this statutory guidance as the primary reference document for all safeguarding and child protection practice.

3 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Role of the Governing Body

3.1.1 Governing bodies have a strategic leadership responsibility for our safeguarding arrangements. We have a senior board level lead role carried out by Kirsty Woollaston. Part 2 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026) sets out the responsibilities of governing bodies. As part of these overarching responsibilities the Governing Body will;

- Have a strategic leadership responsibility for **Southfields Primary School** safeguarding arrangements
- Aware of the obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 , the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation;
- Ensure a whole school approach to safeguarding, including the use of mobile and smart technology in school;
- Ensure that policies, procedure and training are effective and comply with the law at all times and that they allow concerns to be responded to in a timely manner;
- Ensure the school consider local authority and Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership policies and supply information as requested by the safeguarding partners (the Local Authority, a clinical commissioning group for an area within the local authority and the chief office of police for a police area within the local authority);
- Ensure the school have an effective child protection policy, that it is published on the school website **https://southfieldsprimary.org/** & available by other means (school server, staff room, every classroom) and review this annually;
- Ensure the school have a staff behaviour policy or Code of Conduct which refers to low level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing procedures alongside acceptable use of technologies;
- Ensure that all staff and governors undergo safeguarding and child protection training on induction (including online safety and filters and monitoring processes) and this is regularly updated;
- Ensure the school contribute to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance;
- Ensure that there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying when children may be experiencing mental health problems;
- Ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety as a whole school approach and curriculum planning but recognising that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children. See section 12 of this policy for further information;
- Put in place and follow appropriate safeguarding responses for children who are absent from education;

- Appoint an appropriate member of staff from the senior leadership team to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Understand the local criteria for action and local protocol for assessment;
- Recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies but take a risk-based approach to level of information that is provided to temporary staff, volunteers and contractors;
- Ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to keep children safe online and share information regarding online abuse and risks including where to access advice with parents and carers;
- Respond to allegations of abuse against the headteacher whilst ensuring there are procedures in place to manage safeguarding concerns or allegations against staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors); and
- Ensure safer working practice is embedded and effective within policies.

3.2. The Role of the Headteacher

3.2.1 The headteacher will;

- Ensure that this policy is reviewed annually at minimum and ratified by the governing body;
- Ensure that this policy and associated procedures are adhered to by all staff;
- Ensure that all staff are made aware of the named governor for safeguarding and the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Ensure that the role of 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' is explicit in the role-holder's job description including leading on filters and monitoring processes;
- Decide whether to have one or more deputy safeguarding leads and ensure they are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Organise appropriate cover for the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead for any out of hour/out of term activities;
- Appoint a 'Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children' to promote the educational achievement of children looked after;
- Appoint a lead for online safety; (DSL will still retain ultimate responsibility for this)
- Promote a whole school approach to safeguarding;
- Promote resilience to social and emotional wellbeing, which is tailored to the needs of the children;
- Ensure that all recruitment follows the 'Safer Recruitment' guidance and a single, central record is maintained with details of all members of staff who are in contact with children;
- Respond to low level concerns and allegations of abuse against all other members of staff including supply staff, volunteers and contractors;
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service and Teaching Regulation Agency as required;
- Ensure that the school collaborates with Children's Services, the Police, Health services and other services to; promote the welfare of children; provide a co-

ordinated offer of early help assessments when need is identified; contribute to inter-agency plans for children subject to children protection plans and to protect children from harm;
- Safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (Teaching Standards, 2012); and
- Ensure that children's Services (from the host local authority or placing authority) have access to **Southfields Primary School** to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct a section 47 or section 17 assessment, as per Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026).

3.3 The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

3.3.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for **Southfields Primary School** is _Mrs Lucy Ledbrooke. Our Deputy Designated Safeguard Lead (DDSL) in the DSL's absence is Mr James Gale HT & Mr John Marsh DHT

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will;

- Take overall lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and filters and monitoring and processes in place);
- Liaise with the safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026);
- Always be available during term time school hours for staff in the school to discuss safeguarding concerns. If they are not available, a deputy will be made available;
- Undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out this role updated a minimum of biannually;
- Act as a source of support and expertise on matters relating to safeguarding and child protection to ensure that other members of staff can carry out their safeguarding duty;
- Be best placed to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns;
- Identify if children may benefit from Family help;
- Act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners;
- Make referrals to Coventry's Children and families initial response service where children have been harmed or are at risk of significant harm;
- Make referrals to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern and/or support staff that make a referral to Channel;
- Support the school with regards to their responsibilities under the Prevent duty and provide advice and support on protecting children from radicalisation;
- Refer cases to the police where a crime may have been committed[1];
- Ensure all staff have read and understood Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026);
- Update their knowledge and skills regularly and keep up with any developments relevant to their role;

- Provide staff in school with the knowledge, skills and support required to safeguard children;
- Take responsibility for the accurate and timely recording of safeguarding and child protection concerns and take overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection files;
- Take responsibility for the transfer of safeguarding files when a child **Southfields Primary School**
- Attend or ensure an appropriate representative attends multi-agency safeguarding or child protection meetings;
- Promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- Work closely with other relevant education professionals (e.g. SENCO, Virtual School Head) to ensure children with additional vulnerabilities are safeguarded;
- Help to promote educational outcomes of child who have experienced or are experiencing safeguarding or child protection issues by sharing relevant information with teachers and the school leadership team;
- Promote a 'culture of safeguarding', in which every member of the school community acts in the best interests of the child;
- Ensuring the school knows who its cohort of children or have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations;
- Regularly meet (every half term at a minimum) with the safeguarding link governor and/or Chair of Governors to review safeguarding in **Southfields Primary School** and
- Liaise with the headteacher regarding safeguarding cases and issues.
- Liaise with the senior mental health lead when safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health
- Be Aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult – PACE code C 2019

3.3.2 Further details on the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be found in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026).

3.4 The Role & Responsibilities of all Staff within School

3.4.1 School staff play a particularly important role because they are in a position to identify concerns early in order to provide help for children. All staff in **Southfields Primary School** have a responsibility to provide a safe environment, where children can learn;

- Will be able to identify indicators of abuse, exploitation or neglect; with an awareness of safeguarding issues that put children at risk of harm and behaviours associated with these risks;

- Should know what to do if a child tells them that he/she is being abused, exploited or neglected but that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abuse, exploited or neglected and/or recognise their experience as harmful;
- Will be aware of indictors of child-on-child abuse and procedures to deal with this;
- All staff, but especially the DSL and deputies, will also consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families;
- Will be made aware of; the safeguarding and child protection policy; the school behaviour policy; the staff behaviour policy; information about the safeguarding response to children missing in education; the role of the designated safeguarding lead and systems in **Southfields Primary School** that support safeguarding and child protection;
- Will be provided annually with Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026) and will receive annual updated training on their safeguarding roles and responsibilities.
- Will receive regularly updated safeguarding and child protection training including online safety;
- Will receive safeguarding updates throughout the year as part of continuous professional development;
- Should be able to contribute to the development of safeguarding policy and practice;
- Will be made aware of the early help assessment process and understand their role in it;
- Should be equipped to identify children who may benefit from targeted early help and understand the indicators of need that may suggest a child requires targeted support or statutory intervention. Staff will discuss concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy DSL in the first instance and take appropriate action in accordance with this policy.
- May be required to support social workers and other agencies following a referral;
- Will be made aware of the process for making referrals to Children's Services (though the Children and families initial response team), understand statutory assessments and the role that they may be expected to play in such assessments;
- Should be prepared to make referrals to the Children and Families Initial response team if they have concerns about a child's welfare and understand the role that they may be expected to play in such assessments;
- Understands the referral process to the (LADO) and the role they play should they have concerns or allegations are made against any member of staff;
- Should always seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are unsure; and
- All teachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (Teaching Standards, 2012).

3.5 Multi-Agency Working

3.5.1 The school is committed to multi-agency working and operates under Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026) and local safeguarding arrangements.

3.5.2 The school will work with Children's Services the Police, Health services, Family Help practitioners and other relevant agencies to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

3.5.3 We work closely with our Family Hubs to ensure children receive appropriate, co-ordinated Family Help Assessments

Florence Mudhai

Harmony Family Hub

Clifton Street

Hillfields

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CV1 5GR

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3.5.4 The Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) have designated that schools and colleges are a named 'relevant agency'. As such, the school is under a statutory duty to co-operate with published CSCP arrangements.

4 Types of abuse,

Neglect and Exploitation

4.1 As outlined above, all staff will be trained in indicators of abuse, exploitation and neglect and should be able to recognise signs of these. We recognise that abuse, exploitation and neglect along with other safeguarding issues are complex and often multidimensional and therefore don't fall solely under one category. Types of abuse or harm can take many forms including directly inflicting harm on a child or failing to protect a child from harm online as well as face to face both inside and outside of the school/college, including the multi-faceted occurrence of factors causing emotional harm. In many cases, abuse and other safeguarding risks occur concurrently both online and offline. We understand that children may experience multiple and overlapping forms of abuse at the same time. These harms can be interconnected, with abuse in one context increasing vulnerability to abuse in another.

The four main types of abuse that staff are trained to recognise are;

- Physical abuse;

- Sexual abuse;
- Emotional abuse;
- Neglect.

4.2 Types of abuse (Taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026)

Type of abuse	**Information**
Abuse	A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.
Physical abuse	A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
Emotional abuse	The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent 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. 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 participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of

	another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though 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 penetration with an object) 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 in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children 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. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of this and of **Southfields Primary Schools** policy and procedures for dealing with this.
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 care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also

	include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

4.3 Indicators of abuse can be found in Appendix A.

4.4 If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's services (through the Children and families initial response team) and any member of staff can make this referral. A Designated or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead should always be available or appropriate cover arrangements in place, but in exceptional circumstances the member of staff should speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team or seek advice directly from Children's Service and take appropriate action. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be made aware as soon as possible.

4.5 Staff, parents and the wider community should report any concerns that they have about the welfare of children, however minor or seemingly insignificant. Staff should not assume that someone else will report concerns.

4.6 The school recognises that any child can be the victim of abuse and may benefit from early help. However, the school will be particularly vigilant to potential need for early help if a child;

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan);
- Has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit
- has a mental health need;
- 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 or county lines;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is a risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending;
- 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 at risk of 'honour-based' abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.
- is a privately fostered child.

4.7 **Southfields Primary School** recognises that abuse can take many different forms. Staff will also receive training on the following issues and action will be taken if **Southfields Primary School** believes that a child is at risk of or is the victim of;

- bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice based and discriminatory
- child criminal exploitation and sexual exploitation including involvement in county lines);
- domestic abuse;
- emotional abuse;
- fabricated or induced illness;
- faith-based abuse;
- female genital mutilation;
- forced marriage;
- gangs or youth violence;
- gender-based violence;
- hate;
- mental health;
- neglect;
- peer on peer abuse;
- physical abuse;
- radicalisation;
- relationship abuse;
- serious violence and harassment;
- Harmful sexual behaviour
- sexual abuse;
- sexual violence or sexual harassment (including peer on peer abuse);
- sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude and semi-nude images/videos;
- So-called 'honour-based' abuse;
- trafficking and modern slavery.

4.8 **Southfields Primary School** will also take action to protect;

- Children missing education;
- Children missing from home or care.

4.8.1 There are several circumstances that may have a detrimental impact on a child's welfare, safety and educational outcomes. We work with other agencies in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) to support children and families in the following circumstances;

- Children facing the court procedures and/or children in the court system;
- Children with family members in prison;
- Children who are homeless;
- Children who need, or have a social worker.

4.9 Children potentially at greater risk of harm

4.9.1 **Southfields Primary School** recognises that some children need a social worker due to abuse, neglect or complex family circumstances and that abuse and trauma can leave children vulnerable to further harm, as well as educational disadvantage.

4.9.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will hold information relating to social workers working with children in the school.

4.9.3 This information will inform decisions about safeguarding and promoting welfare (including the provision of pastoral and/or academic support).

4.10 Children absent from Education

4.10.1 **Southfields Primary School** understands that children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and criminal exploitation – particularly county lines.

4.10.2 **Southfields Primary School** will report information to the Local Authority when problems are first emerging and if there is a need for the removal of a child from roll.

4.11 Elective Home Education

4.11.1 **Southfields Primary School** recognises that many home educated children have a positive learning experience and the decision is one with the child's best interests at heart however elective home education can mean that some children are not in receipt of suitable education.

4.11.2 Since 2016, **Southfields Primary School** has a statutory duty to inform the Local Authority of all deletions from roll. When Elective Home Education is the reason for this removal, the Local authority and other key professionals will work alongside **Southfields Primary School** to coordinate a meeting with parents where possible ideally before a final decision is made.

4.12 Children requiring Mental Health support

4.12.1 **Southfields Primary School** recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children includes preventing the impairment of children's mental health or development. We understand that positive mental health is an integral part of a child's overall wellbeing, development and safety whilst at school.

4.12.2 All staff will be aware that mental health problems may be an indicator that a child has suffered, is suffering, or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, exploitation or other adverse childhood experiences. Staff will also be aware that children may experience mental health difficulties, self-harm, suicidal thoughts (suicidal ideation) and increased suicide risk, which may require an immediate safeguarding response.

4.12.3 Staff will not attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health condition unless they are appropriately qualified or trained to do so. However, all staff have a responsibility to identify concerns, respond appropriately and follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

4.12.4 We recognise that staff are well placed to observe changes in a child's behaviour, presentation, emotional state and relationships which may indicate that they are experiencing mental health difficulties or are at risk of developing them. Staff should be particularly alert to signs which may indicate self-harm, suicidal ideation or suicide risk. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Talking about wanting to die, feeling hopeless or having no reason to live.
- Expressing feelings of being trapped, worthless, isolated or a burden to others.
- Self-harming behaviours or evidence of self-injury.
- Significant changes in mood, behaviour, attendance, engagement or academic performance.
- Withdrawal from friends, family or activities previously enjoyed.
- Increased risk-taking or reckless behaviour.
- Changes in sleeping or eating patterns.
- Giving away possessions, saying goodbye to others or other behaviours that may indicate preparation for death.
- Persistent low mood, anxiety, distress or emotional dysregulation.
- Any disclosure relating to suicidal thoughts, plans or self-harming behaviours.

There are clear systems and processes in place for identifying, monitoring and responding to mental health concerns. If staff have concerns about a child's mental health, wellbeing or safety, they should follow the school's procedures (insert procedures for your school here, including routes for escalation, referral and accountability).

4.12.5 Any concerns regarding self-harm, suicidal ideation, suicide risk or other mental health concerns that may place a child at risk of harm must be treated as a safeguarding concern. Staff must report such concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL immediately. Where a child is at immediate risk of serious harm, staff must follow the school's emergency safeguarding procedures without delay.

4.12.6 The school recognises that early identification and intervention are important in supporting children experiencing mental health difficulties. The DSL (and any relevant pastoral, wellbeing or mental health lead) will consider appropriate support, referral pathways and multi-agency involvement, including health professionals and specialist mental health services where required.

4.12.7 The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by children, to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe, are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum. The specific content of lessons is determined by the specific needs of the cohort but alongside the PSHE Association Guidance and Protective Behaviours to ensure that mental health and emotional wellbeing issues are taught in a safe and sensitive manner.

Through reflection and positive discussion, the children are given opportunities to talk through a wide range of issues relating to our modern world as well as improving their own state of mindfulness. Southfields Primary Schools Mental Health policy reflects the overall school aims, GARK values, and ethos of the school. It is linked to safeguarding, British values, rights and responsibilities, relationship education and the importance of physical activity and diet for a healthy lifestyle. The children are given the tools to develop their resilience, self-confidence, identity, and relationships.

4.12.8 Further information, guidance and advice regarding mental health, self-harm, suicidal ideation and suicide prevention can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

4.13 Children who are Lesbian, Gay, Bi (LGBTQA+) or may be gender questioning children

4.13.1 The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.

4.13.2 In line with updated Keeping Children Safe In Education (2026) guidance, it is important to consider the Cass review, which highlighted the need for a careful and evidence-informed approach to supporting children questioning their gender and recognised that some may present with wider vulnerabilities, including having complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases additional diagnoses of autism spectrum disorder and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

4.13.3 It is recommended that when families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning children, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. When parents are supporting pre-pubertal children, clinical services should ensure that they can be seen as early as possible by a clinical professional with relevant experience.

4.13.4 As such, when supporting a gender questioning child, schools should take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with the child's parents (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where

involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child), including any clinical advice that is available and how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying. Any decision should be made with the child's best interests as the primary consideration whilst also considering the impact on other children where relevant. Schools should have regard to KCSIE and any local authority guidance relating to gender-questioning children when deciding how to proceed

4.13.5 Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be involved in any decision-making relating to support for a gender-questioning child.

4.13.6 Requests relating to social transition should be considered carefully and, on a case, -by-case basis, taking account of safeguarding, wellbeing, parental involvement, available clinical advice and the child's wider needs.

4.13.7 Schools should clearly record decisions, the rationale for those decisions and any agreed support arrangements, and review these regularly.

4.13.7 LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum and there is a range of support available to help schools counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

4.14 Young Carers

4.14.1**Southfields Primary School** recognises that young carers may face additional safeguarding and welfare needs. Caring responsibilities can have a significant impact on a child's attendance, achievement, behaviour and emotional wellbeing**.**

4.14.2 Staff should be aware that some children may have caring responsibilities which can impact on their attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing. Any concerns that a pupil may be undertaking a caring role, or that their caring responsibilities are affecting their welfare, should be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The school will seek to identify young carers at an early stage and ensure they receive appropriate support, including referrals to external services where required.

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4.15 **Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Medical Needs –**

Children with SEND and those with medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Staff should be aware that abuse, neglect or exploitation may be harder to recognise in these children and should not assume that changes in behaviour, presentation, mood or injuries are related to a child's disability, special educational need or health condition without further consideration.

Additional safeguarding barriers may include:

- communication difficulties that affect a child's ability to report concerns or seek help;
- increased vulnerability to bullying, peer isolation and exploitation;
- greater dependence on adults for care and support;
- the need for intimate or personal care;
- difficulties understanding relationships, consent, appropriate behaviour or online risks.

Any safeguarding concerns relating to a child with SEND or additional medical needs must be discussed with the DSL (or deputy DSL), with appropriate liaison with the SENCO as required. The school will consider whether additional pastoral, communication or safeguarding support is needed to help these children stay safe.

5 Responding to signs of abuse

5.1 If a member of staff, parent or member of the public is concerned about a child's welfare, they should report it to the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible. On occasions when the designated safeguarding lead is not available, it should be reported to the deputy safeguarding lead without delay. Although any member of staff can make a referral to Children's Services where possible there should be a conversation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5.2 If anyone other than the Designated Safeguarding Lead makes a referral to Children's Services or to the police, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible.

5.3 All staff will be alert to indicators of abuse and will report any of the following to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately;

- Any concern or suspicion that a child has sustained an injury outside what is reasonably attributable to normal play;
- Any concerning behaviours exhibited by children that may indicated that they have been harmed or are at risk of harm, including unusual changes in mood or behaviour, concerning use of language and/or concerning drawings or stories.
- Any significant changes in attendance or punctuality;

- Any significant changes in a child's presentation;
- Any concerns relating to people who may pose a risk of harm to a child; and/or
- Any disclosures/allegations of abuse that children have shared.

5.4 There will be occasions where a child discloses/alleges abuse directly to a member of staff. If this happens, the member of staff will;

- listen carefully to the child and believe what they are saying;
- not promise confidentiality, as information may need to be passed on so the child and family can receive additional support;
- only ask for clarification if something is unclear and will not ask 'leading' questions;
- report disclosure to the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible, certainly by the end of the day;
- only discuss the issue with colleagues that need to know about it; and
- will write up the disclosure and pass it to the designated safeguarding lead. It is likely they will have had a discussion with the DSL prior to this but delay should be avoided.

5.5 The designated safeguarding lead will make a decision about the action that needs to be taken following a member of staff raising a concern about a child, or following a direct disclosure recording a clear rationale. The DSL may consider the following options;

- Managing support for the child internally within school;
- Seek advice from the social worker advice line in the MASH;
- Instigate single agency intervention and work directly with the family to improve the situation;
- Offer an Early Help Assessment to provide multi-agency help to a family;
- In cases where children are deemed to be at significant risk of harm, the DSL will refer cases to the Initial Response Service for consideration for statutory intervention. Parental consent will be obtained wherever possible before referring cases to the Initial Response Service. However, if **Southfields Primary School** is worried that telling parents will mean the child is at greater risk of harm, we may do this without informing them.
- If parents do not consent to a referral but the school believes that a child is at significant risk of harm, a referral will still be made to Children's Services.

5.6 For further information about the Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership's "Effective support for Children and Families in Coventry" guidance, which is used by **Southfields Primary School** to make decisions about protecting children, please visit Effective-support-for-children-and-families-in-coventry

5.7 See page 28 for flowchart of actions that will be taken where there are concerns about a child (taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2026.)

5.8 In cases where members of staff become aware that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) has been carried out on a female below the age of 18, they have a mandatory duty to report this to the police without delay and will do so. Staff should refer this to the DSL first,

but the legislation requires regulated health and Children's Service professionals and teachers in England and Wales to make a report to the police where, in the course of their professional duties, they either;

- are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth.

If you believe a child is at risk of FGM, a referral to the MASH is also required.

5.9 **Southfields Primary School** have a duty to refer any children who are living in a private fostering arrangement to the local authority. Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (or under 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a close relative. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and a carer, expected to last 28 days or more, or the school are aware the 28 days has been exceeded.

5.10 All schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 in the exercise of their functions to have "due regard" to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. See Appendix B for further information on **Southfields Primary School** Prevent duty.

5.11 If any member of staff is unsure about signs of abuse or neglect, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5.12 Child on Child Abuse

5.12.1 **Southfields Primary School** understands that both adults and other children can perpetrate abuse, and can happen inside and outside of school, online or face to face. Child on Child abuse is taken very seriously and can include bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying), abuse in intimate personal relationships between children, physical abuse, sharing of consensual and non-consensual sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos, including AI-generated imagery such as deepfakes, sexual violence and/or harassment, upskirting, and initiation/hazing ceremonies. The school recognise that safeguarding issues can manifest as child-on-child abuse. Southfields Primary Policies - Behaviour and Discipline Policy

5.12.2 All members of staff will be made aware of the school's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse. Staff will receive safeguarding training that includes recognising, responding to, recording and reporting child-on-child abuse. The school will ensure staff understand what is meant by child-on-child abuse and the school policy on child-on-child abuse through regular safeguarding training/CPD.

5.12.3 The school will work to prevent child on child abuse by; Southfields Primary School will ensure staff understand what is meant by child-on-child abuse and the school policy on child-on-child abuse by continuing to promote positive relationships through Southfields GARK School values, Protective Behaviours and through the Jigsaw programme.

5.12.4 Although it is recognised that if there are no reported cases, such abuse may still be taking place. If an allegation of child-on-child abuse is made, **Southfields Primary School** will investigate this Southfields Primary School will investigate this this through in-house systems (See Child on Child Abuse Policy and behaviour policy for Guidance) Any allegations will be recorded on CPOMS.

5.12.5 The school recognises that child-on-child abuse may indicate the alleged perpetrator requires support, intervention or safeguarding assessment. If an allegation of child-on-child abuse is made, victims, alleged perpetrators and any other children affected will be supported by the Senior Leadership team, DSL/Pastoral Team and any outside agencies where appropriate/and referral to the Children and Families Initial Response Service will be considered.

5.12.6 **Southfields Primary School** will never pass off child on child abuse as 'banter', 'having a laugh. 'part of growing up' or other such termination that does not recognise the harm caused. This should be a Zero-tolerance approach as this could lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours. It is recognised with this, that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

5.12.7 Southfields Primary School will adhere to guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (**2026**) when responding to incidents of child-on-child abuse. Children will be provided with clear, accessible and promoted routes to report concerns and abuse.

5.12.9 All staff will be made aware that 'upskirting' is a criminal offence.

5.12.10 **Southfields Primary School** recognises that child-on-child abuse is preventable and will use early identification and evidence-based intervention to reduce the risk of abuse occurring. Inline with KCSIE guidance the school will take appropriate action to increase vigilance during times considered higher risk

5.13 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

5.13.1 Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur when an individual or group take advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator through violence or threat of violence. CCE and CSE can affect both males and females and can include children that have been moved for the purpose of exploitation (trafficking).

5.13.2 CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing, vehicle crime, threatening violence on others or even carrying weapons.

5.13.3 The school is responsible for recognising children involved in CCE are victims of exploitation and should be recognised as such due to the harm they have experienced, staff are required to be aware that it is not possible for a child to give informed consent to engage in criminal or other exploitative activity and that a child cannot consent to their own exploitation.

5.13.4 CSE is a form of child sexual abuse including physical contact and non-contact online activities including the internet or by phone. This can happen over time or as a one off and may happen without the child recognising this as abuse or harmful.

5.13.5 The school recognises that children of the age of 16 and 17 who can legally consent to a sexual relationship may also be the victims of CSE but may not recognise this.

5.13.6 The school understands children can be at risk of, or involved in, serious violent crime. This can result in an increase absence from school or college, a change in friendships, decline in educational attainment, significant change in wellbeing, or signs of unexplained injuries.

5.14 Sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude and semi-nude images or videos

5.14.1 "Sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude and semi-nude images or videos including those generated using AI." refers to any sharing of self- generated intimate images and/or videos of between children. This includes;

- A person under the age of 18 creating and sharing self- generated intimate images and/or videos of themselves with a peer under the age of 18;
- A person under the age of 18 sharing sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with a peer under the age of 18 or an adult;
- A person under the age of 18 being in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18.

5.14.2 The school has a responsibility to educate children in the risks relating to 'sharing consensual or non-consensual nude images or videos' and how to keep themselves safe online. Southfields Primary Policies Online Safety PSHE Policy

5.14.3 Any incidents or suspected incidents of 'sharing consensual or non-consensual nude images or videos including those generated using AI' should be reported to the DSL without delay.

5.14.4 Once reported to the DSL, the DSL will decide on the appropriate course of action. This could include;

- Referrals to the Children's and families initial response team in regard to all parties involved (also the police if an urgent response required);

- Confiscation of mobile phones in line with guidance 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation, (Current July 2022);
- Support for young people involved to prevent reoccurrence;
- Sanctions in accordance with the behaviour policy;

5.14.5 Any incidents of 'sharing consensual or non-consensual nude images or videos including those generated using AI' involving the following will result in a Request for support referral and sometimes a Police referral;

- Adult involvement;
- Coercion or blackmail;
- Children under the age of 13;
- Extreme, or violent content;
- Immediate risk of harm.

5.14.6 Staff should not view, copy, print, share or forward images or videos of this nature. Any concerns should be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Devices will be secured where appropriate, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will determine the next course of action in accordance with current UKCIS, DfE and safeguarding guidance.

5.14.7 We will work with parents as necessary if their child is involved in the sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude images or videos.

5.14.8 We operate a culture of safeguarding and young people should feel confident to disclose if they have sent an inappropriate image of themselves. Children who share, receive or are affected by self-generated intimate images and/or videos will be supported appropriately and in a non-judgemental manner. Children will always be supported to retrieve and delete the images.

5.15 Domestic Abuse

5.15.1 Domestic abuse can be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. It can also include psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional acts of abuse.

5.15.2 The school recognises that children can be a victim of Domestic Abuse by seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects or suffering domestic abuse in their own personal relationships. These all have a detrimental impact on children's health, well-being, development and ability to learn. Southfields is an Operation Encompass school; this means that we receive logs from the police following any domestic abuse incidents that have taken place in a child's home within the last 24 hours. Staff do not discuss this with parents and understand the implications of doing so. Any disclosures of domestic abuse made by a child or parent are reported to the Children and Families Initial response service as required and expected.

5.16 Searching, Screening and Confiscation

5.16.1 Where necessary, searching, screening and confiscation will be used to safeguard a child/children in **Southfields Primary School**

5.16.2 The school adheres to 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools (January 2022).

5.17 Online Safety

5.17.1 The school recognises that in today's world, children need to be safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material with many children having unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via their mobile phone. The breadth of issues can be categorised currently into four areas of risk as taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026:

- Content – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content (pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.)
- Contact – being subject to harmful online interaction with other users (peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit)
- Conduct – online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm (making, sending and receiving explicit images)
- Commerce – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams

5.17.2 The school understand that the above can take place on a students phone or smart device (including smart watches, **smart glasses and 'air tags'**) whilst at school/college or elsewhere. The school have responded to this by having a whole school approach to online safety which aims to protect and educate students, parents and staff in their use of technology https://southfieldsprimary.org/Policies/

5.17.3 Southfields Primary School has also established mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any concerns highlighted through our filter and monitoring systems for both staff and students. The effectiveness of this is regularly reviewed with staff aware of how to escalate concerns.

The IT Administrator

The IT administrator is responsible for:

- Putting in place an appropriate level of security protection procedures, such as monitoring systems, which are reviewed and updated on a regular basis to assess effectiveness and ensure pupils are kept safe from potentially harmful and inappropriate content and contact online while at school, including terrorist and extremist material

- Ensuring that the school's ICT systems are secure and protected against viruses and malware, and that such safety mechanisms are updated regularly

- Blocking access to potentially dangerous sites and, where possible, preventing the downloading of potentially dangerous files
- Ensuring that any online safety incidents are reported to the DSL's and dealt with appropriately in line with this policy.

5.18 Serious violence

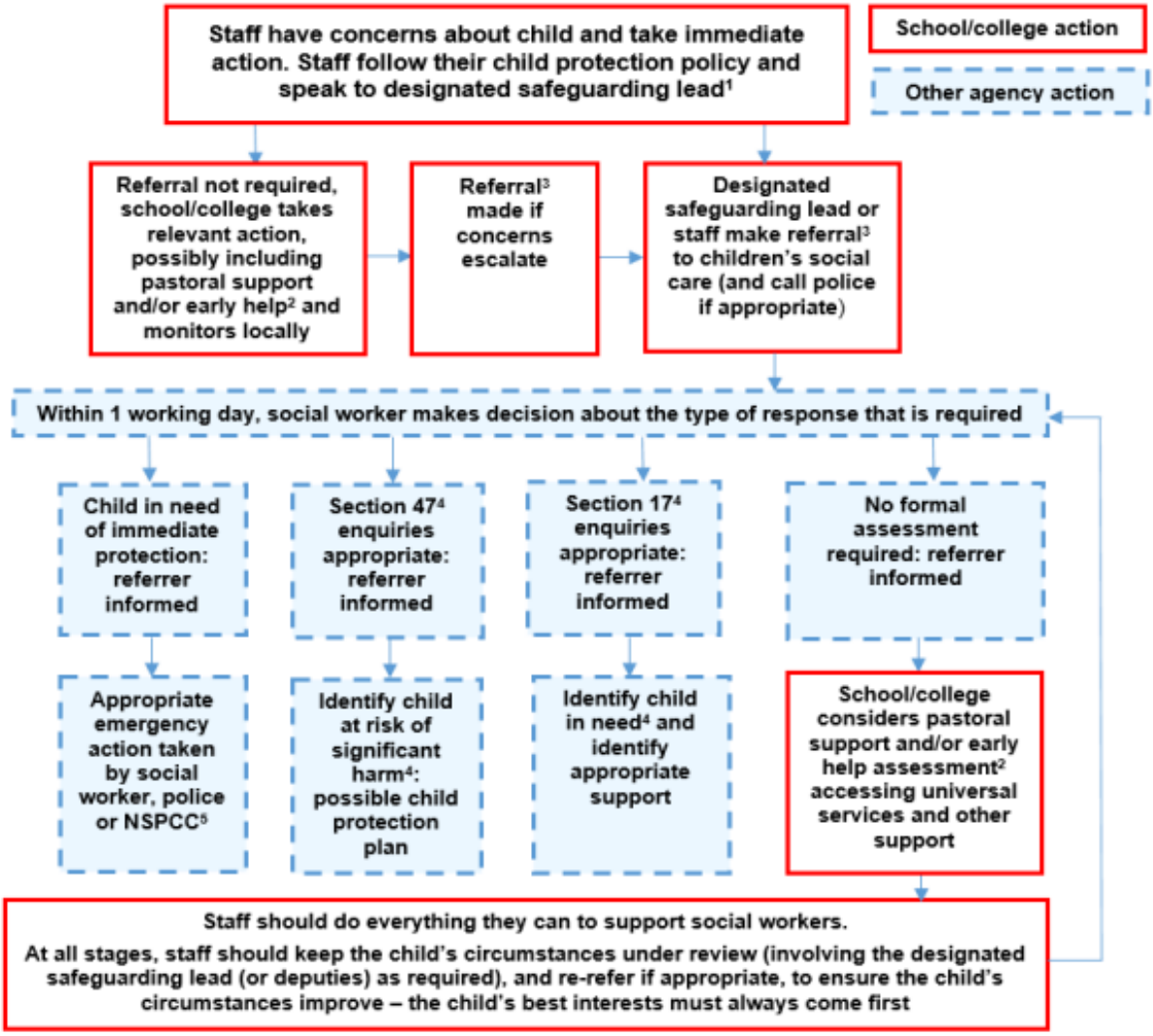
5.18.1 Staff will be alert to indicators that a child may be at risk of or involved in serious violence and will report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL.

5.18.2 Any concerns regarding a child carrying, using, or expressing an intention to use a weapon will be treated seriously and reported without delay. The DSL will assess risk and take appropriate action, including referrals to external agencies where required.

5.18.3 The school recognises that children involved in serious violence may also be victims of abuse, exploitation or other safeguarding concerns and will ensure appropriate support is provided.

DRAFT – NOT CURRENT DfE POLICY

Figure 1: Flowchart setting out the actions taken where there are concerns about a child



[1] In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.
[2] Family Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated Family Help, a family help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Working Together to Safeguard Children provides detailed guidance on the Family Help process.
[3] Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. See Working Together to Safeguard Children.
[4] Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Working Together to Safeguard Children.
[5] This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

5.18 To raise concerns about children, members of staff should contact the Coventry's children's and family initial response service by telephone to discuss the referral. They should then complete the online Request for support form" and submit this, The school will follow up referrals if we do not receive feedback from Children's Services to ascertain the outcome of all referrals.

The Children and Family Initial Response Service telephone number: 02476 788 555

Children and family initial response service: Children's Responsive Services

Out of hours Emergency Duty Team: 02476 832 222

Prevent/Channel Referrals: Refer to the Children and Family Initial Response Service (mash@coventry.gov.uk) and to CTU_GATEWAY@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk

5.18.1 If a child's situation does not appear to be improving following a referral, the school may re-refer the child. We will also consider using the **Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership's Managing Professional Disagreements policy** to ensure that our concerns have been addressed and that the situation improves for the child.

6 Record-keeping

6.1 All concerns, discussions and decision made will be recorded in writing and kept confidential and stored securely. Records will be clear, comprehensive, actioned and outcome noted.

6.2 A written record of all safeguarding and/or child protection concerns, discussions and decisions made will be kept in individual children's files. This will be separate from the main school file and will only be accessed by the relevant safeguarding staff.

6.3 **Southfields Primary School** keeps all safeguarding files electronically, using a system called Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS)

6.4 Staff will submit all concerns in writing to the DSL at the earliest opportunity. This may be after having a verbal conversation, but conversations will also be followed up in writing.

6.5 In the event that a child moves school, the safeguarding file will be transferred to the new setting securely and separately from the main school file in a timely manner (within 5 days for in-year transfers). Once received by the new school, this school will not retain the information.

6.6 The school will seek to hold at least two emergency contacts for every child.

6.7 All personal information processed by **Southfields Primary School** will be managed in accordance with applicable data protection laws, including the Data Protection Act

2018, the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.

Southfields Primary School recognises that data protection laws do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. Where appropriate, information will be shared with relevant agencies and professionals to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Please see the following policies for additional information;

Southfields Primary Policies Data Protection Policy Privacy Notice for Parents

6.8 Further information regarding information sharing and data protection in relation to safeguarding can be found within Keeping Children Safe in Education and Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers.

7 Photography and Images

7.1 Consent from parents to photograph children at school events for promotional reasons will be sought when the child joins **Southfields Primary School**

7.2 Parents can withdraw consent at any time and must notify **Southfields Primary School** if they do not wish their child's photographs to be used.

7.3 Photographs of children used publicly will not be displayed with their name or other identifiable personal information.

7.4 Photographs of children will be processed in line with the General Data Protection Regulation.

https://southfieldsprimary.org/Policies/ GDPR

8 Family Help Assessment

8.1 **Southfields Primary School** is committed to supporting families as soon as a possible problem arises. It is more effective to support a family through early help than reacting to a problem later. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers have a role to play in safeguarding children. **Southfields Primary School** is committed to working closely with its neighbouring family hub to work with families in the community to improve outcomes for children.

Harmony Family Hub
Clifton Street
Hillfields
Coventry
CV1 5GR
Telephone: 024 76 978030

8.2 Any child may benefit from Family Help, but as guided by KCSIE (2026) all school and college staff will be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

• is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs

• has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)

• has a mental health need

• 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 or county lines

• is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care

• has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.

• is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation

• is at risk of being radicalised or exploited • has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending

• is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse

8.3 **Southfields Primary School** works within the Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership's effective-support-for-children-and-young-people framework, available on the CSCP website.

9 Staff training

9.1 In order for staff to be able to understand and discharge their safeguarding and child protection duties, **Southfields Primary School** has committed to training staff throughout the academic year. All staff members will be made aware of **Southfields Primary School** safeguarding processes and structures and will receive training on these as part of their induction. As part of this training and their annual refresher, they will also receive;

- This 'Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy';
- The staff Code of Conduct
- Copies of Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026)
- School procedures for Children Absent from Education
- The school Behaviour Policy
- Low Level Concerns

9.2 Staff at **Southfields Primary School** will;

9.2 Staff at Southfields Primary School will; Staff at Southfields Primary School will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including on online

safety, as required but at least annually (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and CPD. Governors and new staff (as part of their induction) will receive safeguarding training.

9.3 **Southfields Primary School** recognise that children may engage in risky behaviours that may put them at additional risk of danger. These can include drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and the sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude images or videos. Staff will also be trained in these areas to be able to further recognise if a child is at risk of harm.

9.4 All staff are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

10 Safer Recruitment

10.1 **Southfields Primary School** is committed to providing children with a safe environment, in which they can learn. We take safer recruitment seriously and all staff are subject to the following checks;

- Identity check;
- DBS clearance;
- Prohibition from teaching checks (where required);
- Barred List check;
- Section 128 checks (as required - leadership and management);
- Reference check (two references required);
- Professional qualifications check ;
- Right to work in the UK check;
- Further checks for those who have lived outside the UK;
- Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006 checks (as required);
- online search on shortlisted candidates as part of its due diligence checks**;** and
- A health declaration and any necessary occupational health checks will be undertaken in accordance with the Equality Act 2010

10.2 A record of all checks completed for members of staff will be recorded on the Single Central Record.

10.3 All new members of staff will be required to obtain DBS clearance. **Southfields Primary School** reserves the right to re-check DBS clearance for any member of staff where information is received that indicates they may pose a risk to children and may request candidates to register on the DBS update service.

10.4 At least one member of every interview panel will have undertaken Safer Recruitment training which it is recommended is refreshed every 2 years.

10.5 We take proportionate decisions on whether to check individuals above and beyond what is legally required dependant on individual circumstance.

10.6 Any visitor to the school who has not been subject to the necessary checks will be supervised at all times and a risk assessment completed.

10.7 All safer recruitment practices at **Southfields Primary School** comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026). See Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026) for further information. https://southfieldsprimary.org/Policies/ Safer Recruitment

11 Allegations of abuse against staff

11.1 **Southfields Primary School** takes all safeguarding matters including low level concerns and/or allegations that harm to a child has occurred against staff (including trainee teachers, agency, volunteers and contractors) seriously and will manage them in line with this policy, Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026) and the CSCP Guidance, 'Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers'.

11.2 Allegations or concerns may include

- Staff having behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Staff possibly committing a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Staff behaving towards a child or children in a way that indicates that he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- Staff behaving or possibly behaving in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (including behaviour outside of work). This is known as 'Transferable risk'.

11.3 If a concern or allegation of abuse arises against the Headteacher, or should there be a conflict of interest to the Headteacher, it must be immediately reported to the Chair of Governors

11.4 If a concern or allegation of abuse arises against any member of staff, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor other than the Headteacher, it must be reported to the Headteacher without delay.

11.5 Concerns or allegations of abuse against staff must be reported to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors as appropriate and not discussed directly with the person involved.

11.6 The Headteacher or Chair of Governors should consider if the concern or allegation meets the harms threshold as outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) guidance indicating that a person in a Position of Trust has:

• behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child

• possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child

• behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

• behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

11. 7 If they feel the criteria is met then they should refer into Coventry LADO using the online referral form on:

https://myaccount.coventry.gov.uk/service/Allegations_against_people_who_work_in_positions_of_trust_with_children_referral

The Headteacher or Chair of Governors can also seek guidance/advice if unsure by emailing lado@coventry.gov.uk.

11.8 'Low-level' concern does not mean it is not significant. This is a term used for any concern (no matter how small) that an adult working with a child may have breached the staff Code of Conduct and does not meet the harm threshold. Examples of which may include:

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door. Or;
- Humiliating pupils.

The details of the LADO can be found of the front of this policy.

11.9 Concerns relating to a position of trust issue will be referred to the Local Authority designated officer within 24 hours. In accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* ***2026,*** the school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

11.10 If a child has suffered or may have suffered abuse or harm, a request for support form referral will also be made.

11.11 In the instances where an allegation is dealt with internally, the Local Authority designated officer will provide information and support to **Southfields Primary School** in managing the allegation.

11.12 A referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service will be made if a member of staff is dismissed or removed from their post as a result of safeguarding concerns, irrespective of whether they have resigned.

11.13 Supply Teachers and all contracted staff

11.13.1 Although the school does not directly employ supply teachers and contractors, the school will ensure that any concerns or allegations are referred to LADO and the relevant agency informed as the employer.

11.13.2 The school will never cease to use a supply teacher for safeguarding reasons without liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer and reaching an agreed outcome.

11.13.3 Governing bodies/proprietors will liaise with the supply agency to determine whether to suspend or redeploy the supply teacher whilst they carry out their investigation.

11.13.4 The school will inform supply agencies of its process for managing allegations, including inviting the agency's human resource manager (or equivalent) to meetings and regularly updating agencies on relevant school policies. The school will usually take the lead because agencies do not have direct contact with children or staff, so will not be able to gather information.

11.14. Governors

11.14.1 If an allegation or concern is about a Governor, the school/college will follow local procedures.

11.15. Volunteers

11.15.1 Risk assessments and a DBS check will be requested for all volunteers. Under no circumstances will a volunteer prior to satisfactory checks being completed be alone with children unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

11.16. Whistleblowing

11.16.1 **Southfields Primary School** operates a culture of safeguarding and all staff should report any concerns about poor or unsafe practice, or **Southfields Primary School** safeguarding processes to the senior leadership team.

11.16.2 Appropriate whistleblowing procedures are in place whereby the senior leadership team will take all concerns seriously.

11.16.3 In the event that a member of staff is unable to raise an issue with senior leadership in school, they should refer to Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education for additional guidance on whistleblowing procedures.

11.17. Complaints Procedure

11.17.1 The School operates a complaint procedure which will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a pupil that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a pupil or attempting to humiliate them, bullying or belittling a pupil or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by the headteacher, other members of the senior leadership team and governors. https://southfieldsprimary.org/Policies/ - Complaints policy here

11.17.2 Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures. (Also refer to Low level concerns)

11.17.3 Complaints which escalate into a child protection concern will automatically be managed under the school's child protection procedures.

12 Promoting safeguarding and welfare in the curriculum

12.1 **Southfields Primary School** recognises the importance of teaching children how to stay safe and look after their mental health and are committed to equipping children with the skills and knowledge to have successful and happy lives.

12.2 The school will teach children about safeguarding, including online safety (include curriculum details here).

12.3 Schools and colleges play a crucial role in preventative education. Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-school or college approach that prepares pupils and students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment. The school/college will have a clear set of values and standards, upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school/college life. These will be underpinned by the school/college's behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence based RSHE delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum (RSHE) https://southfieldsprimary.org/Policies/

12.4 Children at **Southfields Primary School** will receive the following as part of our promotion of safeguarding across the curriculum:

Online Safety
PSHE
SMSC
NSPCC PANTS
St Giles Trust - Knife Crime/Gangs

Child Sexual Exploitation & Bullying workshops
Safeguarding whole school assemblies
Road safety
Protective Behaviours
Mental health workshops
Pupil Survey's
Safeguarding Champions

Parent workshops:
Online Safety
Mental health awareness
Child accident prevention
Protective Behaviours
PSHE parent consultations
Dental hygiene

12.5 Education at home and remote education

Education at home and remote learning – Safeguarding Addendum -updated when required. See Appendix C.

13 Children Looked After

13.1 The most common reason for children to be looked-after is because they have experienced abuse and/or neglect. **Southfields Primary School** recognises that children looked after may have additional vulnerabilities by virtue of this. The Designated Lead for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children is Mrs Debbie Rock, PEP coordinator is Mrs Lucy Ledbrooke.

13.2 Staff will receive training on how to best safeguard children who are Looked-After and who have been Previously Looked-After.

13.3 The school will work with Personal Advisors when children leave care (where applicable).

13.4 **Southfields Primary School** is committed to working with other agencies to ensure the best outcomes for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After children.

14 Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or physical health needs

14.1 As outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026), **Southfields Primary School** is aware that children with additional needs or disabilities may be more vulnerable to abuse both online and offline and additional barriers may exist when recognising abuse and neglect. This could be because;

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities or certain medical conditions being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- Being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content

14.2 Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the designated safeguarding lead and SENCO. Staff will also be trained in recognising signs of abuse in children with SEN and disabilities or certain medical conditions.

14.3 Staff will take into account the needs of a child when responding to concerns of abuse or when taking a disclosure. We recognise that some children require specialist intervention to communicate and advice from the SENCO will be sought in these circumstances.

14.4 Safeguarding learning opportunities within the curriculum will be appropriately differentiated to ensure all children can access it.

15 Use of reasonable force and restrictive intervention

15.1 **Southfields Primary School** will seek to avoid the use of restrictive interventions wherever possible. There may be occasions when staff are required to use reasonable force to safeguard children. We will not use any more force than is proportionate, necessary and in the best interests of protecting pupils and/or others from harm.

15.2 There may be occasions when staff are required to use reasonable force to safeguard children, prevent injury, prevent serious damage to property or maintain good order and discipline. Any use of force will be lawful, reasonable, proportionate, necessary and for the minimum time required to achieve a legitimate aim. Staff will not use any more force than is necessary in the circumstances.

15.3 The school adopts Team Teach principles and staff receive appropriate training in behaviour support, de-escalation and, where required, positive handling strategies. De-escalation techniques will always be considered before any restrictive intervention is used unless there is an immediate risk of harm.

15.4 Particular consideration will be given to the needs of pupils with SEND, medical conditions or other vulnerabilities. Where appropriate, risk assessments and individual behaviour support plans will identify preventative strategies and agreed responses.

15.5 Any significant incident involving the use of reasonable force or other restrictive intervention will be recorded promptly in accordance with school procedures. Records will include the circumstances leading to the incident, de-escalation strategies used, the nature of the intervention, the outcome and any follow-up actions.

15.6 Parents/carers will be informed of significant incidents involving the use of force as soon as reasonably practicable, unless there are safeguarding reasons not to do so.

15.7 Further information can be found in the school Behaviour Policy, Physical Intervention/Positive Handling Policy and the DfE guidance *Use of Reasonable Force and Other Restrictive Interventions in Schools (2026)*.

At Southfields Primary School positive handling and restraint of children will only ever be used as a last resort at the school and will be reinforced with high quality staff training and thorough risk assessing procedures. Positive handling will only be used when all other strategies have failed or to prevent injury or harm to the child or other people at the school. Positive handling may be required to help facilitate the inclusion of children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and will only be carried out by members of staff who have undergone accredited training. All incidents are recorded in the positive handling log in the Head Teachers office; records are also kept on CPOMS. Positive handling will be used in conjunction with the Behaviour Management Policy.
Relevant staff completed Team Teach Training on September 2nd 2026.

16 Work Experience/ Alternative Provision

16.1 **Southfields Primary School** will continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of Students placed with an alternative provision provider and will be satisfied that this provider meets the needs of the pupil. Written confirmation from the provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out will be sought on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff.

16.2 The DSL will continue to have oversight of all pupils accessing any part of their learning from an alternative provider or delivery online or offsite provided by any organisation or individual not employed by the school. The DSL will ensure that robust arrangements are in place for timely and effective information sharing of safeguarding information between the school and alternative/external providers.

16.3 The DSL will also take responsibility for ensuring that robust procedures are in place to confirm attendance and to enable the swift reporting of non-attendance and children going missing from alternative/ external providers at any time when they should be with that provider.

17 Use of School Premises for non-school activities

The School may hire or rent out school or college facilities/premises to organisations or individuals. Safeguarding is still considered with this and the school will seek assurance that the provider has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place including liaising directly with the school on these matters were appropriate. This applies whether the children in attendance are on the school's roll or not. The governing body/proprietor will ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement and that failure to comply with this would result in termination of the agreement. Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings offers guidance on this. In the event of an incident, the school will follow its own policy including informing the LADO.

18 Children staying with host families

18.1 **Southfields Primary School** recognises its responsibility to safeguard children who stay with host families as part of exchange visits, educational visits or other school-arranged activities.

18.2 Where the school arranges host family accommodation, appropriate suitability and safeguarding checks will be undertaken in line with KCSIE requirements. Any safeguarding concerns identified before, during or after the placement will be managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures, with appropriate action taken to assess risk, support the pupil, and make referrals to relevant agencies where necessary. **Southfields Primary School** will maintain oversight of the placement and work closely with pupils, parents/carers, host families and partner organisations to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils involved.

18.3 Where arrangements meet the definition of private fostering, the school will notify the relevant local authority and work with partner agencies to promote the child's welfare and safety.

19 Residential settings

19.1 Safeguarding procedures apply throughout the residential day and night. Staff will receive appropriate safeguarding training, maintain professional boundaries and follow established reporting procedures for all concerns, allegations and incidents of child-on-child abuse

19.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will work closely with residential leaders and relevant agencies to ensure safeguarding concerns are identified, shared and responded to promptly, using a child-centred approach

20 Summary

20.1 The school is committed to safeguarding children and will always make safeguarding decisions that are in the best interests of each child. For further information or if you have any queries about this policy, please contact the school.

Appendix A

The school's safeguarding policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the following policies;

Southfields Primary Policies

- Anti – Bullying Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice
- Equalities Policy
- Managing Professional Disagreements (**CSCP**)
- Health & Safety Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Intimate Care-policy
- IT Policy
- Medicine & First Aid Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Mental Health Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Site Security Policy
- SEND Policy
- Positive Handling and Restraint policy

The school adheres to Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership Policies, which can be found here: Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures Manual

Appendix B – Further Safeguarding Information

Types of Abuse

As outlined in paragraph 4.4, the school will take action if we believe a child is at risk of or is suffering from abuse. Abuse is not limited to physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect. For further information on the definitions of the types of abuse below, please refer to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026), Annex A.
See below for policy information relating to other key safeguarding issues. All decisions taken in responding to concerns of abuse will be taken in the best interests of the child.

Bullying, including cyber- or online-bullying

The school takes all forms of bullying seriously and will respond sensitively and quickly to any reported bullying. Children should report any bullying to their form tutor, to the DSL or to any trusted member of staff and we will work to resolve it.
We also teach children about the dangers of bullying through our curriculum. See link to curriculum here:
Bullying can take many forms and we have several policies that cover different aspects of bullying. Please see the Anti-Bullying Policy, the Behaviour Policy and paragraph 5.8 of this policy for further information.

Child criminal exploitation (including involvement in county lines)
County lines is the organised criminal distribution of drugs from the big cities into smaller towns and rural areas using children and vulnerable people.
Staff in school are aware of the occurrence of children being vulnerable to potential exploitation through links with older children in the community, online gaming and social media. Contextual knowledge of our community/family's and staff vigilance means that concerns are logged and acted upon promptly. Children are taught about the dangers of being influenced and involved in criminal activities during PSHE lessons at an age-appropriate level, i.e. Year 6 children are introduced to the Precious Lives project an initiative set up with the West Midland Police. Parents are also offered support via workshops during the year. St Giles Trust also deliver awareness sessions on knife crime and gang culture.

Domestic abuse – Southfields is an Operation Encompass school; this means that we receive logs from the police following any domestic abuse incidents that have taken place in a child's home within the last 24 hours. Staff do not discuss this with parents and understand the implications of doing so. Any disclosures of domestic abuse made by a child or parent are reported to the Children's and Families Initial Response Service as required and expected.

Fabricated or induced illness
Attendance is monitored very closely at Southfields Primary School, reasons around absence are sought form parents/carers, where we feel there are concerns around fabricated or induced illness, we would invite parents in for an informal conversation with our Pastoral team. If persistent absence was to continue, we would seek support from the Local Authority during Targeted Support meetings with the Local Authority Attendance Team. Staff would also monitor the child/children and parents and record their concerns on CPOMS. If the concerns raised continued, we would seek advice from the Children and Families Initial Response Service

Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief (CALFB)

Child abuse linked to faith or belief is where concerns for a child's welfare have been identified and may be connected to beliefs about spirit possession, witchcraft, demonic influence, the evil eye, djinns, or other supernatural explanations. A belief in spirit possession is the belief that an evil force has entered a child and is controlling them. In some cases, a child may be labelled as a 'witch' or accused of causing harm through supernatural means. Such beliefs may be genuinely held by family members, carers, faith leaders, communities and, sometimes, by the child themselves. Abuse can occur when attempts are made to 'exorcise', 'deliver' or otherwise remove the perceived spiritual influence. Child abuse linked to faith or belief is not confined to any particular religion, culture, ethnicity or community and should not be viewed as such. Any concerns arising in this context must be taken seriously and reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Southfields Primary School will follow its safeguarding procedures and make referrals to Children and Families Initial Response Service and/or the police where appropriate.

Female genital mutilation
Staff have knowledge of types, indicators and symptoms of FGM. All staff understand they have a mandatory duty to report to the police without delay, if they become aware that FGM has been carried out on a female below the age of 18. Staff will monitor and look out for unusual/changes in behaviour. Our attendance officer will also meet families who are looking to take extended leave, especially near to school holidays and will ask families where we have concerns.

Forced Marriage (a form of so-called 'honour-based' abuse)

Staff understand the implications of forced marriage for children and young people. Forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both parties do not consent, or cannot consent, to the marriage, and pressure, coercion or abuse is used. Staff are aware of the specialist agencies that support victims of forced marriage and understand the need to report concerns immediately where a child may be at risk, whether the concern relates to themselves, a sibling or another family member. Any concerns regarding forced marriage will be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL will seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit and make referrals to Children and Families Initial Response Service and/or the police as appropriate. The school will not

approach family members or community leaders where this may place the child at increased risk.

Useful contacts

Forced Marriage Unit: 020 7008 0151 | fmu@fcdo.gov.uk

Karma Nirvana Honour Network Helpline: 0800 599 9247

Coventry Haven Women's Aid

Panahghar (Coventry)

Freedom Charity

Gangs or youth violence
Using the PSHE Jigsaw programme of study we raise conflict and resolution and as part of this have open discussions with children as to how problems can be solved. If children at Southfields were raising concerns about older siblings, the DSL would contact the sibling's school where possible to share those concerns and decide together on an appropriate course of action.

Gender-based violence
Gender based violence is unacceptable for our children. Staff will report any concerns to the DSL and a referral to the Children and Families Initial Response Service and/or the police will be made where appropriate.

Hate
Any hate-based language or actions against another person is not tolerated at Southfields Primary School. It is dealt with via our behaviour policy and children are taught explicitly about the dangers of extreme language and using language that discriminates against others. Staff will challenge all language that is unacceptable and will not accept any language as 'banter' or 'jokes. Neither will it be considered as acceptable if children use words or language that they do not understand that cause offence and discriminate.

Homelessness
Staff are aware of the on-going concerns for many of our family's that become homeless. The Pastoral Team at Southfields will always seek to support families struggling to find stable accommodation and are aware of the changes to benefits and the Universal Credit system that has added pressure to our families' budgets.
Southfields Pastoral Team works closely with the Groundwork - Breakthrough Project which helps people across Coventry and Warwickshire who are experiencing poverty and disadvantage through 'money mentoring' sessions, and will signpost to P3 - People Potential Possibilities - Early Intervention Team – Housing Support
p3charity.org/services/coventry-housing-support
Projects - Groundwork

Radicalisation, Extremism and the Prevent Duty

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism or extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. Schools and colleges have a duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (the Prevent Duty).

Extremism is defined by the Government as the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance that aims to negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others, undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights, or intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve those results.

Terrorism is defined in law as action or the threat of action designed to influence the government or intimidate the public and made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, racial or ideological cause. Such action may involve serious violence against a person, serious damage to property, endangering life, creating a serious risk to public safety, or serious interference with or disruption of an electronic system.

We recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation is no different from safeguarding against any other vulnerability. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation forms part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs will undertake appropriate Prevent training and ensure that all staff receive safeguarding training which enables them to:

- understand the Prevent Duty;
- recognise children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation;
- identify concerning behaviour or influences;
- understand local risks;
- know how to refer concerns appropriately; and
- understand the Channel process and their role within it.

The school will undertake an appropriate Prevent risk assessment and review this regularly. The assessment will consider the local context, the school's community, online influences and any emerging risks identified by safeguarding partners, the local authority and police.

The school will ensure that:

- appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place to safeguard pupils from harmful and inappropriate online content;
- pupils are taught how to stay safe online;

- pupils are encouraged to think critically and challenge extremist narratives;
- British values are promoted through the curriculum and wider school life; and
- safeguarding against radicalisation is embedded within PSHE, RSHE, SMSC and online safety education.

There is no single profile of a child who may be vulnerable to radicalisation. Vulnerability can arise from a range of circumstances, and staff should be alert to changes in behaviour or circumstances that may indicate a child is being influenced by extremist views or individuals. Indicators may include:

- becoming increasingly isolated from family or friends;
- expressing intolerant or hateful views towards others;
- fixation on an ideological cause;
- accessing or sharing extremist content;
- justifying violence to achieve political, religious or ideological aims;
- significant behavioural or emotional changes;
- becoming secretive about online activity; or
- associating with individuals or groups known to promote extremist views.

Staff should exercise professional curiosity and report any concerns immediately to the DSL. Concerns should be treated in the same way as any other safeguarding concern. The DSL will assess the information and, where appropriate, seek advice from the local Prevent Team, Children and Families Initial Response Service, the police, or make a referral to Channel.

The school recognises that discussing concerns with parents may not always be appropriate and could place a child or investigation at greater risk. Decisions regarding parental involvement will therefore be made on a case-by-case basis by the DSL in line with safeguarding procedures and advice from relevant agencies.

All adults working within the school recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that protecting children from radicalisation forms part of the school's wider safeguarding framework.

Local and National Contacts

Prevent Team (Coventry)
Manjeet Pangli
Email: manjeet.pangli@coventry.gov.uk
Mobile: 07944 208499
Telephone: 02476 831437

West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit
Email: CTU_GATEWAY@west-midlands.police.uk

Department for Education Due Diligence and Counter-Extremism Team
Email: counter.extremism@education.gov.uk

Channel Programme
Channel is a voluntary, confidential, multi-agency programme that provides support to individuals who may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Referrals are considered by a multi-agency panel to determine what support, if any, is required

Relationship Abuse

Children and young people can experience abuse within their own relationships, including emotional abuse, coercive and controlling behaviour, harassment, intimidation, and technology-facilitated abuse. Whilst pupils at primary school age are unlikely to be in adult intimate relationships, staff recognise that harmful behaviours, manipulation, coercion and controlling behaviours can occur within friendships, peer groups and family relationships.

Southfields Primary School promotes healthy, respectful relationships and will challenge harmful behaviours through its behaviour, safeguarding and curriculum policies.

Where a child makes a disclosure relating to relationship abuse involving themselves, a sibling, parent, carer or another family member, staff will report the concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL will assess the concern and seek advice or make referrals to the Children and Families Initial Response Service, the police, or other appropriate agencies where necessary.

Serious Violence

Staff recognise that children may be vulnerable to, affected by, or involved in serious violence, including gang-related activity, criminal exploitation and youth violence.

The school understands the importance of recognising indicators which may signal that a child is at risk from, or involved in, serious violent crime. These may include:

- Increased absence from school.
- Changes in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups.
- A significant decline in educational performance.

- Signs of self-harm, poor mental health or emotional wellbeing concerns.
- Signs of assault or unexplained injuries.
- Unexplained gifts, money or possessions which may indicate criminal exploitation.
- Increased involvement in anti-social behaviour or offending.

Risk factors which may increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include:

- Frequent absence from school.
- Suspension or exclusion from education.
- Experiences of abuse, neglect or trauma.
- Exposure to violence.
- Previous offending behaviour.
- Criminal exploitation, including county lines activity.

Staff are aware of these indicators and risk factors and will report any concerns to the DSL without delay.

Pupils are taught about personal safety, exploitation, gangs, knife crime, criminal activity, healthy decision-making and risk-taking behaviour through the curriculum in an age-appropriate way.

Child-on-Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur:

- Between children of any age and sex.
- Through a group of children sexually assaulting or harassing another child or group of children.
- Online and offline.
- Verbally, physically or through technology.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum of harmful behaviours and may overlap.

The school adopts a **zero-tolerance approach** to sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour. Such behaviour is never acceptable, will not be tolerated and should never be dismissed as:

- Banter.

- Part of growing up.
- Having a laugh.
- Boys being boys.
- Just a joke.

Children who are victims of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be taken seriously, listened to carefully and supported appropriately. A victim will never be made to feel ashamed, blamed or responsible for the abuse they have experienced.

Staff understand that some groups may be more vulnerable, including:

- Girls.
- Children with SEND.
- Children who are perceived to be LGBT.
- Children who are looked after or previously looked after.

Staff will challenge inappropriate behaviour, language and attitudes and will report all concerns immediately to the DSL, who will respond in accordance with Part Five of KCSIE 2026 and local safeguarding procedures.

Intimate Care

Some pupils require support with intimate care due to age, medical needs, SEND or personal circumstances.

Intimate care includes any care involving washing, touching, dressing, toileting or carrying out an invasive procedure in relation to intimate personal areas.

All intimate care will be provided:

- With respect for the child's dignity, privacy and wellbeing.
- In accordance with the school's Intimate Care Policy.
- By appropriately trained staff.
- Wherever possible by two members of staff or with appropriate safeguards in place.
- With due regard to the child's wishes, age and understanding.

Any concerns arising during the provision of intimate care will be reported immediately to the DSL.

Sharing of Nude, Semi-Nude and/or Sexually Explicit Images and Videos

The school recognises that incidents involving the sharing of nude or semi-nude images and videos can occur both online and offline.

Through the curriculum, pupils are taught:

- Safe and responsible online behaviour.
- Privacy and consent.
- The risks associated with creating, sharing or requesting nude or semi-nude images.
- Where to seek help and support.

Where concerns arise regarding the sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos, staff will follow the guidance set out in Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings and report concerns immediately to the DSL.

The DSL will assess the risk and determine whether referrals to the police, the Children and Families Initial Response Service, or other agencies are required. Parents will be informed unless this would place the child at increased risk of harm.

Trafficking and Modern Slavery

Staff understand that children can be victims of trafficking, modern slavery and exploitation.

This may include:

- Criminal exploitation.
- Sexual exploitation.
- Forced labour.
- Domestic servitude.
- County lines activity.
- Forced criminality.

Any concerns relating to trafficking, exploitation or modern slavery must be reported immediately to the DSL.

The DSL will consider referrals to the:

- Children and Families Initial Response Service;

- Police;

Children Absent from Education

The school recognises that children who are absent from education may be at increased risk of:

- Abuse and neglect.
- Child sexual exploitation.
- Child criminal exploitation.
- Forced marriage.
- Radicalisation.
- Serious violence.
- Mental health difficulties.

Southfields Primary School places a high priority on attendance and has a designated Attendance Lead responsible for promoting good attendance and reducing persistent absence.

Where a child is absent and no contact can be established with parents or carers:

1. Telephone contact will be attempted.
2. Emergency contacts will be contacted.
3. A home visit may be undertaken.
4. The DSL and Attendance Lead will review the circumstances.

Where safeguarding concerns exist, advice will be sought from the Children and Families Initial Response Service, and referrals made where appropriate.

If a child has been absent for 20 school days and their whereabouts remain unknown, the school will refer to the Local Authority in accordance with statutory Children Missing Education (CME) procedures.

Early Help and attendance review meetings will continue to be used to support families where attendance concerns are identified.

Children Missing from Home or Care

Children who go missing from home or care may be at increased risk of:

- Abuse and neglect.
- Child sexual exploitation.
- Child criminal exploitation.
- Trafficking.
- Serious violence.
- Radicalisation.

Any concerns regarding a child missing from home or care will be reported immediately to the DSL.

The DSL may liaise with:

- Children's Social Care;
- Children and Families Initial Response Service;
- Police;
- Carers and other professionals involved with the child.

Appropriate safeguarding action will be taken in line with local procedures.

Private Fostering

The school has a statutory duty to notify the Local Authority of any private fostering arrangement.

Where staff become aware that a child may be living in a private fostering arrangement, the DSL will make a referral to the Children and Families Initial Response Service.

Parents and carers should inform the school if a child is living with someone who is not:

- A parent;
- A person with parental responsibility; or
- A close relative;

for a period of 28 days or more.

A private fostering arrangement is one made privately for the care of a child under 16 (or under 18 if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative for 28 days or more.

Indicators of Abuse

Staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation and safeguarding concerns can present in many different ways. Indicators may include:

- Changes in behaviour, presentation or emotional wellbeing.
- Aggressive, withdrawn, anxious or clinging behaviour.
- Poor hygiene or inappropriate clothing.
- Avoidance of specific individuals.
- Reluctance to change clothes or participate in physical activities.
- Poor concentration, tiredness or hunger.
- Frequent absence from school.
- Reluctance to return home.
- Developmental delay without medical explanation.
- Being left with unsuitable carers.
- Concerns regarding younger siblings.
- Talking about running away.
- Alcohol or substance misuse.
- Flinching, fearfulness or unexplained injuries.
- Parents or carers who are dismissive of concerns or present under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

The school recognises that this list is not exhaustive. Staff will maintain professional curiosity, consider the child's lived experience and report any safeguarding concerns immediately in accordance with the school's Child Protection procedures.