Whole-school

Child Protection Policy

The Parkgate Academy

September 2026

Executive Principal	Mr Reece Davy
Head of School	Mrs Phoebe Brooker
Senior Leader(s) available for contact in the absence of DSLs	Miss Rosalind Howard
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mr Reece Davy
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mrs Phoebe Brooker Mrs Sally Jurkow
Additional Safeguarding Leads	Mrs Amanda Clifford Mrs Zoe Plamer Mrs Elaine Leivers Miss Georgia Steven
Designated Teacher for Children in Care	Miss Rosalind Howard
Safeguarding Governor/Trustee	Andrew Bailey andrew.bailey@theforgetrust.co.uk
Local Authority Safeguarding Children in Education Officer	Zain Iqbal - SCIEO@nottscc.gov.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer	LADO@nottscc.gov.uk - 0115 804 1272
Policy approved by the Governing Body	3rd September 2026
Policy published by the school	September 2026
Date for Review	September 2027

Table of Contents

A. Policy Purpose, Scope and Safeguarding Ethos
Purpose and scope, safeguarding ethos and commitment, reporting systems for children, related policies and procedures, review, approval and public availability.

B. Statutory and Local Safeguarding Framework
Statutory guidance, legal responsibilities, Nottinghamshire safeguarding arrangements, local thresholds and referral pathways.

C. Safeguarding Leadership, Governance and Responsibilities
Trust board, Executive Principal, Head of School, Designated Safeguarding Lead, deputy DSLs and safeguarding cover, Designated Teacher, responsibilities of all staff, multi-agency working.

D. Recognising, Reporting and Recording Concerns
Recognising concerns, responding to disclosures, reporting concerns, immediate danger and referrals, recording decisions and actions, confidentiality and information sharing, referral feedback and escalation, transfer of child protection records, support following a concern.

E. Early Support, Family Help and Child Protection
Continuum of help and protection, pastoral and community-based support, Early Help and Family Help, consent and working with families, Family Help assessments and plans, family networks and family group decision-making, children in need, child protection, Operation Encompass, multi-agency plans and review.

F. Children Who May Be at Greater Risk of Harm
SEND, disabilities and health conditions, children with a social worker, looked-after and previously looked-after children, kinship care and private fostering, young carers, children absent from education, alternative provision, domestic abuse, mental health, self-harm and suicide risk, exploitation, modern slavery and serious violence, protected characteristics, children questioning their gender, individual support and review.

G. Contextual Safeguarding and Extra-Familial Harm
Contextual and extra-familial harm, recognising contextual concerns, local safeguarding context, responding to extra-familial harm, professional curiosity and inclusive practice, working with children, families and safeguarding partners, review of contextual safeguarding arrangements.

H. Child-on-Child Abuse and Harmful Sexual Behaviour
Forms of child-on-child abuse, sexual abuse harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence, nudes and semi-nudes, prevention and education, reporting, initial safeguarding response, risk and needs assessment, support, parents and carers, recording and confidentiality, review and learning.

I. **Online Safety**
Areas of online risk, whole-school approach, filtering and monitoring, review of filtering and monitoring, generative artificial intelligence, mobile phones and smart technology, cybersecurity and information security, staff responsibilities, online safety education, working with parents and carers, remote education, reporting and reviewing online concerns.

J. **Safeguarding and Preventative Education**
Whole-school approach, curriculum content, local and emerging safeguarding risks, accessibility and inclusion, safe delivery, empowering children to seek help, working with parents and carers, staff responsibilities, review and evaluation.

K. **Concerns and Allegations About Adults**
Harm-threshold allegations, reporting allegations, initial response and case management, supply staff, contractors and trainee teachers, suspension and alternative arrangements, supporting children and adults, confidentiality, outcomes and record keeping, DBS and Teaching Regulation Agency referrals, low-level concerns, reporting and responding to low-level concerns, whistleblowing, learning lessons.

L. **Safer Working Arrangements**
Safer recruitment, Single Central Record, ongoing suitability, regulated activity and volunteers, supply and agency staff and trainee teachers, contractors and self-employed individuals, visitors and visiting professionals, external providers and use of premises, educational visits, homestays and residential arrangements, reasonable force and restrictive interventions, alternative provision, safeguarding briefing and conduct.

M. **Safeguarding Training and Policy Implementation**
Safeguarding induction, staff training and updates, DSL and deputy DSL training, governor and trustee training, training records and evaluation, monitoring implementation.

Section A - Policy Purpose, Scope and Safeguarding Ethos

The purpose of this policy is to explain how The Parkgate Academy safeguards and promotes the welfare of children, protects them from harm and responds to safeguarding and child protection concerns.

This policy applies to all staff, supply staff, trainee teachers, trustees, volunteers and contractors. Visitors and external providers are expected to follow the safeguarding arrangements relevant to their role while on the premises or working with children on behalf of our school.

This policy is informed by Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures and other legislation and statutory guidance applicable to our school. It should be read alongside the related policies and procedures identified below.

Safeguarding Ethos and Commitment

At The Parkgate Academy we are committed to creating a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment in which every child feels valued, respected and able to seek help. As an academy within the Forge Trust, we are committed to ensuring every child is known, appreciated and understood in a context of "safe emotional spaces". We are committed to "getting it right early" both by giving children an excellent start to their education but also in the context of early intervention and safeguarding.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and is central to leadership, governance, teaching, pastoral care, recruitment, staff conduct and activities taking place on or away from the premises. We maintain an attitude of **"it could happen here"** and promote a culture of vigilance, openness and professional challenge.

We recognise that children may experience harm within or outside their family, within peer groups, in the community or online. We listen to children and consider their needs, wishes, feelings, lived experience and any barriers that may make it more difficult for them to recognise harm, report concerns or access help. Our whole-school approach includes:

- clear leadership, governance and accountability
- accessible systems for reporting concerns
- prompt reporting, recording, referral and escalation
- safer recruitment (staff trained to a high level) and appropriate safeguarding arrangements
- staff induction, training and updates
- appropriate online safety, filtering and monitoring systems
- preventative education and early identification of need
- effective work with parents, carers and safeguarding partners
- regular review of safeguarding information, policies and practice
- Support to ensure DSL's have the time, training and resources to carry out the role.

This commitment underpins our whole-school approach and reflects our belief that every child has the right to feel safe, be heard and receive appropriate help and protection.

All staff must understand their safeguarding responsibilities, follow the procedures set out in this policy and report concerns without delay. The absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy must not prevent or delay appropriate action. Government guidance and advice can be found

in What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abuse.

Staff responsibilities are set out in Section C: Responsibilities of All Staff, and procedures for reporting concerns are set out in Section D: Reporting Safeguarding Concerns.

Reporting Systems for Children

Children are provided with well-promoted, accessible and age-appropriate ways to report safeguarding concerns. They are helped to understand:

- who they can speak to
- how they can report a concern
- that they will be listened to, taken seriously and supported
- what may happen after they report a concern
- what support is available.

Related Policies and Procedures

This policy forms part of the school's wider safeguarding arrangements and should be read alongside other relevant policies and procedures. The following policies contribute to the whole-school approach to safeguarding:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child-on-Child Abuse Policy
- Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy
- Filtering and Monitoring Procedures
- Attendance and Children Missing Education Procedures
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Allegations and Low-Level Concerns Procedures
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Data Protection and Information Sharing Policy
- Early Help, Family Help and Pastoral Support Procedures
- Alternative Provision Procedures
- Reasonable Force or Restrictive Interventions Policy
- Educational Visits and Residential Arrangements
- Visitors and VIPs Procedures and Arrangements
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy

Review, Approval and Public Availability

This policy is reviewed at least annually and updated sooner where required by changes to legislation, statutory or local guidance, our safeguarding arrangements or learning from practice.

The board of trustees seeks assurance that the policy is understood and effective in practice and does not treat annual review and approval solely as a procedural exercise.

The policy is:

- made available to all staff and included within safeguarding induction
- communicated to staff whenever it is updated
- published on the school's website or made available by other appropriate means
- communicated appropriately to parents and carers

Our school will ensure that superseded versions are removed from staff systems, induction materials and policy collections, while retaining previous versions in accordance with its document-retention arrangements

Section B - Statutory and Local Safeguarding Framework

Our safeguarding arrangements are informed by national legislation, statutory guidance and Nottinghamshire's local multi-agency safeguarding procedures. Together, these establish the responsibilities and standards that we must follow to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Statutory Guidance

This policy has been developed with regard to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused
- Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, where applicable
- other statutory guidance relevant to our school's legal status, age range and provision

Legal Responsibilities

Our safeguarding responsibilities arise from legislation and regulations which include, where applicable:

- the Children Acts 1989 and 2004
- the Education Act 2002
- the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015
- the Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021
- the Childcare Act 2006 and relevant disqualification regulations
- the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- the Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010
- legislation concerning specific safeguarding duties, including female genital mutilation

Other legislation and regulations may apply according to our school's legal status and the services it provides. The trust board is responsible for ensuring that our school's safeguarding arrangements comply with the law and have regard to relevant statutory guidance.

Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Arrangements, Local Thresholds and Referrals

At The Parkgate Academy, we follow the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, procedures and guidance published by the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership. We use

Nottinghamshire's current threshold criteria and referral pathways to consider what help or protection a child may need.

A Family Help assessment is not required before making a referral to children's social care.

Detailed reporting and referral procedures are set out in Section D: Reporting Safeguarding Concerns and Immediate Danger and Referrals. The continuum of support and protection is explained in Section E: Continuum of Help and Protection.

We will use Nottinghamshire's professional challenge and escalation procedures where concerns are not adequately addressed, or a child's circumstances are not improving.

Further information: Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures, Nottinghamshire Framework for Support and Nottinghamshire MASH referral arrangements

Section C - Safeguarding Leadership, Governance and Responsibilities

At The Parkgate Academy, safeguarding is a shared responsibility supported by clear leadership and effective governance. Everyone working in or on behalf of our school must act on concerns and must not assume that another person will take action or share information that may be critical to keeping a child safe.

Trust Board

The trust board has strategic leadership responsibility for safeguarding. It will ensure that:

- safeguarding policies, procedures and training comply with the law and are effective in practice;
- a senior member of staff is appointed as DSL and appropriately trained deputies provide effective cover
- the DSL and deputies have the authority, time, funding, training, resources and support required
- children have accessible and well-promoted ways to report concerns
- appropriate safer recruitment, online safety and allegations-management arrangements are maintained
- safeguarding arrangements meet the needs of children who may be at greater risk of harm
- promote an inclusive, anti-discriminatory culture in which racism and other forms of discriminatory behaviour are recognised, challenged and addressed as part of the school's safeguarding responsibilities
- leaders provide sufficient information and assurance to support effective scrutiny and improvement

The appointed safeguarding trustee supports strategic oversight but does not remove responsibility from the trust board as a whole.

Executive Principal/Head of School

The Executive Principal and Head of School are responsible for implementing the safeguarding arrangements agreed by the trust board, they will:

- promote a culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- ensure that staff understand and follow this policy
- ensure that concerns are reported, recorded and acted upon promptly

- support the DSL and deputies and maintain effective safeguarding cover
- ensure that staff and other relevant adults receive appropriate safeguarding induction and training
- oversee the implementation of safer recruitment and safeguarding procedures
- keep the governing body or proprietor informed about safeguarding risks, practice and required improvements

Where the Headteacher or Principal is also the DSL, sufficient time and resources will be provided for both roles and appropriate arrangements must manage any conflict of interest.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. The DSL will:

- advise and support staff and coordinate the response to safeguarding concerns
- make or support referrals and liaise with children's social care, police, health and other services
- understand Nottinghamshire's thresholds, referral pathways and escalation procedures
- contribute to Family Help, statutory assessments, child protection processes and multi-agency meetings
- promote lawful and timely information sharing and maintain secure child protection records
- ensure that staff understand how to report concerns and make direct referrals
- consider children's wishes, feelings, lived experiences and additional barriers to receiving help
- work with the Designated Teacher, SENCO, senior mental health lead and other relevant professionals
- advise leaders and governors about safeguarding risks, patterns and required improvements.

The DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns. Where this is not possible, the agreed safeguarding cover arrangements will apply.

Detailed procedures for responding to concerns, making referrals and coordinating support are set out in Section D: Recognising, Reporting and Recording Concerns and Section E: Early Support, Family Help and Child Protection.

Further information: KCSIE 2026, Annex B – Role of the DSL

Deputy DSLs and Safeguarding Cover

Deputies are trained to the same standard as the DSL and may undertake delegated safeguarding activities.

When the DSL is unavailable:

- staff should report concerns to a deputy DSL (there are seven in school). The DSLs are available in all age phases and in non-teaching areas of school
- concerns must continue to be reviewed and acted upon without delay
- urgent action or referral must not wait for the DSL's return

Any member of staff may make a direct referral or contact the police where necessary. An untrained senior leader does not automatically assume the role of the DSL or a deputy.

Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children*

For consistency with statutory guidance, this policy will use the terms "Looked-After Children" and "Previously Looked-After Children" to remain in line with KCSIE 2026. Nottinghamshire uses the term, "Children We Care For" for "Looked-After Children". As of publishing, both sets of terminology will be in use until the previous terms are phased out nationally.

The Designated Teacher will work with the DSL, SENCO, Virtual School, social workers, carers and other professionals to promote children's educational achievement, welfare and safety. They will contribute to Personal Education Plans, ensure relevant staff understand the child's needs and support appropriate information sharing during transitions.

Further safeguarding considerations for looked-after and previously looked-after children are set out in Section F: Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children.

Further information: Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children

Responsibilities of All Staff

All staff must maintain an attitude of **"it could happen here"** and act in the best interests of the child. They must:

- read and understand KCSIE 2026, this policy and other safeguarding information relevant to their role
- know who the DSL and deputies are and understand the safeguarding cover arrangements
- recognise, report and record concerns without delay, including prejudice-based harm, racism, faith-based prejudice, faith-targeted abuse and other forms of discrimination
- listen to children and take their concerns, wishes and feelings seriously
- act immediately where a child is in danger or significant harm is suspected
- make a direct referral where necessary and not allow the absence of the DSL to delay action
- share relevant information appropriately and never promise to keep a safeguarding disclosure secret
- report concerns about adults and unsafe safeguarding practice;
- complete safeguarding training and updates appropriate to their role
-

Multi-Agency Working

The Parkgate Academy will work with safeguarding partners and other agencies to help, support and protect children. We will share relevant information, contribute to assessments, plans and meetings, complete agreed actions and respond promptly to requests.

Where concerns remain or progress is insufficient, staff will seek feedback and use Nottinghamshire's professional challenge and escalation procedures.

Our contribution to Early Help, Family Help and statutory plans is explained in Section E: Multi-Agency Plans and Review.

Section D - Recognising, Reporting and Recording Concerns

At The Parkgate Academy, staff must report safeguarding concerns without delay, even where information is limited or they are uncertain whether harm has occurred.

Staff should be alert to changes in a child's behaviour, presentation, wellbeing, attendance, relationships, progress, health, online activity or wider circumstances. Concerns may arise within or outside the family, within peer groups, in the community or online, and different forms of harm may overlap.

Staff must remain professionally curious and avoid assumptions based on a child's characteristics, needs or behaviour.

Responding to a Disclosure

If a child shares a concern or discloses abuse, neglect or exploitation, staff should:

- listen calmly, give the child their full attention and allow them to speak at their own pace
- use open prompts only where clarification is necessary and avoid leading, investigative or repeated questions
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing and explain that information must be shared with those who can help
- never promise confidentiality, make judgements or confront the person alleged to have caused harm
- not ask the child to write a statement, sign notes or repeat their account unnecessarily
- record the child's words, wishes and feelings as accurately as possible
- report the concern to the DSL or a deputy immediately

Staff must not investigate the concern themselves or confront the person alleged to have caused harm.

Where a concern involves nudes or semi-nudes, including AI-generated or altered imagery, staff must not intentionally view, copy, print, forward, save or ask the child to share the imagery. The concern must be reported to the DSL immediately. Where a concern involves harmful digital material, staff must also follow Section H: Reporting Child-on-Child Abuse and Harmful Sexual Behaviour.

Further information about recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation is available in What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners and through the NSPCC.

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Staff must report concerns to the DSL or a deputy without delay using the school's agreed procedure:

At The Parkgate Academy, reporting a safeguarding concern is of high priority. All staff are aware of their duty to report a safeguarding concern immediately to one of the eight DSLs in school. Staff will seek to speak directly to a DSL and this will then be followed up by an electronic log of the concern. A DSL will, if required, seek advice from another DSL and action the concern. This will be monitored until a satisfactory outcome is achieved and that the child's safety can be assured.

DSL Meetings happen frequently to offer support, guidance, challenge and make decisions in the best interests of all children's safety and wellbeing.

An electronic or written record does not replace the need to speak directly to the DSL or a deputy where a concern is urgent.

If the DSL is unavailable, staff must follow Section C: Deputy DSLs and Safeguarding Cover. The absence of the DSL or a deputy must not delay action.

Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care where necessary. Staff should inform the DSL as soon as possible after making a direct referral, unless there is a valid reason not to do so.

Immediate Danger and Referrals

Where a child is in immediate danger or requires urgent protection, staff must contact the police on **999** and make an immediate referral to children's social care where appropriate.

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, a referral must be made to Nottinghamshire MASH without delay.

A Family Help assessment is not required before making a referral. Seeking advice, consulting the DSL or attempting to obtain consent must not delay protective action.

The available support and statutory pathways are explained in Section E: Continuum of Help and Protection.

Recording Concerns, Decisions and Actions

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions, actions and outcomes must be recorded promptly. Records should include:

- the child's identifying details and the date, time and context of the concern
- a clear and factual account, including the child's own words, wishes and feelings where possible
- relevant observations, including the location and appearance of any injury
- the name and role of the person making the record
- when and to whom the concern was reported
- advice received, action taken and decisions made
- the outcome and arrangements for follow-up or support

Records should distinguish between fact, observation, professional opinion and information provided by another person.

Staff must not photograph a child's injury, mark or physical indicator for safeguarding-recording purposes. A body map must be used only to record the location and observable appearance of an injury. Staff must not attempt to diagnose the injury, estimate its age or speculate about how it occurred. Photographs required for evidential, forensic or medical purposes should normally be taken by appropriately trained police, medical or other authorised professionals.

Child protection records must be confidential, securely stored and kept separately from the main pupil or student record. Access should be restricted to those who need the information to safeguard or support the child.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Staff must maintain appropriate confidentiality but must never promise to keep safeguarding information secret.

Timely information sharing is essential to identifying need, assessing risk and protecting children. Staff must not assume that another person or agency will share information that may be critical to keeping a child safe.

Information will be shared lawfully, promptly and proportionately where necessary to safeguard or promote a child's welfare. Consent is not always required where another lawful basis applies, and data protection law must not prevent or delay safeguarding action.

Where safe and appropriate, children and parents or carers will be informed about what information will be shared, with whom and why. Information may be shared without their knowledge or consent where seeking consent could increase risk, prejudice an investigation or cause unjustified delay.

Decisions to share or withhold information and the reasons for them will be recorded.

Consent for Early Help and Family Help is addressed in Section E: Consent and Working with Families.

Further guidance: Information sharing advice for practitioners and Data Protection in schools

Referral Feedback and Escalation

Children's social care should acknowledge a referral and decide the next course of action within one working day. **The referrer should follow up if appropriate feedback is not received.**

Where the response does not address the concern, or the child's circumstances are not improving, we will use Nottinghamshire's professional challenge and escalation procedures. Staff must continue to report new information while awaiting a response.

Referral to another agency does not end our responsibility to safeguard and support the child.

Transfer of Child Protection Records

When a child moves school or college, the DSL will transfer the child protection file securely and separately from the main pupil record within five days of an in-year transfer or; within the first five days of a new term.

Confirmation of receipt must be obtained. Relevant safeguarding and risk information will be shared in advance where necessary to enable the receiving school to assess risk and arrange support.

We will retain a record of the transfer in accordance with our retention procedures.

Support Following a Safeguarding Concern

We recognise that disclosures and safeguarding processes may be distressing. We will consider appropriate pastoral, therapeutic or specialist support, safety planning, reasonable adjustments and staff wellbeing support according to individual need.

Support will be reviewed as circumstances change and will not replace any required referral, investigation or protective action.

Section E - Early Support, Family Help and Child Protection

At The Parkgate Academy, we recognise that children and families should receive the right help at the right time. We will identify additional needs early, provide support within our school where appropriate and work with other services when a coordinated or statutory response is required.

Support will be based on the child's needs and circumstances. It will not delay a referral to children's social care where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

Immediate safeguarding concerns must be reported in accordance with Section D: Reporting Safeguarding Concerns and Immediate Danger and Referrals.

Continuum of Help and Protection

The support available to children and families may include:

- pastoral support within our school
- universal services and community-based early help
- targeted support through Nottinghamshire Early Help services or Family Help
- support for a child in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989
- child protection action under section 47 of the Children Act 1989

The level of support may change as needs increase, reduce or become better understood. Staff must continue to report new or escalating concerns and must not assume that existing support or agency involvement means that further action is unnecessary.

Pastoral and Community-Based Support

Where needs can be met safely within our school or through universal services, support may include:

- pastoral care and regular contact with a trusted adult
- attendance, behaviour, SEND or mental health support
- reasonable adjustments and individual support plans
- help from health, family, community or voluntary services
- advice or support through Nottinghamshire Family Hub Networks

Support should have clear aims and be reviewed to determine whether it is improving the child's circumstances. Where needs are increasing, support is ineffective or safeguarding concerns arise, the DSL should consider additional help or referral to children's social care.

Early Help and Family Help

Staff should be alert to children and families who may benefit from coordinated help. This may include circumstances involving absence from education, SEND or health needs, mental health, domestic abuse, family difficulties, caring responsibilities, exploitation or several needs which cannot be addressed effectively by one service.

The DSL will use Nottinghamshire's current threshold guidance and may consult the Early Help Unit or other relevant services.

Family Help brings services together through a coordinated assessment and plan. Education staff may be asked to contribute information, attend meetings, complete agreed actions, review progress or act as lead practitioner where appropriate and supported by local arrangements.

A consistent relationship with the child and family should be maintained wherever possible as their needs change.

Further information and local support can be sought through the Family Hub Networks.

Consent and Working with Families

Early Help and targeted Family Help are voluntary and should be undertaken with the family's consent. The child and family should understand:

- what support is being offered and why
- what information will be shared
- which practitioners or services will be involved
- how progress will be reviewed

If consent is refused, the DSL will consider why support has been declined, whether needs can be addressed in another way and whether the level of concern requires referral to children's social care.

Consent is not required before making a child protection referral or where another lawful basis permits information sharing. Refusal of support must not delay action where a child may be at risk of harm.

General information-sharing requirements are set out in Section D: Confidentiality and Information Sharing.

Family Help Assessments and Plans

Where Family Help is appropriate, the assessment and plan should be child-centred, proportionate and informed by the family's strengths and needs. It should:

- reflect the child's wishes, feelings and lived experience
- consider the needs of other children and adults within the family
- identify risks, strengths, needs and desired outcomes
- set out the support to be provided and who is responsible for each action
- include clear review arrangements
- be updated when circumstances or risks change

A Family Help assessment is not required before making a referral to children's social care.

Family Networks and Family Group Decision-Making

Where safe and appropriate, the child's wider family network may be involved in identifying support and developing a plan. This may include family group decision-making or a family group conference.

The child's welfare and best interests remain central. Family involvement must not delay protective action or result in information being shared with a person who may place the child or another person at greater risk.

Children in Need

Under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, a child may be considered in need where they are unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without services, or where they are disabled. Where children's social care undertakes a section 17 assessment or provides support, we will:

- share relevant information
- contribute to assessments, plans and reviews
- carry out agreed actions
- monitor the child's attendance, presentation, welfare and progress
- report new or escalating concerns promptly

Subject to local arrangements, an appropriately skilled practitioner who is not a social worker may act as the lead practitioner for support under section 17.

Child Protection

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, a referral must be made to Nottinghamshire MASH without delay. We will cooperate with child protection enquiries and processes by:

- providing relevant information promptly
- attending strategy discussions, child protection conferences, core groups and reviews
- contributing informed reports and professional views
- completing agreed actions within the required timescale
- supporting the child within our school

Section 47 enquiries and child protection plans must be led by a qualified social worker. Our involvement will continue for as long as help or protection is required.

Operation Encompass

We receive Operation Encompass notifications where police have reasonable grounds to believe that a child may be a victim of domestic abuse. A child may be affected even where they were not present during the incident or normally live elsewhere. Notifications will be:

- received and stored securely
- shared only with staff who need the information to safeguard or support the child
- considered alongside other information known about the child and family
- used to arrange appropriate safeguarding and pastoral support

An Operation Encompass notification does not replace a referral to children's social care. Where the information indicates that a child may be at risk of harm, we will follow our safeguarding and referral procedures.

Further information about supporting children affected by domestic abuse is set out in Section F: Children Affected by Domestic Abuse.

Multi-Agency Plans and Review

The school will contribute fully to Early Help, Family Help, child-in-need and child protection plans.

Staff attending meetings should be appropriately informed and able to contribute to decision-making. We will:

- provide clear, accurate and relevant information
- consider the child's wishes, feelings and lived experience
- complete agreed actions within the required timescales
- maintain appropriate records
- monitor whether support is improving the child's circumstances
- report and escalate concerns where risk increases or progress is insufficient

Referral to another service does not end our responsibility to safeguard, support and monitor the child.

Where concerns remain or progress is insufficient, staff must follow Section D: Referral Feedback and Escalation.

Further information: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026

Section F - Children Who May Be at Greater Risk of Harm

At The Parkgate Academy, we recognise that any child may experience abuse, neglect, exploitation or other harm. Some children may face additional risks or barriers that make it more difficult for them to recognise harm, report concerns or receive appropriate help.

Staff will consider each child's individual circumstances, needs and lived experience. Membership of a particular group does not mean that a child is experiencing harm, and support will be based on assessment of the individual child rather than assumptions or stereotypes.

Children with Special Educational Needs, Disabilities or Health Conditions

Children with special educational needs, disabilities or health conditions may experience additional safeguarding barriers. These can include:

- assumptions that behaviour, mood or injury relates to the child's needs or condition
- communication difficulties or limited opportunities to report concerns
- difficulty recognising that behaviour towards them is abusive
- increased dependence on adults for care, communication or mobility
- intimate or personal care needs
- social isolation or bullying
- greater exposure to online risks
- a disproportionate impact from harm without outward signs

Staff must remain professionally curious and avoid allowing a child's needs, disability or diagnosis to distract from possible safeguarding concerns. Communication and reporting arrangements will be adapted to the child's needs, and the DSL will work with the SENCO, health professionals, parents or carers and other agencies where appropriate.

Concerns involving a child's medical care, access to essential medication or failure to follow an agreed healthcare plan should be reported to the DSL where they may indicate neglect or another safeguarding concern.

Further information: SEND Code of Practice, Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions and Nottinghamshire SEND local offer

Children with a Social Worker

Children may have a social worker because of safeguarding or welfare needs. Their experiences of abuse, neglect or family adversity may affect their attendance, behaviour, wellbeing, learning and relationships.

The DSL will use relevant information about the child's social worker to inform decisions about safety and support. We will contribute to assessments and plans and report new or escalating concerns promptly.

Staff must not assume that children's social care involvement means that another professional will act.

Further information: Promoting the education of children with a social worker and children in kinship care arrangements

Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children

Looked-after and previously looked-after children, also referred locally as children we care for, may have experienced abuse, neglect, loss, disruption or trauma and may require additional safeguarding and pastoral support.

The DSL and Designated Teacher will work with social workers, carers, parents, the Virtual School and other professionals to ensure that educational and safeguarding needs are considered together.

For a looked-after child, the DSL should hold details of the child's social worker and the relevant Virtual School Head.

The responsibilities of the Designated Teacher are set out in Section C: Designated Teacher.

Further information: Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children and Nottinghamshire Virtual School

Children in Kinship Care and Private Fostering Arrangements

Children living in kinship care may require support arising from changes in family relationships, care arrangements or previous experiences. We will respond to individual needs and signpost carers to relevant local support.

A private fostering arrangement occurs when a child under 16, or under 18 if disabled, is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a close relative for 28 days or more.

Staff must report any known or suspected private fostering arrangement to the DSL. We will notify the local authority where required and will not assume that another person has already done so.

Further information: Promoting the education of children with a social worker and children in kinship care arrangements, Nottinghamshire Kinship Support Service, and Private Fostering Procedures

Young Carers

A young carer is a child who provides, or intends to provide, care for another person. Caring responsibilities may affect their wellbeing, attendance, relationships or educational progress.

Staff should report concerns about possible caring responsibilities to the DSL. We will consider appropriate pastoral support, assessment and referral to relevant services.

Further information: Young Carers Notts

Children Absent from Education

Repeated or prolonged absence from education may be an indicator of abuse, neglect, exploitation, mental health difficulties, safeguarding risks within the home or other unmet needs. We will:

- monitor attendance and patterns of absence
- respond promptly to unexplained or concerning absence
- make reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and welfare
- consider absence alongside other safeguarding information
- share information and work with parents, carers and relevant agencies
- refer or escalate concerns where the child cannot be located, risk is increasing or circumstances are not improving

Staff must follow our school's attendance and children missing education procedures. Attendance concerns must not be treated solely as an administrative matter where there may be a safeguarding risk.

Further information: Working together to improve school attendance, Children missing education and Nottinghamshire Children Missing Education arrangements

Children Receiving Alternative Provision

The commissioning school retains responsibility for safeguarding a child placed in alternative provision. Before and during a placement, we will:

- obtain written assurance about the provider's safeguarding checks and arrangements
- know where the child is being educated, including any subcontracted or satellite provision
- share relevant safeguarding and risk information
- monitor attendance, welfare, progress and the suitability of the placement
- review the placement at least half-termly
- act immediately where concerns arise, ending the placement if it is no longer safe or suitable

Any change to the provider, location or circumstances of the placement which may increase risk must be considered promptly.

Commissioning, provider-assurance and placement arrangements are set out in Section L: Alternative Provision.

For more information: Alternative Provision - Statutory Guidance

Children Affected by Domestic Abuse

A child may be a victim of domestic abuse where they see, hear or experience its effects, including where they were not present during an incident or normally live elsewhere.

We will consider Operation Encompass notifications alongside other information known about the child and provide appropriate safeguarding and pastoral support. Operation Encompass notification and support arrangements are set out in Section E: Operation Encompass.

For more information: Domestic Abuse Act - Statutory Guidance

Mental Health, Self-Harm and Suicide Risk

Mental health difficulties may indicate that a child has experienced or is at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Concerns involving self-harm, eating disorders, suicidal thoughts or another risk to safety must be reported promptly.

We will consider immediate safety and medical needs, listen to the child, involve parents or carers where safe and appropriate and seek support from relevant health or specialist services.

Where there is an immediate risk to life or serious injury, staff must contact emergency services on **999**. A safeguarding referral will be made where concerns may be linked to abuse, neglect, exploitation or significant harm.

Where there is an immediate safeguarding or child protection concern, staff must follow Section D: Immediate Danger and Referrals.

For more information: Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges, Mental health and behaviour in schools and MHST Support

Children at Risk of Exploitation, Modern Slavery or Serious Violence

Children may be harmed through criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, county lines, financial exploitation, trafficking, modern slavery, radicalisation or serious violence. Apparent offending or harmful behaviour may be a sign that a child is being groomed, coerced, controlled or exploited. Staff should be alert to indicators including:

- unexplained money, possessions, travel or changes in relationships
- repeated absence or being found away from home or the school
- association with older individuals or controlling peer groups
- threats, intimidation, debt or fear
- carrying weapons or involvement in serious violence
- unexplained injuries or changes in behaviour
- increased secrecy or use of multiple devices or accounts
- concerning online contact or activity

Concerns must be reported promptly. We will consider risks to the child and others, including risks associated with peer groups, transport routes, locations around our school and online environments.

Wider contextual risks and responses are addressed in Section G: Contextual Safeguarding and Extra-Familial Harm.

For more information: Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims, Youth Endowment Fund, Prevent Duty Guidance, Nottinghamshire Child Exploitation Procedures, and Nottinghamshire Prevent Referrals

Children with Protected Characteristics

We are committed to safeguarding practice that is inclusive, anti-racist, anti-discriminatory and culturally informed.

Staff must be alert to bias, stereotyping and adultification, including assumptions that a child is older, more resilient or less in need of protection than they are. Cultural or religious considerations must not prevent professional curiosity or delay action.

Children who are lesbian, gay or bisexual, or perceived to be, may face additional bullying, prejudice or abuse. We will provide a safe environment in which concerns can be reported and support accessed.

Children Questioning Their Gender

Children questioning their gender may experience bullying, distress, social isolation or other safeguarding concerns. Staff will respond sensitively, consider the child's individual circumstances and act in their best interests. Requests for support with social transition will be considered in accordance with KCSIE 2026, applicable legislation and our relevant procedures. Decisions will:

- consider the child's age, needs, wishes, feelings and circumstances
- involve parents or carers unless there is a safeguarding reason not to do so
- involve the DSL where safeguarding considerations arise
- consider relevant professional advice
- be recorded accurately and shared only where necessary
- be reviewed when needs or circumstances change

We will provide appropriate support to any child who wishes to reconsider or reverse an earlier request.

We will challenge bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Further information: KCSIE 2026, Children who are questioning their gender

Individual Support and Review

Children in our school will be offered tailored support that matches their need and circumstance. Support may include a trusted adult, accessible reporting arrangements, pastoral or communication support, reasonable adjustments, an individual safety plan, work with parents or carers and referral to Early Help, Family Help or specialist services.

Support will be reviewed when circumstances or risks change. Staff must continue to report new concerns where a child already receives support or is known to other services.

The available support pathways are set out in Section E: Continuum of Help and Protection.

Section G - Contextual Safeguarding and Extra-Familial Harm

At The Parkgate Academy, we recognise that children may experience harm beyond their family home, including within peer groups, education settings, neighbourhoods, public places, transport routes and online.

We will consider the people, places and relationships surrounding a child, understand their lived experience and work with children, families and safeguarding partners to identify and reduce risks.

Contextual and Extra-Familial Harm

Extra-familial harm may include:

- child criminal exploitation
- child sexual exploitation
- county lines
- financial exploitation
- serious violence and weapon-related harm
- trafficking and modern slavery
- radicalisation
- abuse within intimate relationships between children
- child-on-child abuse and harmful sexual behaviour
- bullying, harassment and prejudice-based abuse
- grooming, coercion and controlling relationships
- abuse or exploitation facilitated through social media, gaming, generative AI or other technology

Different forms of harm may overlap. A child may experience harm in several contexts or be both harmed by others and involved in behaviour that harms other children. **Staff must respond to children as children first. Apparent offending, aggression, absence or other concerning behaviour may indicate that a child is being groomed, coerced, controlled or exploited.**

Specific considerations relating to exploitation and serious violence are set out in Section F, and child-on-child abuse is addressed in Section H.

Recognising Contextual Concerns

Staff should be alert to changes or patterns which may indicate extra-familial harm, including:

- repeated or prolonged absence from education or home
- spending time in locations or with people not previously known
- changes in friendships, relationships or peer groups
- unexplained money, clothing, gifts, travel or mobile devices
- unexplained injuries, fear, secrecy or emotional distress
- threats, intimidation, coercion or debt
- carrying or associating with weapons
- concerning use of social media, gaming platforms or multiple accounts
- being collected by unknown adults or travelling unexpectedly
- declining attendance, engagement or educational progress
- concerns affecting several children or linked to the same location, group or individual

These indicators do not confirm that harm has occurred. Staff must report concerns to the DSL so that they can be considered alongside other information known about the child, their peers and the wider context.

Concerns must be reported and recorded in accordance with Section D.

Understanding Our Local Safeguarding Context

Contextual Concerns	How we aim to address it

Patriotic/alternative terrorism, misogyny and extremism	PSHE Lessons Staff training (annual and regular updates) Local Police links PREVENT training British Values School Values Staff vigilance – professional curiosity
County Lines – Worksop, Mansfield and Retford	• Staff training (annual and regular updates) • Local Police links • Staff vigilance – professional curiosity • Thorough safeguarding systems
Domestic violence: witnessing and physically experiencing	• Local Police links • ENCOMPASS • Staff training (annual and regular updates) • Thorough safeguarding systems • Staff vigilance – professional curiosity • In-school Pastoral Care • External links with Family Support
Harmful Sexual behaviour	• PSHE Lessons • Staff training (annual and regular updates) • Local Police links • British Values • School Values • Staff vigilance – professional curiosity • Online Safety Newsletters to parents • ESHAWH
Sending of inappropriate images	• PSHE Lessons • Staff training (annual and regular updates) • Local Police links • Computing Curriculum • Staff vigilance – professional curiosity • Online Safety Newsletters to parents • ESHAWH
Parental Conflict	• Local Police links • ENCOMPASS • Staff vigilance – professional curiosity • Staff training (annual and regular updates) • Access to Early Help and external mediation services
Online safety: Group chats Tik Tok Snapchat Gaming sysyems	• PSHE Lessons • Staff training (annual and regular updates) • Computing Curriculum • Staff vigilance – professional curiosity • Online Safety Newsletters to parents • ESHAWH • British Values • School Values
Toxic Trio (Mental Health concerns /Violence/Substance misuse)	• Culture where children feel safe, listened to and supported • Staff training to spot the signs • DSLs knowledge of families • Relationships between school and home to facilitate open communication • Professional curiosity • Working with external agencies • Monitoring attendance, behaviour, presentation and emotional wellbeing to identify concerns • PSHE – self-esteem and healthy relationships • School Values promote resilience • DAaRT in Y6

Youth Violence: weapon carrying, drug trafficking/dealing, anti-social behaviour and associates of violent offenders	• DAaRT programme in Y6 • Links with the local Youth Centre • Communication with the local PSCO • PCSO leads assemblies annually with Year 5 and 6 children • PSHE lessons • Building trusted relationships with pupils to open communication and identify concerns. • Pastoral support – Drawing and Talking, Colour and Chat • British Values • School Values
Poverty: food poverty, period poverty, no proper bed to sleep in and unsuitable clothing.	• Foster a culture of inclusion, which ensures no child is disadvantaged • Staff training to recognise signs of and understand the impact this can have • Access to educational experiences, trips, clubs and enrichment opportunities • Local Community links: Life Springs Community Centre for food bank referrals • Signpost families to financial advice • Liase with the housing community to support families • Work with external agencies – Family Support Centre, Social Care, Children's Centre

The DSL will consider safeguarding information and patterns to identify:

- locations where children may feel or be unsafe
- peer groups or relationships associated with increased risk
- recurring concerns involving particular times, journeys or activities
- online platforms or technologies associated with harm
- groups of children who may require additional support
- gaps in our school's policies, curriculum, supervision or physical environment

Responding to Extra-Familial Harm

Where extra-familial harm is suspected, we will:

- consider the child's immediate safety and the risk to other children
- listen to the child and consider their wishes, feelings and lived experience
- record and report the concern through our school's safeguarding procedures
- consider the locations, relationships, peer groups and online environments connected to the concern
- share information and make referrals where required
- work with parents or carers where it is safe and appropriate
- contribute to multi-agency assessments, plans and disruption activity
- provide appropriate safeguarding and pastoral support
- review whether changes are required to supervision, transport, timetabling, site arrangements or the curriculum.

We will avoid responses which place responsibility on the child for harm caused through grooming, coercion, exploitation or abuse. Behavioural or disciplinary action will be considered alongside the child's safeguarding needs and must not replace an appropriate safeguarding response.

Reporting and referral procedures are set out in Section D, and support pathways are set out in Section E.

Professional Curiosity and Inclusive Practice

Staff must remain professionally curious and consider whether a child's behaviour or circumstances indicate harm that has not been disclosed.

Staff must be alert to bias, stereotyping and adultification. Cultural awareness should support respectful practice but must not discourage professional challenge or delay safeguarding action.

Children with SEND, communication needs or other additional vulnerabilities may require adapted reporting arrangements and support.

Working with Children, Families and Safeguarding Partners

We will use accessible opportunities for pupil voice to understand where and when children feel safe or unsafe.

Parents and carers will be involved where safe and appropriate, but their involvement must not delay protective action or place a child or another person at greater risk.

We will work with safeguarding partners and other relevant organisations to share information, assess risk, coordinate support and disrupt opportunities for abuse or exploitation.

Review of Contextual Safeguarding Arrangements

The DSL and senior leaders will review contextual safeguarding information regularly and after significant incidents. The review will consider whether:

- identified risks have changed
- safeguarding responses are improving children's safety
- children know how and where to seek help
- staff training reflects current risks
- the curriculum addresses relevant local and online concerns
- supervision and environmental arrangements remain appropriate
- further action or multi-agency support is required

Relevant findings will inform the child protection policy, safeguarding training, curriculum planning, pastoral support and wider school procedures.

Identified curriculum needs will inform Section J: Safeguarding and Preventative Education.

Section H - Child-on-Child Abuse and Harmful Sexual Behaviour

At The Parkgate Academy, we recognise that children can abuse other children and that this can happen inside or outside our school and online. Child-on-child abuse will be taken seriously and responded to as a safeguarding concern. We maintain an attitude of **"it could happen here"**, even where no incidents have been reported. Abuse will not be tolerated or dismissed as banter, having a laugh, part of growing up or boys being boys. We will respond in a way that:

- prioritises the safety and best interests of all children involved
- considers the child's wishes, feelings and lived experience
- reflects the children's ages, developmental stages, needs and vulnerabilities
- considers any power imbalance, coercion, discrimination or wider peer-group context
- provides appropriate support alongside any disciplinary response
- involves safeguarding partners and specialist services where required

Forms of Child-on-Child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse may include, but it is not limited to:

- bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying
- discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse and other prejudice-based incidents
- physical abuse
- emotional or psychological abuse
- controlling or coercive behaviour within peer or intimate relationships
- abuse connected to prejudice, misogyny, misandry or harmful attitudes
- initiation or hazing-type violence and rituals
- online abuse, harassment, impersonation or manipulation
- the use of technology or generative AI to create, alter or distribute harmful material
- abuse involving threats, intimidation, exploitation or serious violence
- sexual harassment, sexual abuse or sexual violence

Abuse may be carried out by an individual or a group and may affect children of any age or background. It may occur face to face, online or through a combination of both. Children who cause harm may also have unmet needs or be experiencing abuse, neglect, exploitation or trauma themselves.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual Abuse involves involves forcing, causing or inciting a child 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 and non-penetrative acts. Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities can take place online as well as offline, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and the school's policy and procedures for dealing with it. The school refers readers of this policy to refer to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 for the full definition.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive or violent. Behaviour must be considered within its context. We will consider:

- the age and developmental stage of each child
- the nature, frequency and seriousness of the behaviour
- whether there is coercion, intimidation or a power imbalance
- the effect on the child who has experienced the behaviour
- whether the behaviour is repeated or escalating
- any SEND, communication needs, trauma or other vulnerabilities
- the online and offline context
- whether other children may be at risk
- whether the behaviour indicates wider safeguarding concerns

Staff must not attempt to make specialist assessments outside their role. Concerns must be reported to the DSL so that appropriate advice, assessment and support can be obtained.

Further information: Sexual Behaviour and Development in Children, Responding to Children who Display Sexualised Behaviour and HSB Toolkit

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

Sexual harassment refers to 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' which can occur both online and

offline and inside and outside of school. In this context it specifically relates to child-on-child sexual harassment. This includes (but not limited to):

- sexual comments, sexual stories, sexual jokes
- sexual remarks about clothing or appearance
- physical behaviour
- displaying pictures, photos or drawing of a sexual nature
- upskirting
- online sexual harassment; making and sharing or nudes or semi-nudes, sharing of unwanted explicit content, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments online, sexual exploitation, coercing others into sharing images of performing acts they're not comfortable with

Sexual Violence refers to specific sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. This includes:

- Rape
- Assault by penetration
- Sexual assault
- Sexual activity without consent

Our school recognises that a child under the age of 13 cannot consent to any sexual activity, the age of consent is 16 and sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

Further information: Rape Crisis England & Wales

Nudes and Semi-Nudes

Nudes and Semi-Nudes refers to the creation, sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images by children. The term 'images' includes all visual content, such as photographs, videos and livestreams. The term 'nudes' is used as it is the most widely understood term by young people and best captures the full range of image-sharing behaviours that the policy aims to address.

Images may be taken by children themselves or taken or created by another person. They may also be digitally altered or wholly generated using artificial intelligence, including those described as 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes.'
Further information: UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: Advice for education settings

Prevention and Education

We seek to prevent child-on-child abuse through clear behaviour expectations, accessible reporting systems, appropriate supervision, staff training and planned safeguarding education.

Children will be taught that abuse, harassment, discrimination and violence are unacceptable and how to recognise unsafe behaviour and seek help. Teaching will be age-appropriate, accessible and adapted where necessary.

Further arrangements are set out in Sections I and J and in our Behaviour and Child-on-Child Abuse policies.

Further support: KCSIE 2026, Annex A

Reporting Child-On-Child Abuse and Harmful Sexual Behaviour

All concerns about child-on-child abuse and HSB must be reported to the DSL or a deputy without delay and recorded through our safeguarding procedures.

Staff must follow Section D: Responding to a Disclosure, Reporting Safeguarding Concerns and Recording Concerns, Decisions and Actions. They must not investigate the concern or intentionally view, copy, print, save, forward or ask a child to share harmful digital material.

See Online Safety Policy

The absence of the DSL or a deputy must not delay protective action. Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care or contact the police where necessary.

Initial Safeguarding Response

On receiving a report, our school and DSL will consider:

- the immediate safety and welfare of all children involved
- the child's wishes and feelings
- whether medical assistance or emergency protection is required
- whether other children may be at risk
- the need to preserve evidence
- whether parents or carers should be informed
- whether the concern can be managed within our school based on the incident and information
- whether Early Help, Family Help or specialist support is required
- whether a referral to children's social care or the police is required
- whether advice is needed from another safeguarding or specialist service

The DSL will engage with local processes as necessary. In cases of sexual violence, our school will not manage this independently and internally, and local procedures require our school to report the incident to children's social care and the police. General referral thresholds and support pathways are set out in Section D: Immediate Danger and Referrals and Section E: Continuum of Help and Protection.

We will not conduct a criminal investigation. Where children's social care or police are involved, our school will agree how its safeguarding and disciplinary processes should proceed without prejudicing external enquiries.

Risk and Needs Assessment

Where appropriate, our school and DSL will arrange and record an initial risk and needs assessment. This should consider:

- the safety and needs of the child who has experienced harm
- the needs and circumstances of the child alleged to have caused harm
- the safety of other children, including siblings, friends and witnesses
- shared lessons, activities, spaces, transport and social times
- online contact and social-media activity
- the likelihood of repetition, retaliation, bullying or wider peer-group harm
- any environmental or contextual risks
- the actions required to reduce risk and provide support

In cases of sexual violence, a professional risk assessment by a social worker or sexual violence specialist is to be required. Our school's risk assessment is not intended to replace the detailed assessments of expert professionals. Professional assessments should be used to inform the school or college approach to supporting and protecting their pupils and students and updating their own risk assessment.

The assessment must be reviewed when new information emerges, circumstances change or agreed actions are not reducing risk.

Contextual and extra-familial risks must also be considered in accordance with Section G.

Support

Children who report or experience abuse will be listened to, taken seriously and supported. Support may include:

- an identified trusted adult
- a safety or support plan
- adjustments to lessons, timetables, transport or shared spaces
- pastoral, therapeutic or specialist support
- regular review and check-ins
- support with attendance, learning and wellbeing
- action to address bullying, retaliation or online fallout
- liaison with parents, carers and external services where appropriate

The child should not be made to feel responsible for the disruption caused by safeguarding arrangements. Changes should be proportionate, carefully planned and reviewed with the child's needs and wishes in mind.

Children alleged to have caused harm will also receive an appropriate safeguarding response. This may include:

- assessment of their needs and circumstances
- education and support to understand the impact of their behaviour
- pastoral or specialist intervention
- safeguarding or family support
- proportionate disciplinary action
- referral to statutory or specialist services where required

Support does not prevent our school from applying its behaviour policy. Safeguarding action and disciplinary action may take place alongside each other, provided that both are fair, proportionate and coordinated with any external investigation.

Other children who have witnessed, supported, shared information about or otherwise been affected by an incident will also be considered and offered appropriate support.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers will usually be informed and involved in planning support for their child. The DSL will consider communication separately for each child involved.

Parents or carers will not be informed where doing so may increase risk, prejudice an external enquiry, lead to the loss of evidence or otherwise be contrary to the child's best interests. Where statutory or specialist services are involved, communication with families will be agreed with them.

Recording and Confidentiality

All concerns, decisions, referrals, assessments, support and outcomes must be recorded in accordance with Section D: Recording Concerns, Decisions and Actions and Confidentiality and Information Sharing.

Information will be shared only with those who need it to safeguard or support the children involved. Staff, children and families must respect confidentiality and must not discuss or share information through social media.

Review and Learning

The DSL and senior leaders will review significant incidents and patterns to identify any required changes to policies, staff training, behaviour expectations, reporting systems, curriculum, supervision, online safety or pastoral support.

The governing body or proprietor will receive appropriate assurance while respecting the confidentiality and privacy of the children involved.

Section I - Online Safety

At The Parkgate Academy, online safety is an essential part of our whole-school safeguarding approach. We recognise that technology provides opportunities for learning and communication but may also expose children to abuse, exploitation, harmful content or inappropriate contact. Online and offline concerns will be considered together.

Areas of Online Risk

Our approach considers the four broad areas of online risk:

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

Staff will consider whether online behaviour or content indicates wider abuse, neglect, exploitation, harmful peer relationships or risk outside our school.

Whole-School Approach

We will maintain Online Safety and Acceptable Use policies, appropriate filtering and monitoring systems, clear reporting procedures and age-appropriate online safety education. Our arrangements

will address personal devices, mobile networks, emerging technology and risks arising away from school.

Online concerns will be managed through our safeguarding procedures. Staff must report concerns to the DSL without delay where a child may be at risk of harm.

Further information: Teaching online safety in schools

Filtering and Monitoring

The trust board will ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place on school-owned devices and networks. These systems will be proportionate to the children's ages and needs, our provision and identified risks, and will comply with current Department for Education standards.

The responsible senior leader, supported by the DSL and IT staff or technical provider, will ensure that:

- access to illegal and harmful content is restricted
- concerning activity and system failures are identified and acted upon
- filtering does not unreasonably restrict teaching and learning
- staff understand their responsibilities and how to report concerns

Filtering and monitoring do not replace appropriate supervision, education or professional curiosity.

Further information: Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges, Plan technology for your school and Appropriate Filtering and Monitoring

Review of Filtering and Monitoring

Filtering and monitoring systems will be reviewed at least annually and following significant incidents, system failures or changes to technology, provision or identified risk. The review will:

- test filtering across relevant devices, networks and locations
- check that monitoring alerts reach the appropriate staff
- consider how alerts, breaches and system failures have been managed
- identify actions, responsibilities and timescales for improvement

The findings and resulting actions will be recorded and reported to the governing body or proprietor.

Further information: Verify your Internet is Filtered and Online Safety Self-Review Tool for Schools - 360 safe

Generative Artificial Intelligence

We recognise that generative AI may support education but may also create safeguarding, data protection, ethical, security and intellectual property risks.

Permitted AI Tools

The school recognises that Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be used to support teaching, learning and administrative tasks when used safely and responsibly. Staff may use approved AI tools, including:

- Microsoft Copilot

- Google Gemini
- ATOMAS (supported by Microsoft Copilot)

Conditions for Use

All staff using AI tools must do so in accordance with the school's data protection, safeguarding and acceptable use policies.

Staff must:

- Never enter personal, confidential or identifiable information relating to pupils, families, staff members or other individuals into any AI platform.
- Ensure that any information entered into an AI tool is fully anonymised and does not contain personal data.
- Critically evaluate all AI-generated content for accuracy, appropriateness and bias before using it.
- Use AI as a support tool rather than a replacement for professional judgement and decision-making.
- Ensure that any materials created using AI are appropriate for the age, needs and abilities of pupils.

Access and Monitoring

Pupils access digital technology only under appropriate staff supervision and in accordance with the school's online safety procedures.

The school uses **Securly**, a robust monitoring and filtering system, to help safeguard pupils and staff when using digital technologies. Securly provides real-time monitoring and filtering of online activity and helps identify potential safeguarding concerns, inappropriate content or unsafe online behaviour.

Staff are responsible for ensuring that children use AI-enabled technologies only when appropriate, educationally relevant and closely supervised.

Atom IT are our IT providers and frequently review filtering and monitoring systems.

Reporting Concerns

The school takes any concerns relating to the use of AI and online technologies seriously.

- Securly automatically alerts the **Head of School** and **Executive Principal** to suspicious, concerning or potentially harmful activity identified on pupil and staff accounts.
- Any safeguarding concerns arising from the use of AI or other digital technologies must be reported immediately to a **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** in line with the school's safeguarding procedures.
- Staff must report any misuse of AI tools, inappropriate content, data protection concerns or online safety risks to a DSL and a member of the leadership team without delay.
- All concerns will be recorded, investigated and responded to in accordance with the school's safeguarding, online safety and data protection policies.

Children and staff will receive appropriate guidance about the safe and responsible use of AI. We will consider:

- the age and suitability of AI products
- how personal or sensitive information is processed
- the accuracy, bias and reliability of generated content
- inappropriate or harmful interaction with AI applications
- manipulation, impersonation and misleading content
- whether filtering and monitoring systems apply effectively to AI services
- the potential for AI to facilitate bullying, grooming, exploitation or other harm
- the need for human oversight of decisions affecting children

Staff must not enter confidential, personal or safeguarding information into an AI service unless its use has been formally approved and complies with our data protection and information security arrangements.

Concerns involving AI-generated or altered harmful material must be reported to the DSL and be managed under Section H, where applicable.

More information: Generative artificial intelligence (AI) in education

Mobile Phones and Smart Technology

The academies of the Forge Trust are mobile phone-free environments by default. Our arrangements address:

- when and where mobile phones or smart devices may be brought onto the premises
- Pupil devices must be surrendered and stored during our school hours
- reasonable exceptions for medical and accessibility needs will be considered by the Head of School/ Executive Principal
- the use of devices by staff, visitors and contractors
- photography, video and audio recording
- responses to policy breaches
- how safeguarding concerns involving a device will be reported and managed

Children who bring their mobile phone to school, will have a Mobile Phone Agreement, which is signed by their parent/carer. The agreement includes:
At The Parkgate Academy, we understand that some children may need to bring a mobile phone to school for safety and communication outside of school hours. To support this, we allow pupils to bring their phones into school under the following conditions:

1. The mobile phone must be collected by the class teacher and securely stored at **main school office** on arrival and will remain there until the end of the school day when it will be handed back for home time.

2. Children will not have access to their phone during school hours.

3. The school accepts **no responsibility** for loss, theft or damage to the phone while it is on school premises. The phone is brought to school **entirely at the pupil/parent's own risk**.

We recognise that personal devices and mobile networks may bypass our filtering and monitoring systems. Staff must remain alert to this risk and follow the agreed supervision and reporting procedures (BYOD Policy).

More information: Mobile phones in schools and Searching, screening and confiscation in schools

Cybersecurity and Information Security

We will follow current Department for Education cybersecurity standards and maintain appropriate arrangements to protect systems, accounts and personal information.

Cybersecurity incidents may also be safeguarding incidents. Where an incident affects or may place a child at risk, the DSL, senior leaders, data protection lead and technical staff will coordinate the response.

Detailed technical arrangements are set out in our cybersecurity, data protection and acceptable-use procedures.

Staff Responsibilities

Staff must:

- follow our Online Safety, Acceptable Policies and Staff Code of Conduct.
- use school technology and accounts only for authorised purposes
- maintain professional boundaries in electronic communication
- supervise children's use of technology appropriately
- report harmful content, concerning contact, system breaches and filtering or monitoring failures
- preserve relevant information without investigating safeguarding concerns themselves

Staff must not ask a child to share harmful digital material or use personal devices or accounts to communicate with children unless expressly authorised.

Concerns involving harmful digital material must be managed in accordance with Section D: Responding to a Disclosure and Section H: Reporting Child-on-Child Abuse and Harmful Sexual Behaviour.

More information: Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges and National Cyber Security Centre information for schools

Online Safety Education

Children will receive planned, progressive and age-appropriate education which helps them to:

- recognise online risks and harmful behaviour
- understand privacy, consent, personal information and digital footprints
- use technology safely, respectfully and responsibly
- recognise grooming, manipulation, impersonation and exploitation
- evaluate information critically and recognise misinformation and disinformation
- understand the opportunities and risks associated with generative AI
- report concerns and preserve relevant evidence safely
- know where to seek help within and outside our school

Teaching will be accessible and adapted to children's developmental stages, communication needs and SEND. Further arrangements are set out in Section J: Curriculum Content and our Online Safety Policy.

Further information: KCSIE 2026, Annex A

Working with Parents and Carers

We will explain our online safety expectations and provide parents and carers with relevant information about devices, gaming, social media, parental controls, AI, emerging risks and reporting routes.

Parents and carers should report online safeguarding concerns promptly. Where a child may be at risk of harm, we will follow our safeguarding procedures and share information with statutory services where necessary.

Further information: CEOP Education - Parents and Carers and UK Safer Internet Centre - Parents and Carers

Remote Education and Learning Away from our School

Where children access remote education, we will:

- use approved platforms and account
- maintain professional boundaries
- apply appropriate privacy and security settings
- set clear expectations for staff and children
- provide accessible reporting routes

Children and parents or carers will receive appropriate online safety guidance. Concerns will be managed through our safeguarding procedures. Remote education does not reduce our safeguarding responsibilities.

Reporting and Reviewing Online Concerns

All online safeguarding concerns must be reported and recorded in accordance with Section D: Reporting Safeguarding Concerns and Recording Concerns, Decisions and Actions. Staff must consider:

- the child's immediate safety
- whether other children may be affected
- whether relevant information must be preserved
- whether parents or carers should be informed
- whether specialist advice or referral is required

The DSL and senior leaders will review online incidents and patterns to identify any required changes to filtering and monitoring, staff training, curriculum, supervision, policies or support.

Section J - Safeguarding and Preventative Education

At The Parkgate Academy, safeguarding is embedded across the curriculum and wider school culture. We provide planned, progressive and age-appropriate education which helps children recognise risk, develop safe and respectful relationships, report concerns and seek help.

Our approach reflects statutory curriculum requirements, KCSIE 2026, local safeguarding priorities and the needs of our children.

Whole-School Approach

Safeguarding education is delivered through:

- Relationships and Health Education
- Personal, Social and Health Education
- Computing and Online safety
- Citizenship and other relevant curriculum subjects
- assemblies, workshops and themed activities
- pastoral support and targeted intervention
- wider school expectations, relationships and routines

Safeguarding messages will be reinforced through the curriculum, pastoral support and the conduct modelled by adults. We will promote respect and make clear that abuse, bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence are unacceptable.

Curriculum Content

Children will be taught, in an age-appropriate and accessible way, about matters including (but not limited to):

- healthy and respectful relationships, and consent
- personal boundaries, bodily autonomy and seeking help
- bullying, cyberbullying and prejudice-based behaviour
- child-on-child abuse and harmful behaviour
- domestic abuse and its impact on children
- online safety, digital resilience and responsible use of technology
- privacy, personal information and digital footprints
- harmful online contact, manipulation and exploitation
- generative AI, manipulated content, misinformation and disinformation
- criminal and financial exploitation, county lines and serious violence
- grooming, coercion and controlling behaviour
- radicalisation and extremism
- harmful practices, including female genital mutilation and forced marriage
- mental health, emotional wellbeing and resilience
- substance misuse and other risk-taking behaviour
- road, fire, water and personal safety
- how and where to report concerns and obtain support

We will not rely solely on individual lessons or one-off events. Safeguarding knowledge and protective behaviours will be developed and reinforced over time.

Our RHE policy can be found on the school website.

Our PSHE curriculum can be found on the individual year group Topic Maps, located on the school website.

Detailed online safety arrangements are set out in Section I, and child-on-child abuse is addressed in Section H.

Local and Emerging Safeguarding Risks

The curriculum will be informed by:

- safeguarding concerns and patterns identified within our school
- children's views and experiences
- local safeguarding information
- relevant attendance, behaviour and online safety information
- advice from Nottinghamshire safeguarding services
- emerging national and online risks
- learning from safeguarding incidents, audits and practice reviews

Content will be updated where safeguarding information identifies new risks or gaps in children's knowledge. Our school-specific contextual concerns and responses are set out in Section G: Understanding Our Local Safeguarding Context.

Accessibility and Inclusion

Safeguarding education will be appropriate to children's ages and developmental stages and accessible to children with SEND, communication needs, health conditions or other additional vulnerabilities.

We will make reasonable adjustments and consider whether individual children require preparation, targeted teaching or additional support. Children will not be unnecessarily excluded from important safeguarding education.

Additional safeguarding barriers are addressed in Section F: Children Who May Be at Greater Risk of Harm.

Safe Delivery

Sensitive safeguarding topics will be taught by staff who have appropriate knowledge, confidence and support. Staff will:

- use accurate, age-appropriate and inclusive language
- establish clear expectations for respectful discussion
- avoid asking children to share personal experiences publicly
- remain alert to distress, questions or possible disclosures
- explain that confidentiality cannot be promised where a safeguarding concern arises
- report concerns without delay in accordance with Section D: Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

External speakers and organisations will be checked for suitability. Their materials and intended content will be reviewed in advance, and a member of staff will remain responsible for the session and for responding to any safeguarding concerns. Safeguarding arrangements for visitors and external providers are set out in Section L.

Empowering Children to Seek Help

Children will be helped to understand:

- that abuse, neglect, exploitation, bullying and harassment are never their fault
- that unsafe or harmful behaviour should be reported
- who they can speak to at our school and how to report concerns
- what may happen after they raise a concern

- that they will be listened to, taken seriously and supported
- where they can obtain help outside our school

We will use pupil voice and other accessible feedback methods to understand whether children feel safe, know how to report concerns and have confidence in the response they will receive. The school's reporting arrangements are set out in Section A: Reporting Systems for Children.

Children are regularly reminded about trusted adults, reporting systems and sources of support through weekly PSHE lessons, regular assemblies, discussions and other pastoral support.

Working with Parents and Carers

We will provide parents and carers with appropriate information about our safeguarding curriculum and relevant policies and support them to reinforce safeguarding messages at home.

We will consider their views while continuing to meet our statutory curriculum and safeguarding responsibilities. Concerns about curriculum content will be managed through our agreed procedures.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff should reinforce safeguarding messages through their teaching, conduct and interactions with children.

Staff responsible for planning or delivering the curriculum will ensure that content is accurate, progressive, accessible and appropriate to children's needs. They will respond appropriately to questions and disclosures, report concerns without delay and contribute to curriculum review.

Staff will receive appropriate training and guidance to support safe and effective delivery.

Review and Evaluation

We will review safeguarding and preventative education at least annually and sooner where statutory guidance, local or online risks, safeguarding information or learning from practice indicates that change is required. The review will consider whether:

- required content is taught progressively and accessibly
- children can recognise risks and identify sources of help
- staff are confident and appropriately supported
- resources and external providers remain suitable

The review will be lead by the Executive Principal/Head of School and the findings will be reported to the Trust Board annually as part of the Principals Safeguarding Report.

Section K – Concerns and Allegations About Adults

At The Parkgate Academy, all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of our school will be reported promptly and managed fairly and consistently in accordance with Part four of KCSIE 2026 and Nottinghamshire procedures.

This section applies to staff, supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers, contractors and other adults working in or on behalf of our school. Concerns may meet the harm threshold or may be low-level concerns.

Allegations That May Meet the Harm Threshold

An allegation may meet the harm threshold where an adult working in or on behalf of our school 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
- behaved, or may have behaved, in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

The final criterion may apply where behaviour outside our school raises concerns about the adult's suitability to work with children. This is known as transferable risk.

Staff must report allegations immediately and must not investigate the matter, question witnesses or discuss it with colleagues.

Reporting Allegations

Allegations about a member of staff, supply staff, trainee teacher, volunteer or contractor must be reported immediately to the Executive Principal or Head of School, who will normally act as the case manager.

Where the allegation concerns the Head of School or Executive Principal, it must be reported to the Chair of the Trust Board. Where there is a conflict of interest, the concern must be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

If you have a concern about…	**Speak to…**	**Unavailable or conflict of interest…**
A staff member	Phoebe Brooker/ Reece Davy	Phoebe Brooker/ Reece Davy/ Chair of Trustees
A volunteer/contractor	Phoebe Brooker/ Reece Davy	Phoebe Brooker/ Reece Davy/ Chair of Trustees
Executive Principal/Head of School	Chair of Trustees – Sue Trentini	Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The case manager will contact the LADO without delay and before beginning an internal investigation. Where there is an immediate risk to a child, appropriate action must be taken to secure the child's safety and contact the police or children's social care. Any safeguarding concern about a child arising from the allegation must also be managed in accordance with Section D.

For more information: LADO Referral

Initial Response and Case Management

The case manager will:

- ensure that the child is safe and appropriately supported

- record the concern accurately and preserve relevant information
- consult the LADO and follow the advice provided
- consider whether the police or children's social care should be involved
- consider the support required by the adult subject to the allegation
- maintain appropriate confidentiality
- ensure that decisions, actions and reasons are recorded

The welfare of the child is the priority. The process must also be fair to the adult who is the subject of the allegation. The case manager will not inform the adult of the details of the allegation until this has been agreed with the LADO and, where involved, the police or children's social care.

Supply Staff, Contractors and Trainee Teachers

We will not stop using an individual solely to avoid managing an allegation.

Where the adult is supplied or employed by another organisation, we will inform the organisation, consult the LADO and agree respective responsibilities. The employer may undertake its own employment or disciplinary process, but we remain responsible for managing the safeguarding allegation.

Allegations concerning trainee teachers will be managed through the same procedures, with the employing organisation or training provider involved according to the trainee's status. Their checking and induction arrangements are set out in Section L.

Suspension and Alternative Arrangements

Suspension is not automatic. The case manager will consider the risk to children and whether it can be managed safely through changed duties, additional supervision, redeployment or other temporary arrangements.

The LADO and, where relevant, the police or children's social care will be consulted before a decision is made. The decision and reasons will be recorded.

Where suspension is necessary, the adult will receive appropriate information, an identified contact and support.

Supporting Children and Adults

We will consider the support required by the child, their parents or carers and any other affected children. This may include a trusted adult, pastoral or specialist support, safety planning, appropriate information and protection from bullying or intimidation.

The child's wishes and feelings will be considered, although information may be restricted where disclosure could prejudice an investigation or affect another person's rights.

The adult subject to the allegation will be treated fairly, given appropriate information and support and advised to seek assistance from their trade union, professional association or another independent source.

Confidentiality

Information will be shared only with those who need it to safeguard children, support those involved or manage the allegation. All parties must maintain confidentiality and must not share information through social media or with the wider school community.

We will follow statutory restrictions on publishing information which may identify a teacher who is the subject of an allegation before they are charged, unless those restrictions are formally lifted.

Communication with parents, carers, staff or the wider community will be agreed with the LADO and, where involved, the police or children's social care.

General information-sharing requirements are set out in Section D: Confidentiality and Information Sharing.

Outcomes and Record Keeping

The outcome of an allegation will be recorded using the terminology set out in KCSIE 2026:

- substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation;
- malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and evidence of a deliberate act to deceive or cause harm;
- false: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
- unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence either to prove or disprove the allegation; or
- unfounded: there is no evidence or proper basis supporting the allegation.

We will retain a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, how it was followed up, decisions made, the outcome and any learning arising from the case. Records will be retained securely in accordance with KCSIE 2026 and our retention arrangements. Employment references must be accurate, fair and not misleading.

Referrals to the DBS and Teaching Regulation Agency

Our school has a legal duty to refer an individual to the Disclosure and Barring Service where the statutory referral criteria are met, including where the person has been removed from regulated activity because they have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child. Resignation, retirement, settlement or the end of a contract does not remove this duty.

Where a teacher has been dismissed or would have been dismissed for serious misconduct, our school will consider referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency. We will also consider referrals to any other relevant professional or regulatory body.

For more information: Making barring referrals to DBS, Teacher misconduct (referral form) and Teaching Regulation Agency

Low-Level Concerns

A low-level concern is any concern about an adult's behaviour towards a child that:

- is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct
- does not meet the harm threshold or is not otherwise serious enough to require referral to the LADO

- may arise from conduct inside or outside work

“Low-level” does not mean insignificant. Examples may include overfamiliarity, favouritism, inappropriate communication, unauthorised photography, humiliating language or failure to maintain professional boundaries.

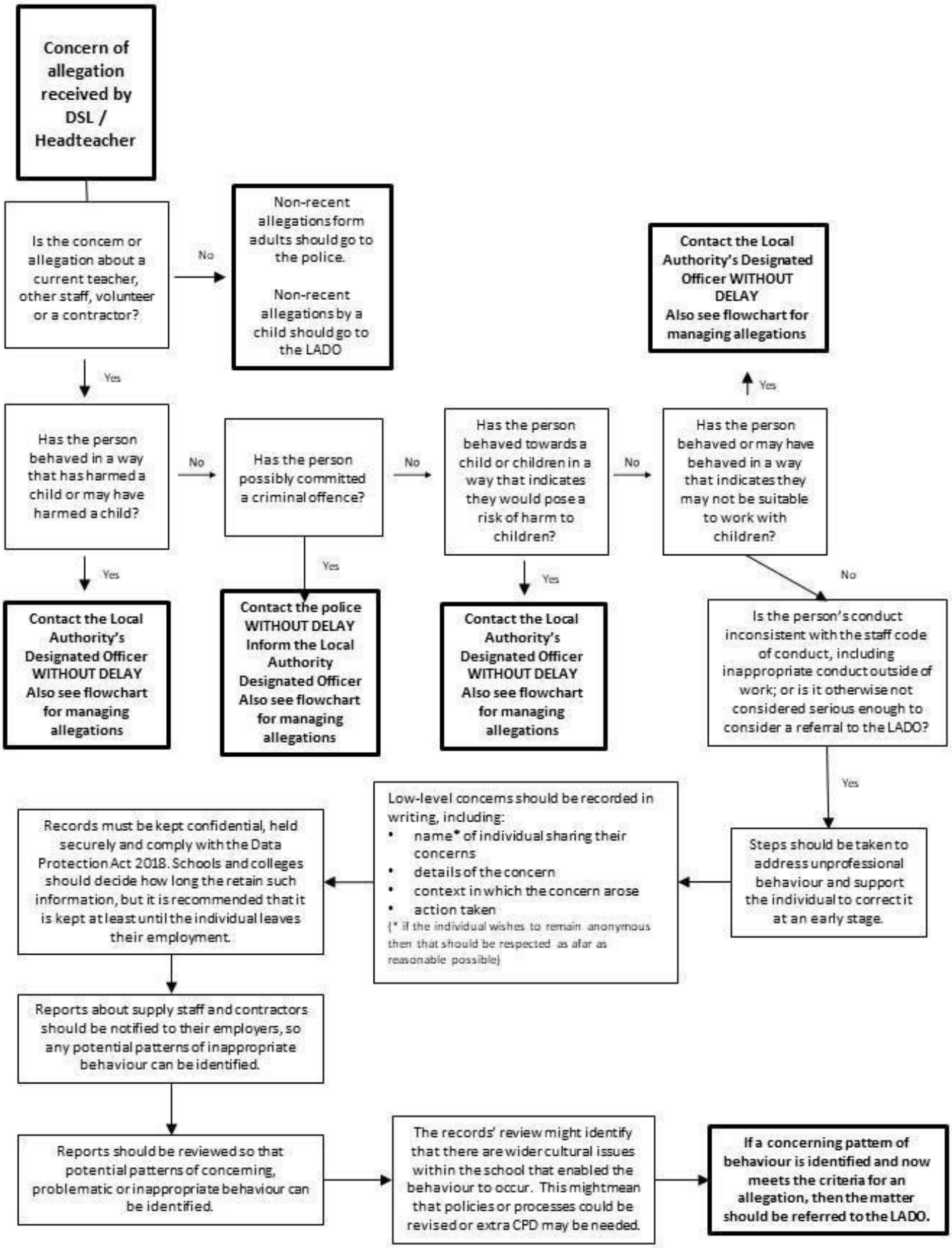
Low-level concerns may arise from suspicion, a complaint, a disclosure, something witnessed by a member of staff or information identified through checks or safeguarding processes.

Professional conduct and ongoing-suitability expectations are addressed in Section L: Ongoing Suitability and the Staff Behaviour Policy or Code of Conduct.

Reporting and Responding to Low-Level Concerns

All low-level concerns must be reported promptly through our school’s agreed procedure.

If you have a concern about…	**Speak to…**	**Unavailable or conflict of interest…**
A staff member	Phoebe Brooker/ Reece Davy	Phoebe Brooker/ Reece Davy/ Chair of Trustees
A volunteer/contractor	Phoebe Brooker/ Reece Davy	Phoebe Brooker/ Reece Davy/ Chair of Trustees
Executive Principal/Head of School	Chair of Trustees – Sue Trentini	Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).



More information can be found in our Low-Level Concern Policy.

The person receiving the concern will:

- record the details clearly and confidentially

- determine whether the concern may meet the harm threshold and seek advice from the LADO where there is doubt
- consider whether the Staff Behaviour Policy or Code of Conduct has been breached
- identify any appropriate management, support, training or disciplinary action
- review previous concerns to identify possible patterns

Where a pattern is identified, or the concern becomes more serious, our school will consider whether the harm threshold is met and whether referral to the LADO or another service is required.

Our school encourages staff to share self-referrals where they believe they may have acted in a way that could be misinterpreted, fell below expected professional standards or placed themselves in a situation which could appear compromising.

Whistleblowing

Staff who have concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practice should use our school's Whistleblowing Policy.

Where staff feel unable to raise a concern internally or believe that a genuine safeguarding concern is not being addressed, they may contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line via telephone at 0800 028 0285 or via email at help@nspcc.org.uk.

Whistleblowing arrangements do not replace the requirement to contact children's social care or the police where a child may be at risk of harm or in immediate danger.

Learning Lessons

At the conclusion of a case, the case manager and LADO will consider whether changes are required to safeguarding procedures, staff training, professional conduct expectations, supervision, recruitment or the school's safeguarding culture.

Learning will be shared appropriately while maintaining confidentiality. The board of trustees will receive suitable assurance that identified actions have been completed. Any required changes to induction or training will be addressed through Section M.

Section L - Safer Working Arrangements

At The Parkgate Academy, we maintain safer working arrangements to ensure that adults working with children are appropriately selected, checked, inducted and supervised.

These arrangements apply according to the adult's role, responsibilities and contact with children and should be read alongside our safer recruitment, staff behaviour, visitor, educational visits, alternative provision and reasonable force procedures.

Safer Recruitment

Our school follows Part three of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and will include:

- clear safeguarding expectations in recruitment materials
- scrutiny of applications, employment history, references and any gaps or inconsistencies
- appropriate safeguarding questions and online searches for shortlisted candidates

- all identity, qualification, right-to-work, prohibition, direction, DBS and barred-list checks required for the role
- involvement of at least one person who has completed appropriate safer recruitment training

Required checks will be completed and recorded before an adult begins unsupervised work with children. Recruitment information will be handled securely and retained in accordance with our procedures.

For more information: KCSIE 2026, Part 3 and The Forge Trust Safer Recruitment Policy

Single Central Record

Our school will maintain an accurate and up-to-date Single Central Record covering the individuals and checks required by KCSIE 2026.

Responsibility for maintaining the record rests with The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Lead. The record will be checked by the Office Manager (also one of the additional DSLs) at appropriate intervals as part of our school's safeguarding assurance arrangements. The Single Central Record supports assurance but does not replace the underlying evidence, risk assessments or safer recruitment procedures.

For more information: Check a teacher's record and KCSIE 2026, Part 3

Ongoing Suitability

Safer recruitment continues after appointment. Staff must maintain appropriate professional boundaries and disclose any change in circumstances that may affect their suitability in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct.

We will consider further checks or a suitability review where a role changes, an individual moves into regulated activity, there is a significant break in service or relevant information raises concerns.

Concerns about an adult will be managed under Section K: Concerns and Allegations About Adults.

Regulated Activity and Volunteers

We will determine whether a role is regulated activity by considering the nature, frequency and circumstances of the work. The previous supervision exemption must not be relied upon where an activity now falls within the current definition of regulated activity. Before a volunteer begins work, we will assess and record:

- the activity and its frequency
- whether it is regulated activity
- the children's ages and needs
- the level of contact and supervision
- the checks permitted and required by law

An enhanced DBS check, including children's barred-list information where legally required, will be obtained for volunteers engaging in regulated activity. A barred person must not be permitted to undertake regulated activity.

Where the school is subject to the EYFS framework, a volunteer must not begin working within provision covered by that framework until the school or maintained nursery school has received the volunteer's enhanced DBS certificate, including children's barred-list information.

Volunteers are approved through application, vetting and induction.

See Volunteer Policy

Supply Staff, Agency Staff and Trainee Teachers

We will obtain written confirmation that the required checks have been completed for supply and agency staff and will verify each person's identity on arrival.

Checks for trainee teachers will reflect whether they are employed by the school or placed through a training provider. Responsibility for checks will be confirmed before the placement begins.

Supply staff, agency staff and trainee teachers will receive safeguarding information proportionate to their role, including reporting routes, staff behaviour expectations and emergency procedures.

Contractors and Self-Employed Individuals

Contractors and self-employed individuals will be checked and supervised according to their role, whether the work is regulated activity and their opportunity for contact with children.

Contractual arrangements will identify responsibility for checks and written assurance. We will verify identity on arrival and will not permit an individual to have unsupervised access to children unless appropriate checks have been completed.

Where a self-employed person requires a DBS check and cannot obtain one through another organisation, we will arrange the appropriate check where permitted.

Visitors and Visiting Professionals

All visitors must follow our school's visitor procedures see Procedures for Visitors to Forge Trust Academies.

Visitors will normally report to reception, provide appropriate identification, sign in, wear the identification issued by the school and follow our safeguarding and conduct expectations.

We will determine required checks and supervision according to the purpose and frequency of the visit and the visitor's contact with children. A DBS certificate will not be requested from every visitor. Where an employer has completed the required checks, we may obtain written assurance and verify the visitor's identity.

Visitors who have not been appropriately checked must not have unsupervised access to children. Checking arrangements must not unnecessarily prevent statutory professionals from carrying out their duties.

External Providers and Use of Premises

Where our premises are used by an external provider working with children, we will seek assurance that appropriate safeguarding and child protection arrangements are in place.

Hire, lease or transfer-of-control agreements will identify safeguarding responsibilities, liaison and reporting arrangements. We will act where a provider fails to meet these requirements, including ending the arrangement where necessary.

Safeguarding concerns arising during externally managed activities should be reported to the provider and through our safeguarding procedures where appropriate. Where we arrange or supervise the activity, our child protection procedures apply.

For more information: Out-of-school settings: safeguarding guidance for providers

Educational Visits, Homestays and Residential Arrangements

Safeguarding will be considered when planning educational visits, exchanges, homestays, residential activities and overnight accommodation - see Off Site Visits Policy (Teams Policy Organiser/ Curriculum).

Risk assessments will consider children's needs and vulnerabilities, staffing and supervision, transport and accommodation, medical needs, personal devices, professional boundaries and procedures for reporting concerns away from school.

Required checks will be completed for adults undertaking regulated activity. Where children stay with host families, we will follow the safeguarding and checking requirements in KCSIE 2026 and private fostering legislation.

Safeguarding concerns arising during an activity must be managed in accordance with Section D.

For more information: Health and safety on educational visits

Reasonable Force and Restrictive Interventions

Our school does not operate a blanket "no contact" policy, as this could prevent staff from protecting a child, providing appropriate support or managing an immediate risk safely. See Use of Restrictive Interventions Policy.

In all instances, staff will aim to de-escalate and contain a situation without the use of force. Staff may use reasonable force only where lawful, necessary and proportionate. Any force used must be no more than necessary and for the least amount of time. When considering or using reasonable force, staff will:

- prioritise prevention and de-escalation
- consider the child's age, SEND, health, communication and mental health needs
- use the least restrictive response available
- protect the child's dignity
- seek medical assistance where required
- record and report the incident promptly
- inform parents or carers where appropriate
- review whether safeguarding concerns or further support are required

Restrictive intervention must never be used as punishment, to cause pain or merely to secure compliance. Planned interventions should be reflected in an appropriate support, behaviour or risk-management plan and reviewed regularly.

Where an intervention raises a safeguarding concern about a child or adult, staff must follow Section D or Section K, as appropriate.

For more information: Use of reasonable force in schools and Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention

Alternative Provision

Where we commission alternative provision, we retain responsibility for safeguarding the child.

Before placement, we will obtain written assurance about the provider's safeguarding arrangements and required checks, confirm where the child will be educated, share relevant safeguarding information and agree attendance, welfare and reporting arrangements.

We will maintain contact with the child and provider, monitor attendance and suitability and review the placement at least half-termly. We will act immediately where concerns arise and end the placement if it is no longer safe or suitable.

The provider must notify us of changes to staffing, location, ownership or delivery which may affect the child's safety or the placement's suitability. Further safeguarding expectations are set out in Section F: Children Receiving Alternative Provision and our Alternative Provision procedures.

Safeguarding Briefing and Conduct

Adults working in or on behalf of our school will receive safeguarding information proportionate to their role, including the identity of the DSL and deputies, reporting routes, conduct expectations and emergency procedures.

All adults must follow our safeguarding arrangements and report concerns without delay. Failure to comply may result in removal from the premises, termination of an activity or contract, disciplinary action or referral to a relevant agency or professional body.

Section M - Safeguarding Training and Policy Implementation

At The Parkgate Academy, we ensure that staff, trustees and volunteers have the safeguarding knowledge and confidence required for their roles.

Training will reflect KCSIE 2026, Working Together 2026, Nottinghamshire procedures, the needs of our children and relevant local or emerging risks.

Safeguarding Induction

All staff will receive safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, at induction. Induction will be appropriate to their role and will include:

- this Child Protection Policy, Staff Behaviour Policy or Code of Conduct, Behaviour Policy and all other applicable safeguarding policies and procedures

- the identity and role of the DSL and deputies, and our school's safeguarding cover arrangements
- how to recognise, report and record concerns about a child
- how to report concerns and allegations about adults, low-level concerns and whistleblowing arrangements
- online safety and staff responsibilities for filtering and monitoring
- emergency and direct referral procedures

Induction Process

All new staff, volunteers, governors, contractors and regular visitors receive an induction to ensure they understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding, child protection and wider school procedures.

New staff induction is delivered by the Head of School or Executive Principal through a face-to-face meeting. During this meeting, the relevant Induction Checklist and Safeguarding Checklist are reviewed in full. These documents form part of the school's Induction Policy.

Volunteers, contractors or regular visitors induction is delivered by the Deputy DSL or the Office Manager, where a confidentiality agreement is discussed and signed.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Head of School or Executive Principal is responsible for ensuring that all new staff and relevant adults receive a comprehensive induction and are provided with the information necessary to carry out their role safely and effectively.

Recording Completion and Understanding

Completion of the induction process is documented using the school's Induction Checklist and Safeguarding Checklist.

Staff are required to sign against each item on the checklist to confirm that:

- The information has been explained to them.
- They have read and understood the relevant guidance and policies.
- They understand their responsibilities and know how to seek further support or clarification where required.

Completed checklists are retained by the school as evidence that induction has been completed and understood.

Supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers, contractors and other adults will receive safeguarding information proportionate to their role, responsibilities and contact with children.

Staff are responsible for reading and following the current policy and must seek advice from the DSL where they are unclear about a safeguarding responsibility or procedure.

Induction will direct staff to the responsibilities and procedures in Sections C, D, I and K.

Staff Training and Updates

All staff will receive safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated and appropriate to their role. They will also receive safeguarding updates as required and at least annually. Training will include, where relevant:

- recognising and responding to abuse, neglect, exploitation and other concerns
- reporting, referrals, information sharing and confidentiality
- Early Help, Family Help and multi-agency working
- children who may be at greater risk of harm
- child-on-child abuse and domestic abuse
- online safety, generative AI, filtering and monitoring
- children absent from education, mental health and exploitation
- concerns about adults, whistleblowing and professional boundaries
- changes to statutory guidance, local procedures and emerging risks

Training will reflect our local context and learning from incidents, complaints, audits and practice reviews.

Planned Training Arrangements

- All staff receive termly statutory safeguarding training, which includes updates on safeguarding legislation, local safeguarding priorities, child protection procedures, online safety and emerging risks.

- Records of training attendance are maintained and monitored by the safeguarding team to ensure compliance.

Staff Absence and Catch-Up Arrangements

- Attendance at safeguarding training sessions is monitored.

- Any staff member who is absent from scheduled safeguarding training will be required to attend a catch-up session at the earliest opportunity.

- Catch-up training may be delivered by a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), through an alternative training session, or via approved safeguarding training materials.

Induction for New Staff

- All new staff joining the school during the academic year receive a comprehensive safeguarding induction before or as soon as possible after commencing employment.

- As part of the induction process, staff are required to read and understand relevant safeguarding documentation.

- New staff receive guidance on safeguarding procedures, reporting concerns, professional boundaries, and the school's safeguarding culture and expectations.

- The completion of induction training and policy reading is recorded and monitored by the school.

DSL and Deputy DSL Training

The DSL and deputies will receive safeguarding and child protection training appropriate to their role at least every two years. Their knowledge and skills will be updated at regular intervals, and at least annually, through training, briefings, professional networks, e-bulletins and other relevant learning. Their training and professional development will support them to:

- understand assessment, referral and child protection processes
- apply Nottinghamshire thresholds and escalation procedures
- contribute effectively to Family Help and multi-agency working
- understand information-sharing and record-keeping responsibilities
- support children who may be at greater risk of harm
- manage child-on-child abuse concerns
- understand online safety and filtering and monitoring systems
- manage safeguarding concerns about adults
- support and advise staff
- keep safeguarding policies and practice under review

The Executive Principal and Head of School will ensure that DSLs and deputies have the time, funding, resources and support required to maintain their knowledge and carry out their responsibilities effectively.

The responsibilities attached to these roles are set out in Section C: Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy DSLs and Safeguarding Cover.

Trustee Training

Trustees will receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction which is regularly updated. This will support them to understand their strategic responsibilities, provide effective challenge and assure themselves that safeguarding arrangements are effective.

Training will include KCSIE 2026, safer recruitment, concerns about adults, online safety, filtering and monitoring, children who may be at greater risk of harm and oversight of safeguarding practice.

The trustee with responsibility for safeguarding will receive additional training appropriate to the role. This does not remove responsibility from the trust board as a whole.

Strategic safeguarding responsibilities are set out in Section C: Governing Body, Trust Board or Proprietor.

Training Records and Evaluation

We will maintain an accurate record of safeguarding training, including:

- the participant's name and role
- the training completed and date
- the provider
- any renewal or update date

- action taken where training was missed

Responsibility for maintaining the training record rests with the Deputy Safeguarding Lead. Training records will be reviewed to identify gaps, overdue updates and additional learning needs.

We will evaluate whether training is understood and improving practice through staff feedback or knowledge checks, the quality of safeguarding records, learning from incidents and audits, feedback from children and assurance activity by leaders and governors.

Where weaknesses are identified, additional training, supervision, guidance or procedural changes will be provided.

Monitoring Implementation

The Executive Principal, Head of School, DSL and governing body / board of trustees will seek assurance that this policy is understood and effective in practice. Monitoring will consider:

- safeguarding concerns, referrals, records and outcomes
- children's understanding of reporting systems
- staff training, confidence and compliance
- DSL availability and safeguarding cover
- online safety, safer recruitment and concerns about adults
- alternative provision and external providers
- actions arising from audits, incidents and practice reviews

Safeguarding assurance is reported to the Trust Board Via the termly Principals report, the trust audit and document check and link trustee visits.

The policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where statutory guidance, Nottinghamshire procedures, our school's arrangements or learning from practice indicate that changes are required.

Nottinghamshire County Council

Child Protection & Safeguarding Flowchart

Concerned for a child's welfare in and outside of school?
Be alert to signs of abuse, low attendance, unusual behaviour and/or changes to

A child makes a disclosure

- **Listen calmly and attentively**, allow them to speak freely and reassure them that they have made the right choice
- **Use open-ended questions** ("Can you tell me what happened?") and **avoid leading or investigative questions**
- **Reassure them** that they are being taken seriously and will be supported
- **Do not promise confidentiality** — explain that you must share the information to keep them safe
- **Avoid physical comfort gestures** unless **clearly** appropriate.
- **Do not ask the child to write a statement or sign your notes**
- **Record the child's exact words** and any wishes or feelings expressed on paper
- **Report verbally to the DSL** or SLT in DSL's absence and **write up the conversation as soon as possible**
- **Where possible**, manage disclosures with **two staff present**, ideally including the DSL or Deputy DSL

Guidance for Using Body Maps to Record Observations of Physical Injury

Where appropriate, **medical assistance should be sought without delay**.

Body maps are a tool to help staff accurately document and illustrate visible signs of harm or physical injury. They should be used in conjunction with the school's safeguarding recording procedures.

- Always use a **black ink pen** (not pencil), and **do not use correction fluid or erasers**.
- **Do not remove clothing** to examine injuries unless the area is already exposed due to treatment or the child's clothing naturally allows visibility.
- **Staff must not take photographs** of any injuries or marks on a child's body under any circumstances. Doing so may result in the staff member being subject to **managing allegations procedures**. Use the body map provided to record observations in line with this guidance.
- **All concerns must be reported and recorded immediately** to the appropriate safeguarding services, such as the **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** or the child's allocated **social worker** if the case is already open to children's social care.

When recording an injury, aim to include the following details for each mark observed (e.g. bruises, cuts, swelling, burns, scalds, lacerations):

- **Exact location** on the body (e.g. upper outer arm, left cheek)
- **Size** of the injury (in centimetres or inches)
- **Shape** of the injury (e.g. round, linear, irregular)
- **Colour** of the injury (note if multiple colours are present)
- Whether the **skin is broken**
- Presence of **swelling**, either at the site or elsewhere
- Any **scabbing, blistering, or bleeding**
- Whether the injury appears **clean or contaminated** (e.g. grit, fluff)
- Any **restriction in mobility** due to the injury
- Whether the site feels **warm to the touch**
- Whether the child appears **feverish or in pain**
- Any changes in the child's **posture or body movement**

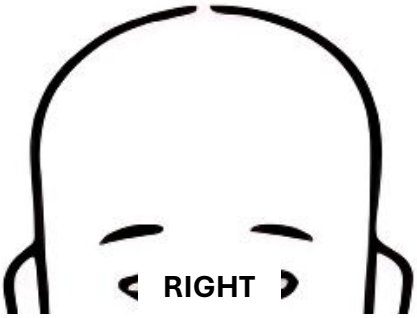
The **date and time** of the observation must be clearly recorded, along with the **name and role** of the person completing the record. Additional comments may be added where relevant.

If **First Aid** is administered, this should be recorded appropriately.

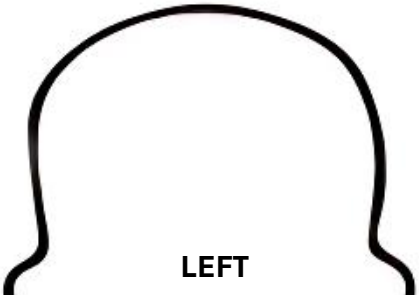
Names for child:		Details of physical injury:
Date of Birth:		
Name of worker:		
Signature of worker:		
Name of school/college:		
Date and time of observation:		

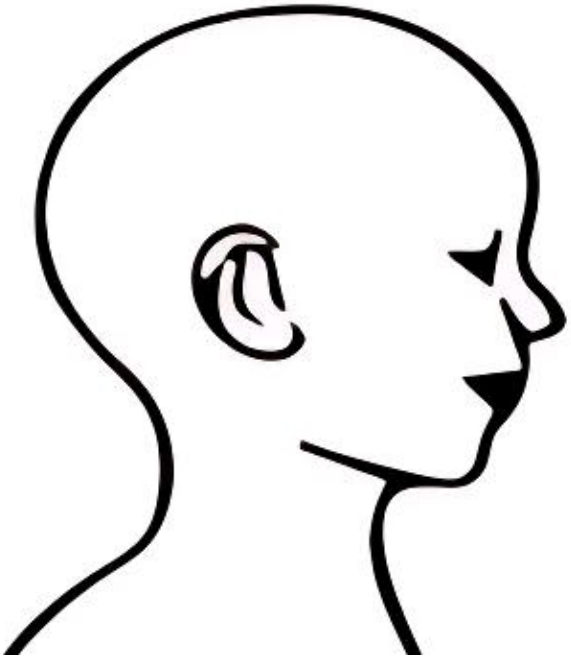
A completed body map should be stored securely within the child's **child protection file**.

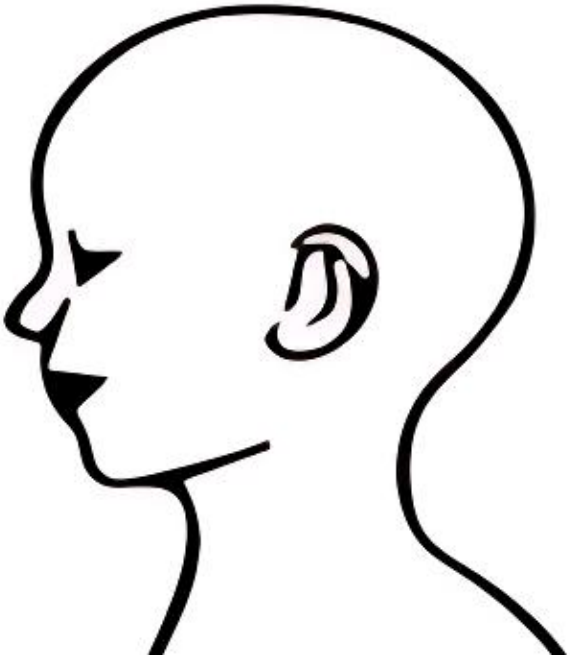
FRONT



BACK

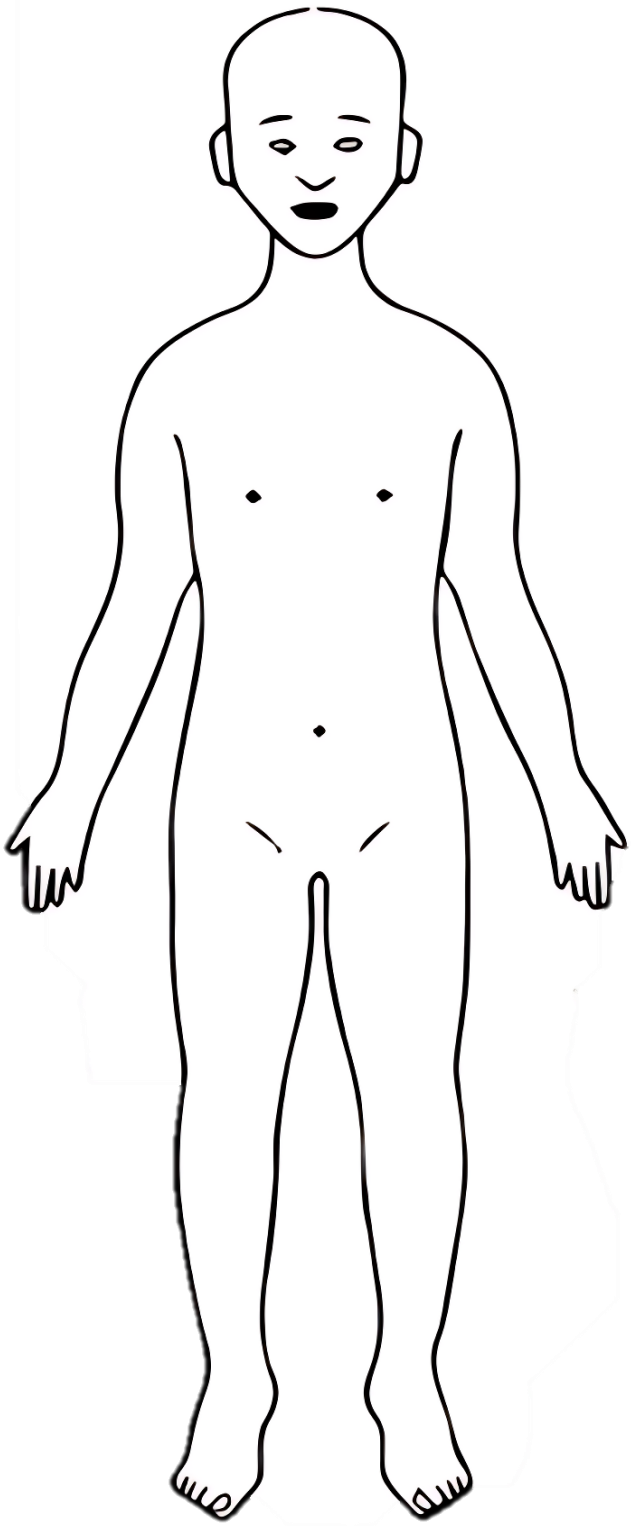




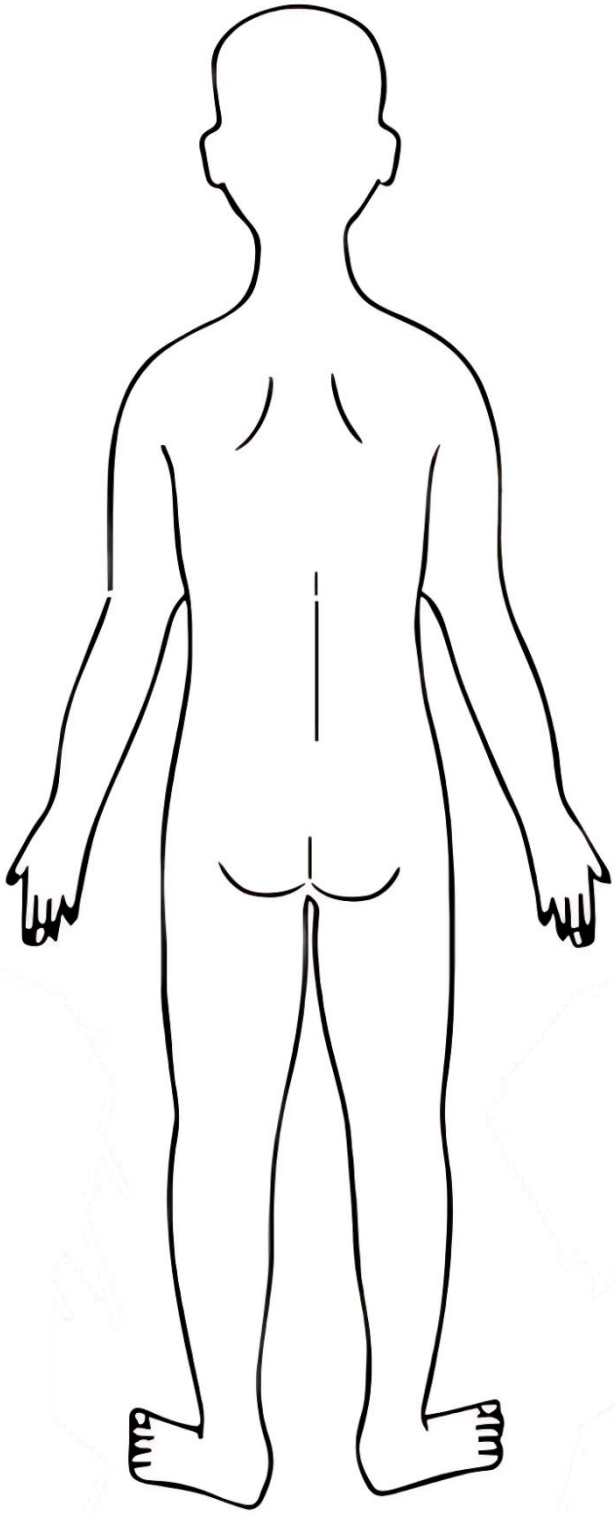


Names for child:		Details of physical injury:
Date of Birth:		
Name of worker:		
Signature of worker:		
Name of school/college:		
Date and time of observation:		

FRONT

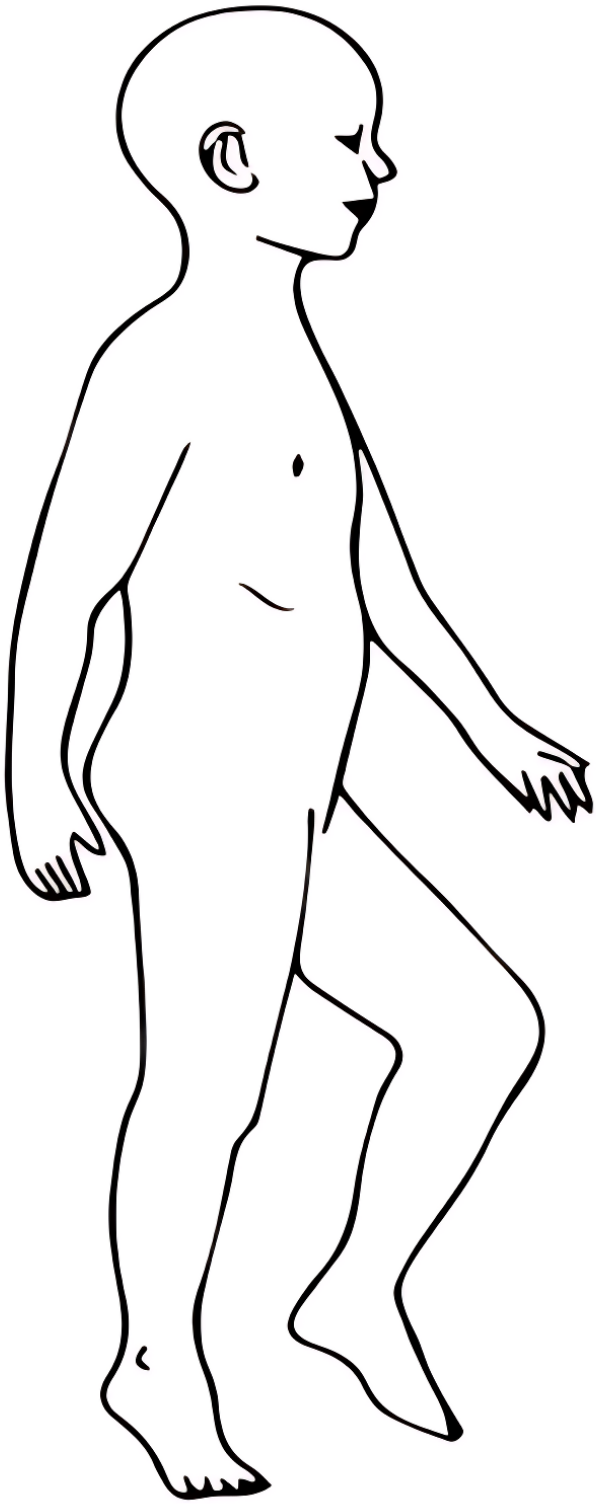


BACK

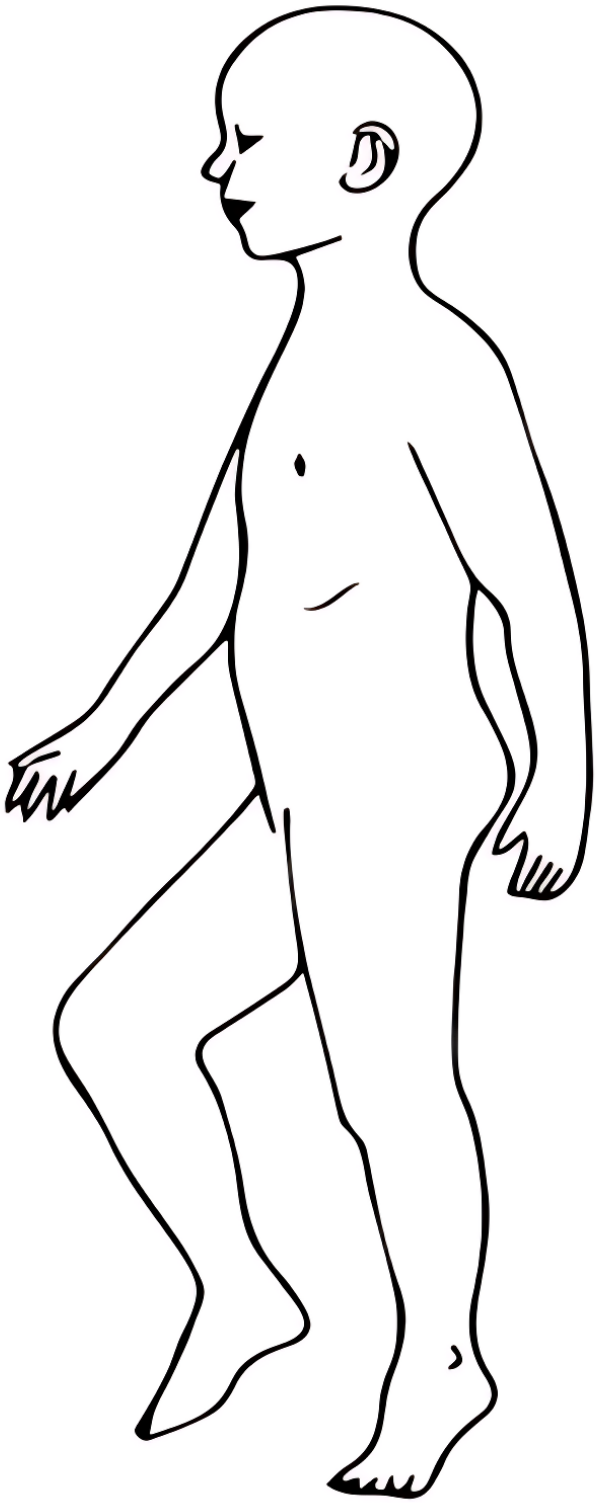


Names for child:		Details of physical injury:
Date of Birth:		
Name of worker:		
Signature of worker:		
Name of school/college:		
Date and time of observation:		

RIGHT

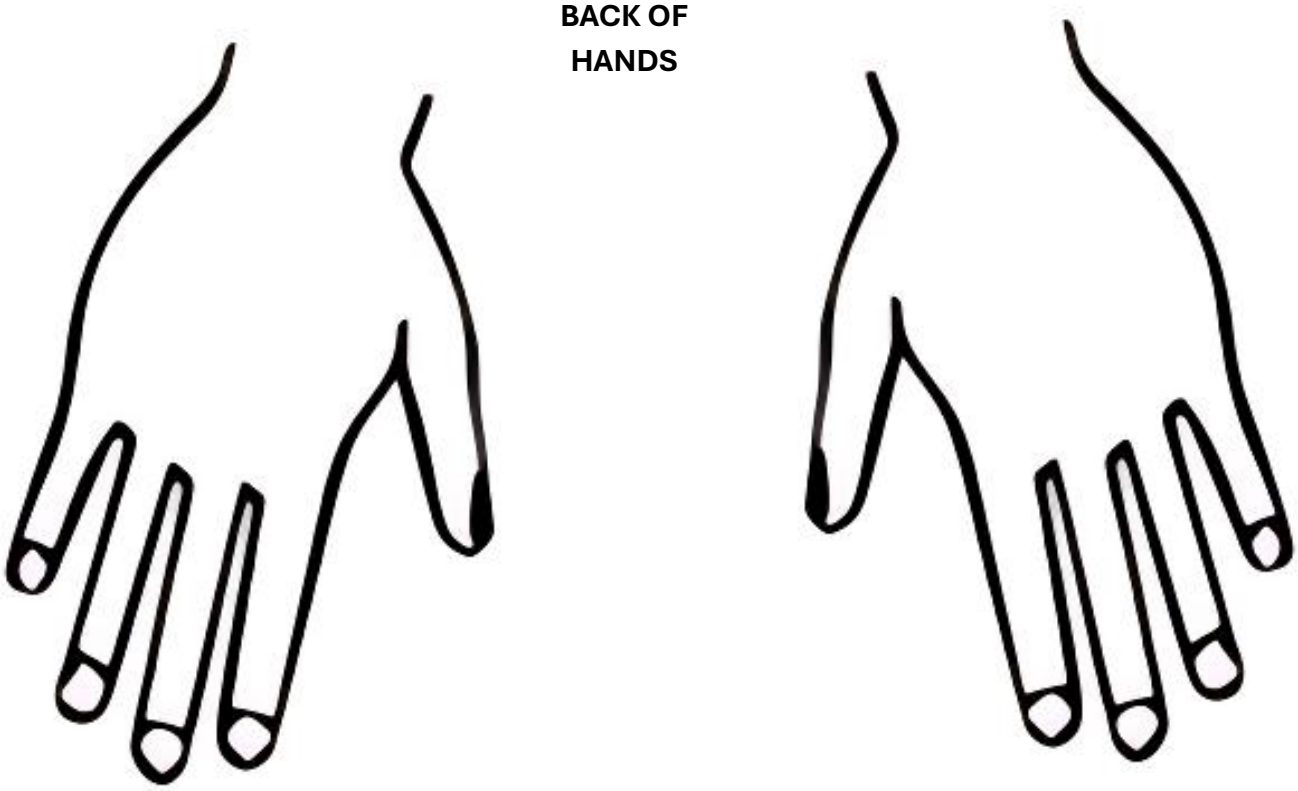


LEFT

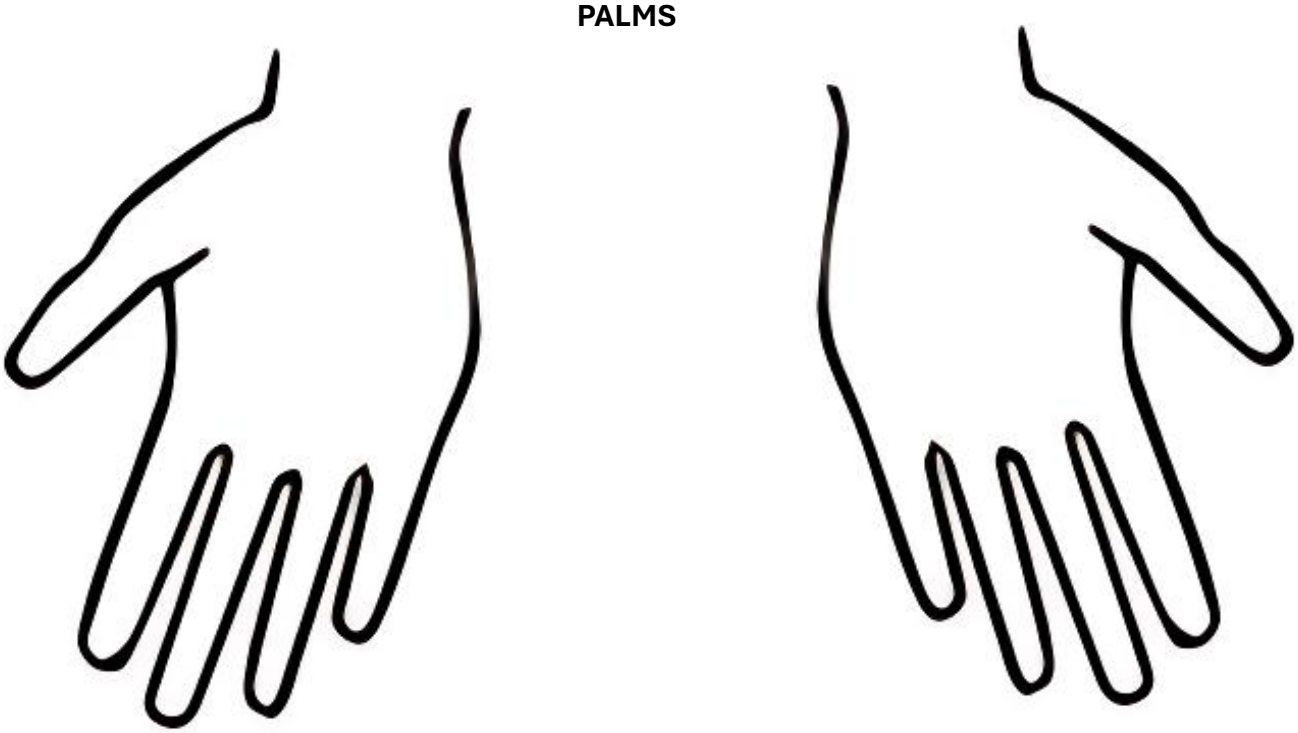
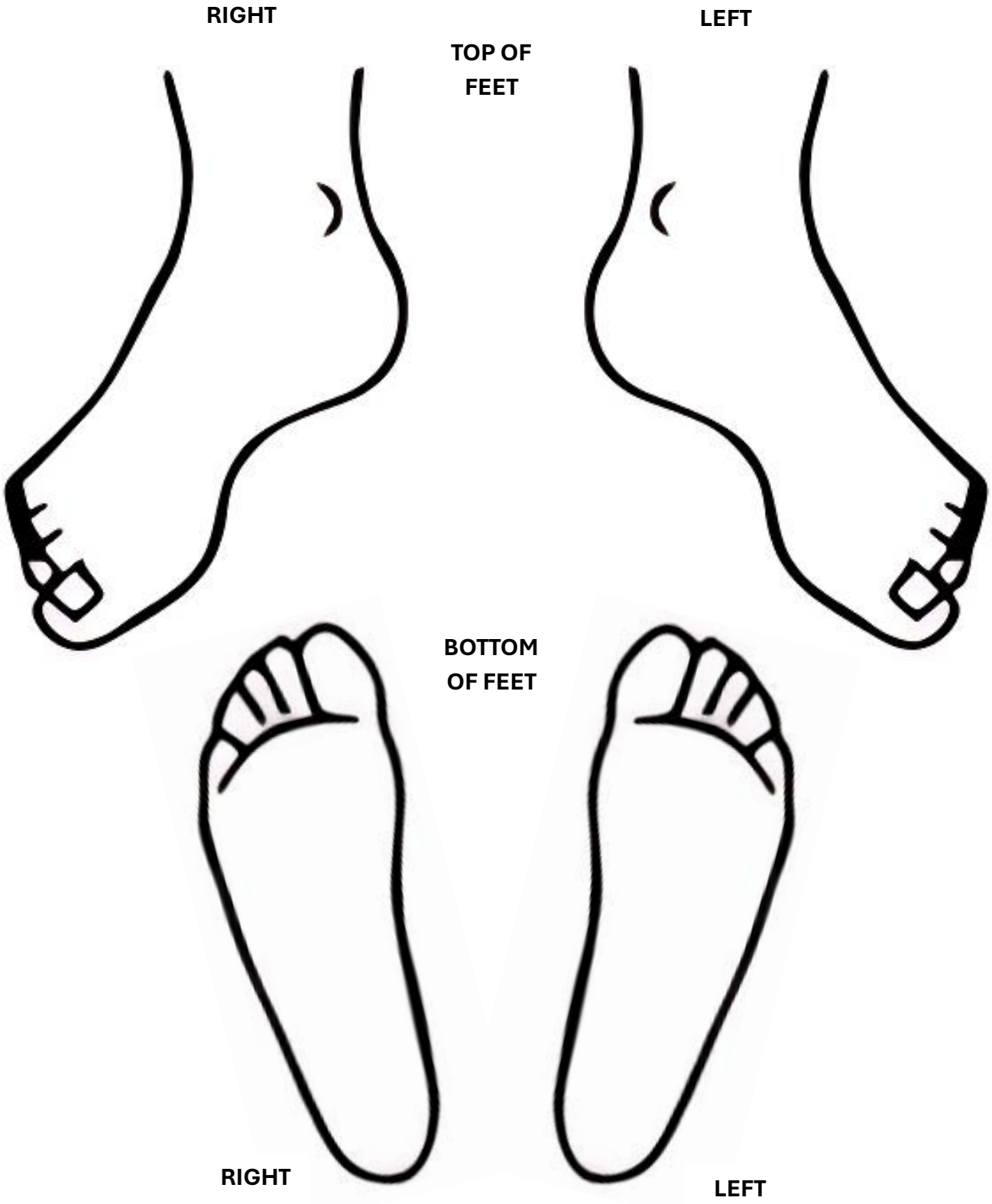


Names for child:		Details of physical injury:
Date of Birth:		
Name of worker:		
Signature of worker:		
Name of school/college:		
Date and time of observation:		

RIGHT **BACK OF HANDS** **LEFT**



RIGHT **PALMS** **LEFT**



Names for child:		Details of physical injury:
Date of Birth:		
Name of worker:		
Signature of worker:		
Name of school/college:		
Date and time of observation: