



NSPCC Safeguarding Report

Avanti Park, Frome

Tuesday 28th April 2023

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1 - Introduction

Avanti Park School, located in Frome, is known for its commitment to three fundamental pillars: Educational Excellence, Character Formation, and Spiritual Insight. The school takes immense pride in fostering an inclusive, warm, and caring environment, where the focus is on building strong relationships between staff and pupils. This emphasis on relationships ensures that every child can flourish and reach their academic and social potential.

At Avanti Park School, the staff work in close partnership with parents to prepare each child for the challenges they will face in life. The school works hard to provide students with memorable experiences in various curriculum areas, including arts, crafts, and whole-school festival celebrations. Through the school's comprehensive curriculum, students develop a reflective and compassionate understanding of themselves and the communities around them.

Avanti Park School caters to students from Early Years to Year 8, spanning the first and middle school age groups. The school has a total student population of 452, with 65 students in the secondary phase. Notably, there have been 180 recent in-year admissions, primarily in the primary phase. Avanti Park School has been a part of the Avanti Trust for the past four years, benefiting from the collective expertise and resources offered by the trust.

Avanti Park School's unwavering dedication to educational excellence, holistic development, and strong community engagement creates a nurturing environment where students can thrive academically, socially, and spiritually.

2 - Objectives

2.1 Activities undertaken

Before the visit to Avanti Park on Friday 28th April 2023, an evaluation of the school's website was conducted to assess the level of emphasis placed on safeguarding and the ease of accessing relevant information. During the visit, several staff members were interviewed, including the DSL/Headteacher, DDSLs, Trust Lead for Safeguarding, a Linked Safeguarding SSC Member, and various teaching staff. Additionally, a group of students were engaged in conversations as part of the review process. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the school's infrastructure and amenities, a thorough tour of the premises was conducted, examining the layout and facilities.

2.2 Safeguarding policy and website information

During the review of the school's website, it was observed that there were several pathways available to access the Safeguarding Policy. These routes included links to both the school policy and the trust policy template. After careful examination, it was determined that the safeguarding section under the 'About' tab provided valuable information along with the contact details of the safeguarding team. However, it was noted that there is room for improvement by expanding the content to include more comprehensive information for parents regarding current topics and concerns related to safeguarding.

Recommendations and suggestions

- ***Review the safeguarding page within the website to make the area even more explicit and easily accessible. This could also incorporate further links to other support pages / external agencies that reflect the current needs of the school community.***

3 – Site security, physical environment, visitor information

3.1 Access to the Site

Avanti Park has implemented various security measures to ensure the safety of both pedestrians and vehicles on the site. A barrier car park is in place to restrict access, which is only available for staff, visitors, and parents with disabled children. The school communicates its travel plan to parents each week through a newsletter to ensure that parents understand the parking situation and other pertinent information.

The school works in close collaboration with the local police to ensure that the security measures in place are effective and up-to-date. Checks to ensure that the perimeter fencing of the site is secure are undertaken regularly. CCTV cameras have been installed, which cover all entrances to the school to provide additional security. It is evident that Avanti Park School takes the safety and security of its students and staff very seriously and has taken significant steps to ensure that the site is secure.

3.2 Visitors

Visitors to the school are required to sign in using the electronic system that is in place. During my visit I was asked to provide my DBS and ID checks were completed. I was directed to read the safeguarding information that was provided on the signing in screen. This could have been improved by the implementation of a safeguarding leaflet. However, I was quizzed on who the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) was after reading the information to check my understanding. The reception area is secure.

3.3 Staff access

The staff at Avanti Park strictly adhere to digital sign-in procedures when entering the premises, using a designated entrance. To maintain accountability and safety, staff members are required to sign out if they leave the school site. These procedures ensure a systematic record of staff movement and enable effective monitoring of staff presence on site.

3.4 School environment

The school tour left a highly positive impression, highlighting numerous purpose-built areas and a well-maintained old building that is ideally suited for a primary/middle school setting. The displays found throughout the school were abundant and kept up to date, displaying a commitment to showcasing students' work and achievements. The single-sex toilets were meticulously maintained, ensuring a clean and comfortable environment for students. The outdoor spaces were in excellent condition, with the perimeter fencing intact, indicating significant investment in maintaining the premises. The medical room was efficiently managed, with proper upkeep and maintenance evident during the visit. Given the site's

location, it was noted that certain areas could benefit from privacy screening, such as the implementation of bamboo fencing to enhance privacy.

Recommendations and suggestions

- › **Revisit the visitor information to ensure that contact information for the Safeguarding Team is clear, as should be the expectations for visitors. This should mirror expectations set within the trust/policy.**
- › **Explore the potential for the addition to screening (such as bamboo) to the 'open' areas of the school site (for instance the sports area).**

4 - Leadership and management of safeguarding

4.1 Safeguarding management structure

Avanti Park School provides a range of support within the school to ensure the well-being and safeguarding of its students. The school has a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who is the Principal, supported by two deputy designated safeguarding leads (DDSL). The DSL takes the lead in training staff, including new staff members, on safeguarding matters. One of the DDSLs also serves as the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) and does not have any teaching commitments. Another DDSL holds the role of Designated Teacher for Looked After Children (LAC) and is a teaching staff member.

To ensure that staff members are aware of the designated safeguarding lead on duty, the school regularly communicates this information through staff newsletters. In addition to the designated safeguarding team, Avanti Park has a strong pastoral structure in place. In the primary phase, class teachers play a crucial role in supporting students, with further support provided by phase leads. In the secondary phase, tutors are assigned to students, and phase leads are responsible for their respective year groups. The leadership team also plays an active role in providing support across the whole school.

The school has three Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA) and two Personal, Social, Health, and Economic (PSHE) leads, one for the primary phase and another for the secondary phase. These individuals are involved in organising external speakers and contributing to the well-being and development of students. Additionally, the school utilises a counselling service called 'Place to be' for counselling sessions, and low-level talking therapy is also available to students.

The school collaborates with the Frome Learning Partnership, which employs Parent Family Support Advisors across Frome. These advisors support families through Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings. It is important to note that the Parent Family Support Advisors are not directly involved in the early help services provided by Children's Services.

There are robust support systems in place, encompassing designated safeguarding leads, pastoral staff, counselling services, and collaboration with external partners to address the well-being and safeguarding needs of its students.

4.2 DSL/DDSL Training

Both the DSL and DDSL have undertaken training in the last two years to ensure their knowledge and skills in safeguarding are up to date. The DSL has completed training provided by various providers, including Equality and Diversity, Fire Safety, Online Safety, Child-on-Child Sexual Violence and Harassment. The team have also received training on topics such as Suicide First Aid, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), and Sexually Harmful Behaviour. Additionally, the DSL has completed the required PREVENT training, which is undertaken by all staff every two years.

The DDSL, who is also a teaching staff member, has undergone training in Non-Violent Resistance, Thrive, and Nurture Group. However, there has been no specific training on Trauma-Informed Practice this is something that is being reviewed and will be implemented if the school moves towards implementing this practice.

Avanti Park has established good relationships with the training team and the Education Safeguarding team within the LA. The headteacher has worked closely with them for several years, ensuring accessibility and effective collaboration.

To stay updated with policy changes, emerging issues, and other safeguarding developments, the DSL is subscribed to the Key Safeguarding newsletter and receives termly briefings from the LA. The DSL also receives updates from the NSPCC through the CASPAR and education updates.

Identified future training needs include the implementation of a Mental Health Lead position, in addition to the existing mental health first aiders already in place at the school. This signifies the school's recognition of the importance of mental health support and their intention to address it further through specialised training.

4.3 DSL Capacity

The DSL holds the role of headteacher, which aligns their safeguarding responsibilities with their wider contributions to the school. The decision for the headteacher to also take on the DSL role was made in response to the state of safeguarding when the headteacher assumed the post. This arrangement ensures that safeguarding remains a top priority within the school's leadership.

In managing their various roles, the DSL effectively triages responsibilities among the safeguarding team, ensuring that tasks are managed meticulously. This approach helps maintain a manageable workload. Additionally, the DSL feels that the capacity for safeguarding is sufficient and will be further enhanced by training a Higher-Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) in the secondary phase to become a DDSL.

The trust has been highly supportive, particularly in areas such as health and safety, ensuring that appropriate resources are available to address safeguarding needs. This support enables the DSL to carry out their responsibilities and maintain a secure and safeguarded environment for students.

The DSL and wider leadership team recognises the importance of their safeguarding role within the broader context of their positions. They feel that they have the necessary time,

resources, and support to effectively fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities and maintain a strong commitment to ensuring the well-being and safety of all students.

4.4 Supervision and support

Currently, there is no formal supervision in place for the DSL and DDSL at Avanti Park School. However, the trust is actively exploring the introduction of supervision for the DSLs, including the SENCo, starting from the new year. This initiative is being considered in collaboration with the Open Minded charity, indicating a proactive approach to supporting the well-being and professional development of the DSLs.

In terms of well-being support, the trust shares information about Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) and other relevant resources to promote the well-being of staff, including the DSL and DDSL. It is also understood that the line manager would provide support for well-being for the DSL/Headteacher; however, there is a consideration that it should not be limited to just a line management meeting to ensure holistic support.

4.5 Day to day management of safeguarding

The school utilises CPOMS as its electronic system for reporting concerns. Notifications generated through CPOMS are received by the entire safeguarding team. When a concern is raised, the first team member who sees it takes responsibility for handling and addressing the concern. While there is no formal triaging process in place, the team ensures that concerns are promptly attended to and appropriately actioned. Closed cases are managed by the safeguarding team, ensuring that they are properly closed off.

However, there are concerns regarding the staff categories within the system, which is currently being addressed by the trust. The school acknowledges the need for implementing categories for low-level concerns to streamline the reporting process effectively.

For 'out-of-hours' concerns, including holiday periods, the school relies on the safeguarding hotline provided by the Local Authority (LA). This ensures that staff and stakeholders have access to immediate support and advice.

The DSL and DDSLs are accessible sources of support and advice for staff members who have concerns. Their availability and approachability make them the main point of contact for staff seeking guidance in safeguarding matters.

4.6 Strategic Management of safeguarding

The headteacher holds the responsibility and oversight for strategic safeguarding within the school. They play a crucial role in ensuring that safeguarding measures align with the school's overall strategic direction.

Regarding future plans, the school is working collaboratively with the trust lead to identify areas that require further development. An annual audit conducted by the Local Authority (LA) helps inform the ongoing improvement efforts. It is worth noting that no significant concerns have been raised in recent audits.

Recent work has been focused on adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of the students, with a specific emphasis on addressing safeguarding concerns and contextual

needs. The school aims to ensure a clear link between the curriculum and safeguarding practices.

Safeguarding is integrated into the School Self-Evaluation Form (SEF), highlighting its significance as a priority area. It is also incorporated into the school's action plan, demonstrating the commitment to ongoing improvement and safeguarding enhancement.

The DSL collaborates with various areas, including the Mental Health Lead, SENDCo, DTLAC (Designated Teacher for Looked After Children), and the Behaviour Lead. This collaborative approach ensures a holistic and integrated approach to addressing the diverse needs of students in relation to safeguarding.

The DSL is able to articulate key issues faced within the school and the local community. In Frome, concerns related to county lines activity have been identified, along with the proximity of the school to a park, which could pose safety risks if students are unaccompanied. Additionally, some parents have chosen to withdraw their children from workshops conducted by the police, which may be attributed to historical factors when the school was a Steiner school. Understanding and addressing these key issues is vital for effective safeguarding practices within the school and its local community.

4.7 Governance of safeguarding

Avanti Park has a named Safeguarding Governor (SG) who is mentioned in the school policies and on the website. Contact details for the SG are provided to ensure easy accessibility. The SG has a social work background and has been in the role for about a year.

The SG has received standard safeguarding training and online training courses related to safeguarding issues. There have been meetings between the SG and the SSC, with two meetings having taken place so far.

Regular safeguarding meetings are held, and following the review, there will be a meeting to create an action plan based on the findings. The SG ensures that a written account of safeguarding discussions and actions is provided as required.

The SG sees their role as both supportive and challenging for the school. They are not afraid to provide supportive challenges and are clear about their responsibilities.

The SG identifies several strengths in the school's work related to safeguarding. They highlight the proactive approach of the DSL and senior leaders in understanding issues of concern. The open leadership style and presence of staff, including the DSL, are seen as strengths. The SG appreciates the safeguarding welfare check that occurs as staff interact with parents daily.

Challenges acknowledged by the SG include the variability of services available due to postcode differences, as well as addressing the diverse learning needs of the students effectively. The SG recognises the need for continuous improvement in addressing these challenges.

Recommendations and suggestions

- › **Review CPOMS from a staff point of view (all DSLs across the trust should do this – led by the Inclusion lead) to ensure that there is an understanding of how things work.**
- › **Additional training such as Equality could be updated as needed for the identified staff.**
- › **Work with the trust to ensure a Mental Health Policy is implemented that includes trained staff members on being Mental Health Leads.**
- › **Regularly review the Headteacher’s workload and ensure that if there is a need, review the role re. DSL and look at reappointing if necessary (with the Headteacher remaining as DDSL).**
- › **Explicit wellbeing meetings were in place for the Headteacher/DSL, but these are no longer discreet. This could be explored at trust level to see if they can be put back into place as the headteacher found them useful.**
- › **Continue work with parents to ensure that they are onboard with things around safeguarding and buy-in to the school. So that there is not an ‘opt out’ culture.**

5 – Safeguarding Procedures and Record Keeping

5.1 Staff know how to report a concern

Staff at Avanti Park have a clear understanding of the process for passing on concerns, both regarding children and their colleagues. They are aware that CPOMS is used as the reporting system for concerns, and they also know to communicate any concerns to the DSL team if necessary. Staff have been provided with guidance on how to record their concerns, including what information should be included. They understand the importance of accurately documenting concerns, including for low-level issues, and they are aware of the designated timescales and procedures to follow.

In the event of a concern about another member of staff, the appropriate procedures are in place. Staff know to follow the school's policies and reporting mechanisms, which may involve speaking to the DSL team or utilising the established reporting channels. Similarly, if a concern involves the Headteacher, staff are aware that they can reach out to the head of the Southwest hub through the email system.

Although staff generally have a good understanding of the reporting process, there is a need for reinforcement and reiteration of the school's policies. It is important to ensure that all staff are fully informed and updated on the policies and procedures to promote a consistent and effective approach to handling concerns.

5.2 Staff know how to escalate a concern

The staff who took part in the review process have clarity on the procedures for escalating a concern should the need arise, although there haven't been any recent cases requiring escalation. They understand the steps they would need to take to ensure a concern is appropriately raised to the necessary authorities or higher levels of management.

The school's whistleblowing policy is known to staff, although there may be some variation in their awareness of the specific details contained within the policy. The policy is discussed at

the beginning of the academic year, emphasising the importance of creating a culture where staff feel comfortable and supported in using the whistleblowing policy if necessary.

Staff are aware of external support options available to them for discussing concerns. They have knowledge of resources such as the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line, which provides guidance and assistance in navigating whistleblowing procedures.

In addition, staff demonstrate awareness of the local safeguarding board. They understand the role and purpose of the board in safeguarding matters and its importance in ensuring the well-being of children and young people.

5.3 Staff are given feedback and support

In situations where it is appropriate and necessary, staff are provided with relevant feedback regarding the actions taken or outcomes of their concerns. However, staff understand that in some cases, due to confidentiality or safeguarding reasons, they may not receive detailed feedback.

The school recognises the importance of supporting staff who have received a disclosure or have been involved in challenging situations. Personal support is offered to staff in such circumstances, and it is provided by both the DSL and the wider safeguarding team. Staff are aware of the availability of this support and know that they can seek assistance and guidance when needed. Additionally, staff have knowledge of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) as an additional resource for personal support.

The DSL at Avanti Park plays a prominent role in school life. They provide wider support and guidance on safeguarding issues, ensuring that staff have the necessary information and resources to address concerns and maintain a safe environment for students.

5.4 Record keeping

Paper records are not used as historic records have been scanned and stored electronically, as are new documents that come in paper format. Online records are securely stored and accessed through the CPOMS system. The use of electronic storage ensures that records are protected and accessible to authorised personnel only.

Records viewed during the review process included a comprehensive chronology of events (maintained by CPOMS), actions taken, decisions made, and outcomes. This information is documented to provide a clear and detailed account of safeguarding concerns and the subsequent steps taken to address them. Additionally, relevant documents such as minutes from meetings are attached to student electronic files to provide a complete record of safeguarding-related discussions and decisions.

When students transfer to new settings, the DSL is contacted by the receiving DSL to discuss the transfer of files. A record is kept of files that have been sent and received to ensure that information is accurately tracked and maintained during the transfer process.

5.5 Analysis of data

Safeguarding data is actively used to identify trends and emerging issues. The safeguarding team collaborates to analyse the data and strategise appropriate support measures. Trends



noticed on CPOMS, including the number of incidents, are reported to the SSC, this allows for a comprehensive overview of safeguarding concerns and facilitates informed decision-making.

The analysis of CPOMS cases is done on a half-termly basis within the team to ensure a comprehensive review and to identify any areas that may require additional attention or support.

5.6 Single Central Record and Safer Recruitment

The School Business Manager is responsible for maintaining the Single Central Record (SCR). The Trust provides support for this process and regularly reviews the document to ensure compliance.

When onboarding new staff, the Trust Central team takes the lead in the background checking process, and the relevant staff members are trained in Safer Recruitment. However, the school does not currently have easy access to the hard copies of personnel records. This is an ongoing project being carried out by the central team. During the review, I had the opportunity to review electronic copies of the requested files. At present, DBS checks are only conducted upon initial employment, although a review is underway to ensure best practice is followed.

Overall, the Single Central Record was found to be compliant, and it is evident that a significant amount of work has been invested to bring it to its current state.

Recommendations and suggestions

- › **Data use: ensure that data is utilised over a period of time to allow comparison. Although the trust only require the data at given points throughout the year, the DSL should keep a larger log to enable the tracking of trends. This will help with the implementation of strategies and curriculum to meet the needs of the school population.**
- › **SCR: Review how original documents are authorised once copied i.e., ensure that all copies are individually signed and dated to demonstrate that the original has been seen and when.**
- › **SCR: Ensure that any overseas checks that require translating are done by a certified translator. The use of Google Translate is not best practice.**
- › **Ensure that staff are confident in the referral process if there are concerns about colleagues. This should include who to refer if the concern is about the Headteacher.**

6 - Multi-Agency Working

6.1 Engagement with the Local Authority

The school has arrangements in place for referrals to the local authority. An advice line is available for guidance on the next steps to take. Referrals are made using the Early Help Assessment, which involves completing an online form followed by a phone call.

While there is no specific Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) referral line in Somerset, the Early Help Assessment is utilised for all agencies involved in the referral process.

The school receives positive support from the local authority, and there is a partnership in place for safeguarding purposes. The DSL and the safeguarding team attend meetings of the local safeguarding partnership on a regular basis.

6.2 Engagement with Children's Social Care

There are currently:

- Child Protection - 1
- Child In Need - 1
- LAC – 1 (8 former)
- TAF - 10

The DSL ensures that they attend all relevant meetings and provide reports accordingly. They make sure that meetings are scheduled at a convenient time for them to attend.

Previously, the safeguarding team have had to challenge decisions made, but this has been on an informal basis. However, the team are fully aware of how to escalate through the local authority 'Professional Differences' form if needed.

6.3 Engagement with other organisations

The school has regular contact with the local police, and a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) meets regularly with the headteacher. The PCSO works with the children on areas such as safety.

In terms of health support, the school has recently had communication with the local doctors' surgery regarding a new system for team meetings to discuss shared families. While the school nurse is not able to be present frequently due to funding limitations, referrals can be made to access their services.

For mental health support, the school can make referrals to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Additionally, there is a provision called "Young Somerset," which offers low-level Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) for students who do not meet the threshold for CAMHS. Onsite, the school has a service called "Place to Be," which is funded by the Frome Learning Partnership. The school also pays for low-level talking therapy through a company called "Speak Easy." Referrals can also be made to organisations such as WHY (We Hear You) and support can be accessed through the Adoption Support Fund.

The school is connected with the local community through organisations like Fair Frome, which offers support to families in terms of financial assistance and food banks. The local council also provides various forms of support to the school.

There are various sports-related opportunities connected to the school, including partnerships with organisations such as Circamedia, IG Sports, and the local football club. These opportunities often take place after school hours.

Recommendations and suggestions

- › **Although the safeguarding team know how to escalate concerns locally, ensure that staff feel confident using the NSPCC Helpline if needed for support in this area.**
- › **Operation Encompass – it should be reviewed to ensure that it can be implemented within the school to support those students who require it.**
- › **Continue to identify organisations that can help children and families that are part of the school community.**

7 - Training and Induction

7.1 Induction

Safeguarding plays a crucial role in the induction process for new staff. Training is provided to ensure that they have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and the school's safeguarding policies and procedures. The DSL is typically responsible for delivering this training.

During the induction process, a checklist is followed to cover various aspects, including safeguarding and health and safety. This checklist ensures that all mandatory training and information are provided to new staff members.

Records of the induction training are kept in the library section of the CPOMS system. As part of the induction process, new staff members are made aware of the mandatory documents and policies that they need to familiarise themselves with.

7.2 Annual staff training and updates

At the start of the school year, all staff receive annual updates, which include safeguarding training. The headteacher takes responsibility for delivering this training, emphasising its importance. Additionally, there is a training plan in place for the school that explicitly includes safeguarding.

To keep staff updated throughout the year, bi-weekly briefings are conducted. Safeguarding training sessions are also held for 1.5 hours each half term to ensure that staff remain informed and up to date.

Records of staff training are maintained by the office staff. When training takes place, staff members sign in to indicate their attendance. In cases where staff members are absent, the training materials are sent to them for self-study. However, it is noted that currently, these materials are not regularly checked by the DSL, which is an area that could be improved upon.

In addition to the mandatory safeguarding training, the school may offer additional training to staff that supports safeguarding and well-being. These additional training opportunities contribute to creating a supportive and informed staff body.



7.3 Supporting students

During the review process, it was evident that all staff members have a clear understanding of their responsibilities in supporting children. Their passion for their work was palpable, and their commitment to maintaining a consistent approach was unmistakable.

7.4 Support and guidance from the DSL

The DSL is highly supportive of the staff and has consistently been available to provide guidance and assistance when needed. They have created a safe and approachable environment where staff feel comfortable seeking support without fear of reprisal. The DSL's professionalism and approachability have contributed to their prominent role in the school's safeguarding efforts. Staff members appreciate the regular training provided and believe that the school is a safe place for children, although they acknowledge the importance of remaining vigilant and not becoming complacent.

Recommendations and suggestions

- ***Working with the Trust ensure that training expectations are aligned with those of the school.***
- ***To continue to embed the safeguarding culture, use case studies more frequently with staff i.e., in meetings to spark debate and confidence in handling safeguarding concerns.***
- ***Review training records and ensure that they are up-to-date for all those who have previously missed training sessions.***

8 – School Ethos and Pastoral Care

8.1 School ethos to support safeguarding and promote wellbeing

The school has a strong commitment to safeguarding, and it is evident that safeguarding is at the heart of everything that is done. This commitment is deeply ingrained in the school's values, ethos, and mission. The daily life of the school reflects this commitment, as everyone is aware of the importance of safeguarding and its integration into all aspects of school operations.

The pastoral structure of the school is designed to provide daily support to students. The school recognises the importance of taking a holistic approach to student well-being, and the pastoral team plays a crucial role in this regard. They offer support and guidance to students, helping them navigate various challenges and fostering positive behaviour through restorative practices.

Building strong relationships is a fundamental part of the school's ethos, as it recognises the significance of creating a supportive and nurturing environment for students. The Avanti Way, an approach that promotes values-based education, is also implemented in the school. The lead is actively working to align the Avanti Way with the Jigsaw program, which focuses on personal, social, and health education (PSHE).



Additionally, the school holds the status of a Silver Rights Respecting School, emphasising the importance of promoting and respecting the rights of all individuals within the school community.

8.2 Student voice

Students feel safe in the school environment, although they identify areas such as the basketball court where they may feel less safe. Bullying is dealt with appropriately, and students feel that they have a voice through avenues like the school council and suggestion box, where they can share their ideas and concerns. The school also provides support for students' well-being, such as the "worry monster" and access to the "place to be" if they need someone to talk to. Students are taught about online safety, healthy relationships, and consent, and they appreciate the inclusive atmosphere of the school. While students felt there are areas for improvement, such as promoting creativity and physical education, overall, they appreciate the supportive and safe environment provided by the school.

8.3 Additional provision for vulnerable students

The school employs various strategies to identify vulnerable students. These include regular pupil progress meetings, weekly briefings with teaching assistants, and identification of students with additional needs or who are eligible for pupil premium support. The school also gathers information from other schools and conducts home visits for Early Years students to detect any concerns. The Local Schools Partnership is another valuable source of information. In addition, behaviour and safeguarding incidents are discussed on a weekly basis between the headteacher and phase leads. The school has fostered a culture where parents feel they have good access to staff, enabling them to provide important insights and signpost any concerns.

Regarding students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), the DSL and the SENDCo work closely together. They are both part of the senior management team and collaborate to ensure that SEND students have appropriate safeguarding, Personal, Social, Health, and Economic Education (PSHEE), and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) information. This partnership helps to address the specific needs and support required for SEND students, ensuring their well-being and safety within the school environment.

8.4 Attendance

The school has established procedures for addressing unexplained student absences. First-day calling is implemented, with teachers taking the register and the attendance officer actively chasing up N codes and missing codes. The attendance officer works closely with the DSL to ensure prompt identification and response to any absences, particularly for children on child protection plans or identified as vulnerable. A daily list is generated to identify students who require contact, and efforts are made to complete first-day calling by 10:30 am. Urgent checks are conducted for vulnerable students or those classified as "walk alone."

Home visits are conducted when a child is absent for five or more days due to illness or a lack of contact on the first day. The school follows policy and protocols established by the local authority for Child Missing Education (CME) cases, ensuring appropriate contacts are made and required timescales are adhered to. In response to Elective Home Education (EHE) requests, parents are contacted, and the necessary documentation, such as the off-rolling form and letters, are provided in compliance with the local authority's expectations. The

school maintains a spreadsheet to track EHE outcomes and trends, ensuring records are kept on Arbor, the school's attendance management system.

The attendance officer, working closely with the DSL, plays a vital role in supporting safeguarding and well-being. They collaborate to monitor attendance data, identify patterns or concerns, and take appropriate actions to address any issues. The attendance officer also shares relevant information with the school's SSC and participates in a working party led by the headteacher to discuss attendance and well-being matters. Regular monitoring and discussion of attendance data occur, with a RAG-rated attendance sheet utilised to highlight attendance trends and inform further actions.

Recommendations and suggestions

- › **Review the current process of reporting on N codes. This could be utilised much more effectively through using the Arbor system than the manual method.**
- › **Home visits should be completed by two people to ensure staff safety and wellbeing. The home visit policy should reflect this.**
- › **Any absent children who live a 'distance' should be home visited on a regular basis to ensure their wellbeing.**

9 – What do children learn about safeguarding?

9.1 PHSEE and RSE

The school has a clear policy in place for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), which is readily accessible on the school website. The policy includes an outline of what is taught and when, with specific amendments made to ensure comprehensive coverage of sexual harassment work in the Key Stage 3 curriculum.

The delivery of PSHEE/RSE is supported by the Jigsaw Scheme of work, with one hour per week dedicated to teaching these subjects. Parents are informed about the content of the curriculum through regular communication channels, such as weekly newsletters and letters sent home, allowing them to opt their child out if desired. Assemblies are also used to reinforce key messages related to PSHEE/RSE. The PSHE lead actively seeks input from the school council on the PSHE curriculum during council meetings held each term, ensuring student voice and perspectives are taken into account. Efforts are being made to provide additional training for staff to enhance their confidence in teaching topics such as female puberty effectively.

The delivery of PSHEE/RSE aligns with the work of the DSL and the wider safeguarding agenda by promoting the well-being and safety of students. It equips them with the knowledge and skills necessary to make informed decisions, develop healthy relationships, and understand concepts like consent and personal boundaries.

9.2 Online safety

The school has a clear policy in place regarding online safety, which is an integral part of the PSHE curriculum. The Headteacher has mapped out the curriculum to ensure comprehensive coverage of online safety topics. Children are taught about various aspects of online safety.



Incidents that occur outside of school are managed appropriately, either as behaviour incidents or safeguarding concerns, depending on the nature of the incident and the potential impact on the students involved. The school recognises that the online world presents several key issues, including online bullying, inappropriate content, and the potential dangers of online grooming.

9.3 Child-on-child safeguarding

In response to the child-on-child agenda over the past three years, the school has taken proactive steps to address this issue. Staff training and awareness have been a key focus, with regular training sessions provided to ensure that staff are knowledgeable and confident in distinguishing between child-on-child incidents and instances of unkindness. The headteacher plays an active role in clarifying this distinction when necessary.

Records of child-on-child incidents are meticulously kept using online platforms such as Arbor and CPOMS. These records help identify patterns and trends, enabling the school to address recurring issues effectively. Additionally, surveys have been conducted with parents, who have provided positive feedback on how such incidents are handled with the seriousness they require.

Incidents involving protected characteristics are recorded on Arbor, and the relevant information is reported to the Local Authority through an online form. This reporting process ensures that appropriate measures are taken, including restorative practices as needed. Parents are promptly informed about incidents involving their children, emphasising the importance of clear and effective communication.

The school is prepared to use risk assessments when necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of all students involved in child-on-child incidents. Risk assessments help in identifying potential hazards and implementing suitable measures to mitigate risks.

The school has ongoing plans to support and develop its work in addressing child-on-child incidents. This includes regular staff training to maintain awareness and understanding, continuous monitoring of data to identify trends, and a commitment to restorative approaches when dealing with incidents. The school values open communication with parents and seeks their input through surveys to ensure that their perspectives are considered in the development of strategies and interventions in this area.

Recommendations and suggestions

- ***Continue to review the curriculum to ensure that it reflects the current issues facing the student population.***
- ***Ensure that staff training is continually reiterated to ensure that staff feel confident in dealing with issues such as online safety (including outside of school events).***
- ***Working with the trust (and other schools within it) formulate a plan of support when parents 'opt-out' of important issues, to help prevent this.***

10 – Summary

10.1 What the school does well

The school demonstrates a strong commitment to safeguarding and creating a safe environment for students. Safeguarding is at the heart of everything they do, with staff displaying a clear awareness of their responsibilities. The DSL is highly supportive, approachable, and ensures that staff receive necessary training. Student voice is encouraged through initiatives such as the school council and suggestion box.

The school places a strong emphasis on values, holistic support, and healthy relationships. They effectively identify and support vulnerable students, with robust procedures for absences and child missing education. Policies, including those for online safety and child-on-child incidents, are in place and regularly reviewed. Overall, the school's dedication to safeguarding, communication, and continuous improvement is commendable.

10.2 Key Recommendations

Specific suggestions have been made within each section of the report. However, the key areas to address are:

- **Review training records and ensure that they are up-to-date for all those who have previously missed training sessions.**
- **Operation Encompass – it should be reviewed to ensure that it can be implemented within the school to support those students who require it.**
- **Revisit the visitor information to ensure that contact information for the Safeguarding Team is clear, as should be the expectations for visitors. This should mirror expectations set within the trust/policy.**
- **Work with the trust to ensure a Mental Health Policy is implemented that includes trained staff members on being Mental Health Leads.**

10.3 Overall view of safeguarding

The school demonstrates a strong commitment to safeguarding, with safeguarding being the heart of everything they do. All staff are fully aware of their responsibilities and are passionate about their work. Training is provided, and records are kept ensuring compliance.

The DSL is supportive and approachable, providing wider support and guidance around safeguarding issues. The school values student voice, creating a safe and inclusive environment. They identify vulnerable students and offer additional support where needed.

Robust procedures are in place for absences, child missing education, and online safety. The school's safeguarding efforts are evident in their policies, training, and continuous improvement.