



CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

This is a Category 1 Policy (Full Delegation)

This policy is in force until further notice from:	Summer 2024
This policy must be reviewed by no later than*: <i>*This refers to the term in which the Policy must be reviewed by the appropriate Committee for recommendation to the Board.</i>	Summer 2025
Policy Author(s):	Aurora Reid
Date policy reviewed by Committee and Minute reference	Learning, Teaching and Standards Committee: 24 June 2024 (Note reference 6)
Date Policy approved by the Trust Board and Minute reference	23 July 2024 (Minute reference 118)
Location of publication of policy:	Governor Hub/ AST Website/ Internal Records & Intranet

This policy is in force until further notice from:	Summer 2024
This policy must be reviewed by no later than*: <i>*This refers to the term in which the Policy must be reviewed by the appropriate Committee for recommendations to the Board.</i>	Summer 2025
Policy Author(s):	Aurora Reid
Date policy reviewed by Education Director:	July 2024
Location of publication of policy:	The Trust Website/ Governor Hub/ Internal Records & Intranet

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Under the Trust's Scheme of Delegation this policy must be approved by

[LEARNING, TEACHING AND STANDARDS]

Such approval was given in:

Learning, Teaching and Standards Committee

Summer 2024

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Contents

No.		Title	Page Number
1.		Key Contacts	5
	1.1.	Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children at [INSERT SCHOOL NAME]	5
	1.2.	Key local contacts for safeguarding children	5
2.		AST Safeguarding Mission Statement	6
	2.1.	Introduction	6
	2.2.	Equality Statement	7
3.		Introduction and legislative framework	7
	3.1.	Introduction	7
	3.2.	A child/young person centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding	8
	3.3.	Avanti Schools Trust Safeguarding Mission Statement	8
	3.4.	Why is this important to schools in the Avanti Schools Trust	10
	3.5.	Contextual Safeguarding	10
4.		Responsibilities	11
	4.1.	Governance & Accountability in relation to Safeguarding	11
	4.2.	The Trustees	11
	4.3.	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	13
5.		Procedures	14
	5.1.	What all staff and volunteers should look out for	14
	5.2.	Thresholds for intervention	15
	5.3.	Early Help	15
	5.4.	Children in Need	16
	5.5.	Children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm	16
	5.6.	General	16
	5.7.	When concerned about a child/young person	18
	5.8.	Dealing with a disclosure	18
	5.9.	Confidentiality and communication with parents	19
	5.10.	Record Keeping	20
	5.11.	Transfer of files/records	20
6.		Information Sharing	21
7.		Safeguarding on educational visits and residentials	22
8.		Safer Workforce	23
	8.1	Safer Recruitment	23
	8.2.	Safer Working practice	23

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

	8.3.	Managing allegations against staff and volunteers	23
	8.4.	Managing Low Level Concerns	25
9.		Physical Intervention/Reasonable Force	25
10.		Whistleblowing	26
11.		Supporting Vulnerable Children/Young People	27
	11.1.	Introduction	27
	11.2.	Looked After Children	27
	11.3.	Children/young people potentially at greater risk of harm	28
	11.4.	Relationships and Sex Education	28
12.		Online Safety	28
13.		Child-on-Child Abuse	30
	13.1.	Bullying	30
	13.2.	Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment	31
	13.3.	Management of sexual violence/harassment cases	34
14.		Further Information – Safeguarding Children in Specific Circumstances	35
	14.1.	Children and the Court System	35
	14.2.	Children with Disabilities or Special Educational Needs	36
	14.3.	Children with a family member in prison	36
	14.4.	Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation	37
	14.5.	Gangs and Youth Violence	38
	14.6.	County Lines	39
	14.7.	Domestic Abuse	39
	14.8.	Operation Encompass	39
	14.9.	So-called ‘honour-based’ abuse (HBA)	41
	14.10.	Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)	41
	14.11.	Forced Marriage	42
	14.12.	Homelessness	42
	14.13.	Homestay – children staying with host families	42
	14.14.	Missing education or missing from home and care	43
	14.15.	Preventing Radicalisation	43
	14.16.	Private Fostering	44
	14.17.	Substance Misuse	45
	14.18.	Mental Health Children/Young People	45
	14.19.	Parental Mental Health	46
	14.20.	Trafficking and Modern-Day Slavery	46
	14.21.	Young Carers	46
		Appendix A: Role Description for Designated Safeguarding Lead	47
		Appendix B: Template for Record of Concern	51

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

		Appendix C: Types of abuse, neglect and exploitation– definitions	54
		Appendix D: Actions where there are concerns about a Child	56

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Key Contacts

1.1. Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children at [INSERT SCHOOL NAME]

(TO BE COMPLETED AT SCHOOL LEVEL)

Role	Name	Phone	Email
Designated Lead Person for Safeguarding (DSL)	Luisa Nielsen	020 8381 3344	luisa.nielsen@avanti.org.uk
Deputy DSL	Alisha Mahoon	020 8381 3344	alisha.mahoon@avanti.org.uk
SSC Member for Safeguarding	Sanjana Karnani	020 8381 3344	sanjana.karnani.kapsh-ssc@avanti.org.uk
Lead for Looked After Children	Luisa Nielsen	020 8381 3344	luisa.nielsen@avanti.org.uk
Lead for On-line Safety	Alisha Mahoon	020 8381 3344	alisha.mahoon@avanti.org.uk
Principal	Shriti Bellare	020 8381 3344	shriti.bellare@avanti.org.uk
Chair of SSC	Sanjana Karnani	020 83813344	sanjana.karnani.kapsh-ssc@avanti.org.uk

1.2. Key local contacts for safeguarding children

Social Care & Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	Emergency Duty Team: weekends, bank holidays and between 5pm-9am during the week:
Police	101 or for immediate emergency: 999
FGM - Mandatory reporting	Police on 101
Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations against Staff and volunteers (LADO)	Initial referrals via MASH/Golden Number above. (For on-going cases)
Children and Young People with Disabilities 0-25 years	020 8051 8381
Local multi-agency	

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

procedures, guidance and training:	020 8901 2690
NSPCC	0800 800 5000
Childline	0800 1111
Government's Whistleblowing Service via NSPCC Report Line	0800 028 0285
Forced Marriage Unit	Tel: 020 7008 0151 From overseas: +44 (0)20 7008 0151(Mon – Fri 9am-5pm) Out of hours: 020 7008 1500 (ask for the Global Response Centre) Email: fmufco.gov.uk
Support and Advice about Extremism DfE helpline (non-emergency advice)	Tel: 020 7340 7264 Email: counterextremism@education.gsi.gov.uk
Disclosure and Barring Service	Tel:03000 200 190 Email: customerservices@db.gov.uk
Teaching Regulation Authority	Tel: 020 7593 5393 Email: misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk

2. AST Safeguarding Mission Statement

2.1. Introduction

2.1.1. Our vision is simple, yet profound: to inspire spiritually compassionate changemakers. Our actions and our intentions as school leaders are guided by our core principles of Education Excellence, Character Formation and Spiritual Insight.

2.1.2. We believe everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practice in a way that protects them. Children and young people need to feel safe, protected and included to become successful learners and achieve academically, socially, and emotionally.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

2.1.3. Avanti’s virtues of respect, self-discipline, courage, integrity, empathy, and gratitude are tangible throughout school life, where leadership at all levels understand the importance of modelling exemplary behaviour and attitudes. These characteristics influence our children and young people to also model and grow up to behave appropriately.

2.1.4. At Avanti Schools Trust, we recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children and young people are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and follow our procedures to ensure that children and young people receive effective support, protection, and justice. Child protection forms part of the school’s safeguarding responsibilities and is taken very seriously.

2.2. Equality Statement

2.2.1. We will give equal priority to keeping all children and young people safe regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. We know that for some children and young people there is an increased risk of abuse with additional barriers to recognising and disclosing such abuse.

2.2.2. Avanti Schools Trust are committed to anti-discriminatory practices and recognise children’s diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children and young people have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

3. Introduction and legislative framework

3.1. Introduction

3.1.1. Avanti Schools Trust is fully committed to meeting its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care. We recognise the important part we have to play in identifying children and young people at risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation and in securing appropriate support for them and their families.

3.1.2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in the Department for Education’s (DfE) statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2024\)](#) as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing the impairment of children’s mental and physical health or

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

development Ensuring that children and young people grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

- Taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

3.1. A child/young person centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding

3.1.1. The child or young person's best interests will remain our paramount focus and this is best achieved by Avanti Schools Trust schools working within the context of the following statutory duties and government guidance which require effective inter-agency cooperation.

3.1.2. **Section 175** of the [Education Act 2002](#) places a statutory duty on the governing bodies (School Stakeholder Committees) to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people who attend the school.

3.2. Avanti Schools Trust Safeguarding Mission Statement

3.2.1. [Section 11 Children Act 2004](#) sets out the arrangements that schools and other specified settings must make to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. These arrangements are outlined within our policy and procedure so that all staff, volunteers, families, and the local community are provided with a clear understanding of our school's processes and commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in our care.

3.2.2. [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#) brought about a new partnership arrangement to safeguard children. Each school in the Avanti Schools Trust works closely and collaboratively with their respective local authority in order to promote a 'Think Whole Family' approach to safeguarding. As a relevant agency Avanti Schools Trust is committed to fulfilling its statutory duty to engage with these arrangements.

3.2.3. All staff in Avanti Schools Trust Schools which includes Principals, teachers, support staff, Trustees and School Stakeholder Committees (SSCs) , proprietors and management committees should read part 1 of statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DfE 2024\)](#) (KCSIE), which sets out the legal duties you must follow to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people under the age of 18 in our schools.

3.2.4. [KCSIE](#) incorporates a range of related responsibilities for schools and statutory duties introduced to protect children and young people, including Female Genital Mutilation and Radicalisation.

3.2.5. Our policy and procedure is written in accordance with [KCSIE](#) and similarly should be read

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

by all staff. Our policy and procedures also reflect government advice [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Advice for practitioners](#).

3.2.6. It is also expected that all staff are made aware of related internal school policies which can be found [here](#).

3.2.7. All staff at Avanti Schools Trust schools understand that safeguarding children and young people is everyone's responsibility.

3.2.8. We will:

3.2.8. Provide a caring, positive, safe, and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical, and moral development of the individual child and young person. Always act in the best interests of the child/young person, taking their wishes and feelings into account.

3.2.8.1. Ensure that all staff and volunteers are recruited using robust 'Safer Recruitment' processes (Avanti Schools Trust Safer Recruitment Procedures).

3.2.8.2. Aim to identify concerns early and prevent concerns from escalating. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, providing the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.

3.2.8.3. Establish and maintain an environment where children and young people feel respected, safe and are encouraged to talk and be listened to when they have a worry or concern.

3.2.8.4. Require any member of staff who has a concern about a child or young person's welfare to follow the referral process set out in this document.

3.2.8.5. Where there is a safeguarding concern, take the child or young person's wishes and feelings into account at all stages of the process of intervention.

3.2.8.6. Ensure that children and young people who have been abused or neglected will be supported in line with a protection plan.

3.2.8.7. Work with parents/carers to build a supportive relationship and be clear about our Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures and in particular

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

when we may need to refer concerns to other agencies.

- 3.2.8.8. Include opportunities across the curriculum, including PSHE and IT for children and young people to be taught about safeguarding and to develop the skills they need to recognise danger and know where to seek help.
- 3.2.8.9. Maintain an attitude of “it could happen here” where safeguarding is concerned.
- 3.2.8.10. Have a zero-tolerance approach to any discrimination as outlined in the Equalities Act (2010) including but not limited to racism/ sexism/ homophobia/ transphobia and disability discrimination.

3.3. Why is this important to schools in the Avanti Schools Trust

- 3.3.1. It is important for children and young people to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and serious case review have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. Examples of poor practice include:
 - 3.3.1.1. Failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
 - 3.3.1.2. Poor record keeping.
 - 3.3.1.3. Failing to listen to the views of the child or young person.
 - 3.3.1.4. Failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve.
 - 3.3.1.5. Not sharing information or sharing information too slowly.
 - 3.3.1.6. A lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

3.4. Contextual Safeguarding

- 3.4.1. We recognise that some safeguarding incidents or behaviours are associated with wider environmental factors which relate to children and young peoples’ neighbourhoods and/or online communications. Contextual Safeguarding expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse in a range of social contexts.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

4 Responsibilities

4.1. Governance & Accountability in relation to Safeguarding

- 4.1.1. The Board of Directors is the legal Governing Body of every Avanti school and has ultimate accountability and legal responsibility for all Avanti Schools, including statutory responsibilities of governors and accountability for the quality of educational provision and school effectiveness. The Board has appointed School Stakeholder Committees (SSCs) for each Avanti School. SSCs provide perspectives from various stakeholder groups (staff, parents and wider community) on the day-to-day functioning of the school in order to support the school's work.
- 4.1.2. This person should have the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources and, where appropriate, supporting or directing other staff. They must also have regard to this guidance to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in their schools or colleges are effective and comply with the law at all times (DfE [KCSIE 2024](#)).
- 4.1.3. A designated member of the Board of Trustees provides strategic oversight of all Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures. They provide strategic support and will delegate to the Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead in each school to ensure that this policy is followed.
- 4.1.4. Any serious issues in any of the schools within the Avanti Schools Trust (against a staff member, serious H&S concern, or safeguarding incident) should be shared with The Head of People.
- 4.1.5. Online safeguarding training is also implemented during the course of the year to support updates. Each school has its own Designated Safeguarding Lead and more than one Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

4.2. The Trustees

- 4.2.1. It is the responsibility of the Trust's Board of Trustees to ensure that their school complies with its legislative duties and has regard to Government Guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#) to ensure that their school's policies, procedure and training are effective and comply with the law.
- 4.2.2. In line with the scheme of delegation these responsibilities may be delegated to individual School Stakeholder Committees (SSCs).

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- 4.2.3. This responsibility includes understanding the local criteria for action and assessment and supplying information as requested by the three safeguarding partners (Local Authority, Police and Clinical Commissioning Group).
- 4.2.4. The Trustees will:
- 4.2.4.1. Designate a lead Trustee link member for child protection and safeguarding who will oversee the school's policy and practice and champion safeguarding issues.
 - 4.2.4.2. Nominate a member of the Trustees (the Chair) to be responsible in the event of an allegation of abuse made against the Principal.
 - 4.2.4.3. Ensure that the school has at least one DSL within the senior leadership team.
 - 4.2.4.4. Ensure that policies and procedures are in place, which are compliant with government guidance and the appropriate local Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements for each school. These should be reviewed annually, and staff should be encouraged to contribute to their development. These should be made available publicly via the website or other means.
 - 4.2.4.5. Ensure that all staff and volunteers access appropriate levels of child protection and safeguarding induction and training, including online safety. In addition, all staff should receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (e.g. via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as required, and at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children and young people effectively.
 - 4.2.4.6. Liaise closely with the DSL and receive regular reports in to monitor procedures and practice and ensure compliance.
 - 4.2.4.7. Ensure that staff understand the process and principles for sharing information, including the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR.
 - 4.2.4.8. Ensure that **safer recruitment procedures** are in place and are applied for all staff and volunteers to ensure suitability to work with children and young people, including the requirement for at least one person conducting an interview to have completed safer recruitment training. **See the [Safer Recruitment Policy – Avanti Schools Trust](#).**
 - 4.2.4.9. Ensure that **Allegations Management procedures** are in place and

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

embedded across the school, as set out in 7.3.

- 4.2.4.10. Ensure that other related procedures are in place and embedded as set out in The [Guidance for Safer Working Practice](#).
 - 4.2.4.11. Ensure that appropriate responses to children and young people who go missing from education, particularly repeat occasions, are in place to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.
 - 4.2.4.12. Ensure that other related procedures e.g. FGM; domestic abuse; anti-bullying; child-on-child abuse (including sexual violence and sexual harassment); preventing harassment; preventing radicalisation; trafficking; and modern-day slavery; are in place and embedded.
 - 4.2.4.13. Ensure any deficiencies in safeguarding arrangements are remedied without delay.
 - 4.2.4.14. Ensure that staff are equipped to respond to the needs of vulnerable children and young people including those with disabilities and those who are Looked After by the Local Authority.
 - 4.2.4.15. Ensure that the curriculum supports children and young people in recognising and responding to risks, including on-line safety.
- 4.2.5. Principals will take a proportionate risk-based approach to the level of information provided to temporary staff and volunteers on induction.

4.1. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- 4.1.1. Each school within the Avanti Schools Trust will appoint a DSL who is a member of the senior leadership team and takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. This is explicit in the role-holder's job description (See [Annex C of KCSIE 2024](#) for role description). The Deputy DSLs are trained to the same standard as the DSL.
- 4.1.2. Note: Whilst the activities of a DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained Deputy DSLs, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL. This responsibility should not be delegated.
- 4.1.3. During term time each DSL or Deputy DSL will always be available (during school hours) for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Each school will ensure appropriate cover

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

- 4.1.4. The DSL and Deputy will liaise with the three safeguarding partners (Local Authority, Police and Clinical Commissioning Group) and work with other agencies in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#).
- 4.1.5. The DSLs will:
- 4.1.5.1. Undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. Training should be updated every two years with regular updates (at least annually) on developments in between, e.g. via e-bulletins, Forums for DSLs, and reading time, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.
 - 4.1.5.2. Act as focal point for staff concerns and liaise with the Local Authority and other agencies in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.
 - 4.1.5.3. Refer all cases of suspected abuse to local children's Social Care via the local procedures.
 - 4.1.5.4. Refer all cases to the police where a crime has been committed.
 - 4.1.5.5. Ensure all staff members have read the mandatory reading list and attended safeguarding and child protection training annually.
 - 4.1.5.6. Ensure that regular training updates are given to all staff members and volunteers.
- 4.1.6. For the full Role Description for the DSL see **Appendix**.

5 Procedures

5.1. What all staff and volunteers should look out for

- 5.1.1. Any child/young person may benefit from early help, but all staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child/young person who:
- Is disabled and has specific additional needs.
 - Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, health and Care Plan).

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- Is a young carer.
- Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups.
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or from home.
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or exploitation.
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child/young person, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse.
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.
- Has returned home to their family from care.
- Is a privately fostered child/young person.
- Has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a child referral unit.
- Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending.

5.2. Thresholds for intervention

5.2.1. The DSL will decide upon the most appropriate course of action and whether the concerns should be referred to Children's Social Care. If it is decided to make a referral to Children's Social Care parents will be informed, unless to do so would place the child or young person at further risk or undermine the collection of evidence e.g. obtaining forensic evidence. All concerns, discussion and decisions will be recorded in writing. The DSL will provide guidance on the appropriate action. Options will include:

- 5.2.1.1. Managing any support for the child/young person internally via the school/college's own pastoral support processes.
- 5.2.1.2. An early help assessment; or
- 5.2.1.3. A referral for statutory services e.g. the child/young person might be in need, is in need or suffering or likely to suffer harm.

5.3. Early Help

5.3.1. All staff play an important role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people should be prepared to identify children/young people who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child or young person's life. This may be done for example, by immediately speaking with the DSL, or their Deputies, regarding any concerns or emerging issues,

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment etc. Taking these steps may prevent concerns from escalating.

- 5.3.2. If early help is appropriate, the DSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to Children's Social Care for assessment for statutory services if the child or young person's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

5.4. Children in Need

- 5.4.1. A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. The Local Authority is required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

5.5. Children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm

- 5.5.1. Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Such enquiries enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment, including all forms of abuse (including domestic abuse) and neglect, female genital mutilation or other so-called honour-based violence, and extra-familial threats like radicalisation and sexual exploitation.
- 5.5.2. **All children or young people identified as children in need or children at risk** will be provided with the appropriate levels of pastoral support led by a DSL in conjunction with Heads of Year and form tutors.

5.6. General

- 5.6.1. It is the responsibility of every member of staff, governing body, and volunteer at all Avanti Schools Trust Schools to know, understand and follow our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedure. They should also read Part 1 of [KCSIE 2024](#). Where safeguarding is a concern, all staff and volunteers etc. should maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and know what to look for.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- 5.6.2. Third party organisations using or hiring Trust premises for their own activities and/or events must provide their own safeguarding policies to Principals and DSLs of those venue that are being used. Providers must meet the expectations of the guidance and leasing agreements must reflect this expectation.
- 5.6.3. If any member of staff or volunteer is concerned about a child or young person s/he must inform the DSL or one of the deputy DSLs immediately. They must record information regarding the concerns on the same day. The written record or electronic record via CPOMS must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations or what has been said. (See Appendix for recording template if not CPOMS).
- 5.6.4. Where this a child protection concern, allegation, or disclosure, the DSL or Deputy DSL will make an immediate call to Children's Social Care to alert or to consult with them. The relevant forms will be sent by the DSL or Deputy DSL.
- 5.6.5. If in exceptional circumstances the DSL (or Deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from Children's Social Care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the DSL as soon as is practically possible.
- 5.6.6. If a member of staff disagrees about the level of concern and feels that a child or young person has not been protected, then any member of staff can make a direct referral to Children's Social Care.
- 5.6.7. Within one working day of a referral being made, Children's Social Care should acknowledge receipt to the referrer and make a decision about the next steps and the type of response that is required. The referrer should follow up if this information is not forthcoming.
- 5.6.8. If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, staff should do everything they can to support that assessment (supported by the DSL as required).
- 5.6.9. If, after a referral, the child/young person's situation does not appear to be improving, the referrer should consider following their local Safeguarding Board guidance on Multi Agency Resolution of Professional Disagreements to ensure that their concerns are addressed and, most importantly, that the child/young person's situation improves.
- 5.7. **When concerned about a child/young person**

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

5.7.1. All staff and volunteers in Avanti School Trust should be aware that the main categories of abuse include, Physical, Emotional, Sexual Abuse, Neglect and exploitation (see Appendix C). Training should equip staff to help identify the indicators of harm. For example, if in an abusive relationship a child/young person may:

5.7.1.1. Appear frightened of a parent or others in the household e.g. siblings.

5.7.1.2. Appear frightened of someone outside of the home, including a peer. This includes within the school setting.

5.7.1.3. Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and cultural backgrounds).

5.7.1.4. Display insufficient sense of boundaries or lack stranger awareness.

5.7.1.5. Appear wary of adults and display a 'frozen watchfulness' or appear noticeably withdrawn.

5.8. Dealing with a disclosure

5.8.1. If a child/young person discloses that he or she has been abused or neglected, the member of staff or volunteer should:

5.8.1.1. Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief, allowing the child/young person to talk freely and at their own pace.

5.8.1.2. Take what the child/young person says seriously.

5.8.1.3. Listen and only ask questions when it is necessary to obtain clarification.

5.8.1.4. Ask only open questions such as How did that happen? What was happening at the time? Anything else you want to tell me?
Not ask leading questions which may be considered as suggesting what might have happened, or who has perpetrated the abuse, as this can later be interpreted as putting ideas into the child/young person's mind.

5.8.1.5. Reassure the child/young person, but do not make promises, particularly about maintaining confidentiality - it might be necessary to refer to other agencies. It is better to say that you might have to tell someone who will

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

ensure the correct action is taken.

- 5.8.1.6. Reassure the child/young person that they were right to tell someone.
- 5.8.1.7. Remain objective and not prejudge an alleged perpetrator.
- 5.8.1.8. Make a written record as soon as possible, using the child/young person's language when relaying what they said (do not include the personal opinion of the note taker).
- 5.8.1.9. Pass the information to the DSL **without delay**.

5.9. Confidentiality and communication with parents

- 5.9.1. All staff in schools within the Avanti Schools Trust have a responsibility to share relevant information in response to child protection concerns or Children in Need with other specified professionals, particularly investigative agencies i.e. Children's Social Care and the Police.
- 5.9.2. If a child/young person confides in you and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important to tell the child/young person in a sensitive manner and appropriate to their development that you cannot promise complete confidentiality. Explain what you will do next and that information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to help.
- 5.9.3. Staff/volunteers who receive sensitive information about children/young people and their families should therefore only share information with appropriate professionals.
- 5.9.4. Parents should be made aware of our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and its availability on both the Avanti Schools Trust website as well as on each individual school's website.
- 5.9.5. Parents should be informed prior to referrals being made to other agencies, unless to do so might place the child or young person at further risk or cause evidence to be removed or destroyed. The DSL will ensure that our school's information sharing arrangements comply with government guidance (see section 6 Information Sharing).
- 5.9.6. Any written communications containing sensitive information must only be sent to other professionals on a need-to-know basis, using secure mail processes e.g. secure email.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

5.10. Record Keeping

- 5.10.1. When a child protection concern has been identified, reported, or disclosed, the member of staff receiving this information should:
- 5.10.1.1. Make brief notes as soon as possible. Use the school Record of Concern Sheet wherever possible or log this a new action onto CPOMS; all relevant additional information is to be scanned/attached to CPOMS (if required).
 - 5.10.1.2. Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child or young person.
 - 5.10.1.3. Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any visible injuries (i.e. do not undress the child or young person beyond outer clothing that would normally be removed at school). This can also be logged onto CPOMS on the bodymapping tool.
 - 5.10.1.4. Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions.
 - 5.10.1.5. Make a record of all concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the DSL.
 - 5.10.1.6. Sign and date your notes/or this will be automatically logged onto CPOMS.
- 5.10.2. All notes and records must be given to the DSL promptly/ or logged onto CPOMS and flagged to the Safeguarding team.
- 5.10.3. The DSL will ensure that all safeguarding records are managed in accordance with the [Education \(Pupil Information - England\) Regulation 2005](#).

5.11. Transfer of files/records

- 5.11.1. When a child or young person leaves one of our schools, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file, if they have one, is transferred securely to the new school or college within 5 days (as stated in [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#)) and ensure that the relevant member of staff in the new establishment is made aware. For further Guidance see [Guidance on the Transfer of a Child Protection or Safeguarding File to another education setting - July 2017](#).

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- 5.11.2. In England, Scotland and Wales, the file should be kept until the child is 25 (this is seven years after they reach the school leaving age) (Information and Records Management Society (IRMS), 2019). When the retention period is finished, confidential records should be incinerated or shredded in the presence of a member of the organisation or entrusted to a firm specialising in the destruction of confidential material. At the same time any electronic versions of the record must be purged. If not shredded immediately, all confidential records should be held in a secured plastic bag, labelled as confidential and locked in a cupboard or other secure place; or placed in a confidential waste bin. See https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/3324/child-protection-records-retention-and-storage-guidelines_june_2023.pdf.

6. Information Sharing

- 6.1. Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation. The Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) do not prevent or limit the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children and young people safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children and young people. Further advice can be found on the Information Commissioner's Website and in particular the [ICO Guide to Data Protection](#) which includes guidance on the GDPR.
- 6.2. The DfE has also published [Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners](#) And [Data protection: a toolkit for schools](#)
- 6.3. This document includes the seven golden rules to information sharing:
- 6.3.1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
 - 6.3.2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
 - 6.3.3. Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- 6.3.4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where there is a lawful basis to share information e.g. S47 or S17 enquiries it is good practice to inform parents that the information will be shared.
- 6.3.5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who maybe affected by their actions.
- 6.3.6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles).
- 6.3.7. Guidance on Avanti Schools Trust data breach procedures can be found [here](#).
- 6.3.8. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.
- 6.3.9. All staff should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children and young people, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child or young person is already known to Children’s Social Care.

7. Safeguarding on educational visits and residentials

- 7.1. Where staff are not supervising children or young people from their own setting, they must follow the central and/or local safeguarding policies of the settings where they are in situ at the time.
- 7.2. Where staff are supervising children or young people from their own settings but at off-

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

site locations, the Trust central and school specific local policies apply.

- 7.3. Visitors working on school sites with children or young people are expected to always abide by the Trust central and school specific policies.
- 7.4. Where locations for off- site activities/events have their own risk assessments for children/young people and visitors, these should be adopted and adhered to

8. Safer Workforce

8.1. Safer Recruitment

- 8.1.1. Avanti Schools Trust has a separate [Safer Recruitment Policy](#) which specifies how all staff and volunteers must be recruited, following robust recruitment and selection process, including DBS and thorough reference checks.
- 8.1.2. The aims of the Safer Recruitment policy are to help appoint the most suitable people to work with our young people and to deter, reject or identify people who might harm young people or are otherwise unsuitable to work or volunteer in our schools.

8.2. Safer Working Practice

- 8.2.1. All school staff and volunteers should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child or young person. Click here for further [Guidance on Safer Working Practice](#) (May 2019).

8.3. Managing allegations against staff and volunteers

- 8.3.1. Any allegation against a member of staff (including supply staff) or volunteer, as described below, must be reported to the school's Principal without delay.
- 8.3.2. This part of the guidance relates to members of staff, supply staff and volunteers who are currently working in any school or college regardless of whether the school or college is where the alleged abuse took place. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching should be referred to the police. Historical allegations of abuse should also be referred to the police.
- 8.3.3. Where an allegation is made against the Principal, the matter must be reported immediately to the Chair of Trustees or the Vice-Chair in his/her absence, without notifying the Principal first. The Head of People and Safeguarding Trustee may also be made aware.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- 8.3.4. Where a member of staff or volunteer may have:
- 8.3.4.1. Behaved in a way that has harmed a child/young person or may have harmed a child/young person.
 - 8.3.4.2. Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or young person; or
 - 8.3.4.3. Behaved towards a child/young person or children/young people in a way that indicates s/he may pose a risk of harm to children/young people.
 - 8.3.4.4. Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates that they may not be suitable to work with children or young people.
- 8.3.5. In addition, we ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with children or young people aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the *Sexual Offences Act 2003*.
- 8.3.6. Each school will also ensure that any member of staff facing an allegation will be provided with support, including a named contact if they are suspended. We will work effectively with the specific LADO to help ensure that the matter is dealt with as quickly, fairly and consistently as possible in the interests of all concerned.
- 8.3.7. The person to whom an allegation is first reported should take the matter seriously and keep an open mind. S/he should not investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification. Confidentiality should not be promised and information should be shared on a 'need-to-know' basis only.
- 8.3.8. An immediate written record of the allegations should be made, including time, date, and place where the alleged incident took place, with brief details of what was said to have happened. This record should be signed and immediately passed on to the Principal (or Chair of Trustees if the allegation is made against the Principal).
- 8.3.9. The Principal or Chair of Trustees will consult the LADO for guidance on an investigation that may need to be carried out.
- 8.3.10. Whilst recognising our duty to support staff, the welfare of our young people remains our paramount consideration.
- 8.3.11. Our schools will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the school. We recognise our legal duty to refer to the Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) and any other relevant professional body details of anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or young person. For further details on the management of allegations against staff, please see Avanti Schools Trust's Safer Recruitment Policy.

- 8.3.12. As stated previously, any serious issue with regards to allegations against a staff member should be shared promptly with the Head of People.

8.4. Managing Low Level Concerns

- 8.4.1. A low-level concern is one that does not meet the threshold for harm and thus for a referral to the LADO. Low level concerns should never be ignored as they represent actions that may damage the Trust and a school's culture of openness, honesty, trust, and transparency.

- 8.4.2. Such behaviour is not confined to school hours and may include behaviour which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children/young people or to act as an appropriate role model.

- 8.4.3. It might include making, or encourage others to make sexual remarks to, or about, a child or young person. Use of inappropriate language to or in the presence of children or young people, discussing their personal or sexual relationships with or in the presence of children or young people. Making (or encourage others to make) unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean, discriminate, or humiliate, or might be interpreted as such.

9. Physical Intervention/ Reasonable Force

- 9.1. Avanti Schools Trust's policy on [physical intervention and reasonable force](#) by staff is set out separately. It complies with the [DfE's guidance on use of reasonable force](#). This policy states that staff may only use reasonable force, meaning no more force than is needed to prevent young people from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder. It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

- 9.2. Principals and other authorised trained staff can use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to conduct a search for the following prohibited items: knives and weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, cigarettes and tobacco, fireworks, pornographic images, mobile phones or any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage property.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- 9.3. Where the use of force is necessary, plans and reasonable adjustments should be made for disabled children/young people and children/young people with special educational needs. Any use of force or restraint must be recorded and signed by a witness. The parent/carer will be informed of the incident.
- 9.4. Using searching, screening and confiscation powers appropriately is an important way to ensure children/young people and staff welfare is protected and helps schools establish an environment where everyone is safe. The [DfE has published advice \(July 2022\)](#) that explains schools' screening, searching and confiscation powers so that Principals, senior leaders, and other staff have the confidence to use them if necessary.

10. Whistleblowing

- 10.1. All staff and volunteers at our schools should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures to follow agreed policies and procedures and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by our senior leadership teams.
- 10.2. All staff and volunteers are to be made aware of their Whistleblowing responsibilities and how they can promptly report any concerns in the interests of protecting children/young people and staff from poor practice and or unsuitable behaviour. This includes the requirement to self-disclose any personal information which may impact on their suitability to work in an education setting.
- 10.3. Where internal reporting arrangements are viewed not to have been taken seriously or with sufficient rigour.
- 10.4. Any member of staff can raise concerns externally if the matter is not resolved by the Principal or Chair of SSC e.g. via the Local Authority's Designated Officer for Managing Allegations; the relevant local Safeguarding Childrens Board or the Government's Whistle-blowing report line: **0800 028 0285** or help@nspcc.org.uk
- 10.5. Further detail about whistleblowing is set out in [Avanti Schools Trust's Whistleblowing Policy](#).

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

11. Supporting Vulnerable Children/Young People

11.1. Introduction

- 11.1.1. We recognise that without appropriate intervention and support, abuse or witnessing violence may have an adverse impact on children or young people which may last into adulthood.
- 11.1.2. Our schools will support young people through:
- 11.1.2.1. Curricular opportunities to encourage self-esteem and self-advocacy, including a Safeguarding and PSHE curriculum.
 - 11.1.2.2. An ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive, and safe environment and values the whole community.
 - 11.1.2.3. Liaison with other agencies which support the children/young people such as Social Care and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
 - 11.1.2.4. Behaviour policies which support vulnerable children/young people in the school. Our staff will agree a consistent approach that focuses on the behaviour of the child/young person but does not damage the child/young person's sense of worth.

11.2. Looked After Children

- 11.2.1. The most common reason for children or young people becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. We will ensure that our staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep looked after children safe, including children/young people who were previously looked after.
- 11.2.2. We will ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. Our staff will obtain information about the child or young person's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The Designated Teacher for Children Looked After (CLA) will obtain details of the child/young person's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child or young person.
- 11.2.3. The Designated Teacher for CLA will work with the virtual school head and the Personal

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Adviser to promote the educational achievement and welfare of existing and previously Looked After Children. Each school will ensure there is a specific named individual in each school for CLA children. For further information see [Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher](#) and [Promoting the Education of Looked After Children](#).

11.3. Children/young people potentially at greater risk of harm

- 11.3.1. (KCSIE Paragraphs 159-164) [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#)
- 11.3.2. Children or young people who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans) may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs.
- 11.3.3. Local authorities should share the fact a child or young person has a social worker, and the DSL will hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child/young person's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes.
- 11.3.4. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both local authorities and schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children or young people.
- 11.3.5. Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of young people. It is important to be aware that 'a child or young person's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour, and mental health'.

11.4. Relationships and Sex Education

- 11.4.1. The Relationships Education, Relationships, Sex & Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 states that as of the summer term 2021 young people receiving primary education must be taught Relationships Education, and young people receiving secondary education must be taught Relationships and Sex Education.
- 11.4.2. The DfE guidance gives schools freedom to deliver the content set out in the guidance in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum.

12. Online Safety

- 12.1. In accordance with the [KCSIE 2024](#) Avanti Schools Trust acknowledge their role in providing an 'effective whole school and college approach to online safety' and to their empowerment 'to protect and educate young people and staff in their use of technology

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any concerns where appropriate'. The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers a school to protect and educate the whole school community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate. The Avanti Schools Trust is committed to ensure that 'online safety is a running and interrelated theme' and is reflected in all relevant policies as well as in consideration when planning the curriculum, teacher training, the role and responsibilities of the DSL and any parental engagement'.

- 12.2. Education at home. Where children or young people are being asked to learn online at home the department has provided advice to support schools and colleges do so safely: [safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers](#) and [safeguarding-and-remote-education](#).
- 12.3. Additional information to support governing bodies and proprietors keep their children and young people safe online (including when they are online at home) is provided in [KCSIE 2024](#) Annex C.
- 12.4. The [Online Safety Policy](#) is set out in a separate document. We ensure that we have effective mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate. Online safety is included in our curriculum at all levels and information is also provided to parents/carers.

Online Safety is classified into four areas of risk:

- 12.4.1. **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content.
 - 12.4.2. **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users.
 - 12.4.3. **Conduct** –personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm.
 - 12.4.4. **Commerce** –risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams.
- 12.5. All staff are made aware of the policy on Online Safety which sets our expectations relating to:
 - 12.5.1. Creating a safer online environment – including training requirements, filters,

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

and monitoring.

12.5.2. Giving everyone the skills, knowledge and understanding to help children and young people stay safe on-line.

12.5.3. Inspiring safe and responsible use and behaviour.

12.5.4. Safe use of mobile phones both within school and on educational visits/outings.

12.5.5. Safe use of camera equipment, including camera phones.

12.5.6. What steps to take if you have concerns and where to go for further help.

12.6. Staff must read the Online Safety policy in relation to personal online behaviour.

12.7. As part of their safeguarding and online safety training, staff need to understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring systems.

13. Child-on-Child Abuse

13.1. Bullying

13.1.1. The Avanti Schools Trust's policy on the prevention and management of bullying is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually by the Board and is then localised and reviewed by each SSC. This policy includes reference to all prejudice related bullying. We acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying may lead to considerations under child protection procedures.

13.1.2. We recognise that children and young people can also be vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional bullying and abuse by their peers or they may be the perpetrator of such behaviour. We will always address such abuse seriously, involving partner agencies where required. We will remain alert to the possibility that a child or young person who has harmed another may well also be a victim. Staff should not dismiss some abusive sexual behaviour as 'normal' between young people and should not develop high thresholds before taking action. Equally, abuse issues can sometimes be gender specific e.g. girls being sexually touched/assaulted and boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

13.2. Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment

- 13.2.1. Avanti Schools Trust recognise that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between children and young people of any age and sex. It may occur online and offline and can be complex.
- 13.2.2. Sexual violence refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:
- 13.2.2.1. Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus, or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
 - 13.2.2.2. Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
 - 13.2.2.3. Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
 - 13.2.2.4. Sexual harassment means 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. In referencing sexual harassment, it is in the context of child-on-child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child/young person's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded, or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualized environment.
- 13.2.3. We also recognise the criminal offence of 'Upskirting' (where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Anyone of any gender can be a victim.
- 13.2.4. We will ensure that all such matters are taken seriously, and that appropriate action is taken to address the issue, including the provision of support. Sexual violence or sexual harassment will not be passed off as 'banter' or just 'part of growing up'.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- 13.2.5. In response to such a report our schools will act in accordance with Part 5 of [KCSIE \(2024\)](#):
- 13.2.5.1. That systems are in place and are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children and young people to confidently report abuse, knowing that their concerns will be treated seriously.
 - 13.2.5.2. Reassure the victim that they will be taken seriously, and they will be supported and kept safe.
 - 13.2.5.3. Respond in line with our safeguarding procedures outlined in Section 5 of this document.
 - 13.2.5.4. Where a concern includes an online element, follow DfE guidance: [Searching, screening and confiscation at school](#) and UKCCIS advice [Sexting in schools and colleges](#). Adults should not view sexual or forward illegal images of children or young people. ([KCSIE 2024 section 444](#)) Wherever possible responses to incidents should be based on what DSLs have been told about the content of the imagery. See [Guidance on Suspected Indecent Imagery for Staff](#).
 - 13.2.5.5. Staff should only share the report with those people who are necessary to progress it.
 - 13.2.5.6. It is important that the victim understands the next steps and who the report will be passed to.
 - 13.2.5.7. To recognise that a child or young person is likely to disclose to someone they trust and that this could be **anyone** in a school. All staff are trained to manage a report. However, if possible, managing reports with two members of staff present (preferably one of them being the DSL or a Deputy).
 - 13.2.5.8. Where there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL will make and record an immediate risk and needs assessment.
 - 13.2.5.9. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the DSL will consider the need for a risk assessment on a case-by-case basis.
- 13.2.6. The risk and needs assessment will consider and keep under review:
- 13.2.6.1. The victim, especially their protection and support.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- 13.2.6.2. Whether there have been other victims.
 - 13.2.6.3. The alleged perpetrator(s); and
 - 13.2.6.4. All the other children and young people (and, if appropriate, adult learners and staff) at the schools, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them.
- 13.2.7. Our DSLs will engage with children’s social care, the police and specialist services as required. Any risk assessments undertaken by the other agencies/services will be used to inform our school/college’s own risk assessment and approach to supporting and protecting their children/young people and updating their risk assessment.
- 13.2.8. Important considerations:
- 13.2.8.1. **‘It could happen here’**- all schools are aware and will respond appropriately to all reports and concerns about sexual violence and/or sexual harassment both online and offline including those which have happened outside school.
 - 13.2.8.2. The wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible.
 - 13.2.8.3. The nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour.
 - 13.2.8.4. The ages and developmental stages of the children or young people involved.
 - 13.2.8.5. Any power imbalance between the children/young people e.g. age differential, disability or learning difficulty.
 - 13.2.8.6. If the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse.
 - 13.2.8.7. Any ongoing risks to the victim, other children/young people, adult learners or staff; and
 - 13.2.8.8. Other related, contextual issues e.g. in the community/local environment.
 - 13.2.8.9. If both the alleged perpetrator and victim are still attending the same school/college, how best to keep them at a reasonable distance apart (including on transport) ([KCSIE](#) 2024 section 448 for further information).

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

13.3. Management of sexual violence/harassment cases

- 13.3.1. Where appropriate, the management of such cases will be agreed with in consultation with children's social care and/or the police or other specialist service. There are four possible routes – **all** underpinned by the principle that such behaviour is **never acceptable and will not be tolerated**:
- 13.3.2. **Manage internally** - In some case of sexual harassment, e.g. one-off incidents, it might be appropriate to handle the incident internally, perhaps through utilising our behaviour and bullying policies and by providing pastoral support.
- 13.3.3. **Early Help** – Providing early help can be particularly useful to address non- violent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent escalation of sexual violence.
- 13.3.4. **Referrals to children's social care** – Where a child or young person has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, we will make a referral to children's social care, who will determine whether any of the children or young people involved are in need of protection or other services. Referring to children's social care should not delay our schools from taking immediate action to protect the victim and other children/young people. However, we will ensure that any such actions do not jeopardise a statutory investigation.
- 13.3.5. **Reporting to the Police** – Any report to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to children's social care. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the matter should be passed on to the police. If the alleged perpetrator is under ten (below the age of criminal responsibility), the principle of reporting to the police remains. The police will take a welfare approach, rather than a criminal justice approach.
- 13.3.6. The school/college will consult the police and agree what information can be disclosed to staff and others and in particular to the alleged perpetrator and their parents/carers. They should also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity.
- With all routes outlined above, it is vital that all concerns, decisions, and reasons for decisions are recorded (written or electronic).***
- 13.3.7. In all cases, our schools will work with children's social care and the police to manage any implications and to safeguard children and young people. An important consideration will be to ensure that the victim can continue in their normal routine, including continuing to receive a suitable education.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- 13.3.8. Throughout any criminal process taking place, the police will help and support our schools as much as they can – within the constraints of any legal restrictions.
- 13.3.8. **The end of the criminal process** – if a child or young person is convicted or cautioned for a sexual offence and remains in school/college, expectations regarding their future behaviour and any restrictions must be made clear.
- 13.3.9. **Safeguarding and supporting the victim** – victims may not disclose the whole picture immediately. They should be asked if they would find it helpful to have a designated trusted adult to talk to about their needs and have choice about who this is. In response to any stress they may experience, flexible or alternative arrangements for their education may need to be considered. We will do everything we reasonably can to protect the victim from bullying and harassment to ensure that they continue to receive a suitable education.
- 13.3.10. **Safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator** – Any child or young person will likely experience stress as a result of being subject of allegations and any associated negative reactions by their peers. We will respond proportionately, recognising that the alleged perpetrator may have unmet needs as well as potentially posing a risk of harm to other children or young people. These behaviours may be a symptom of either their own abuse or exposure to abusive practices and or materials. We will seek advice as appropriate from children’s social care, specialist sexual violence services and the police.
- 13.3.11. If the alleged perpetrator moves to another educational provision, our DSL’s will ensure that relevant staff at the new provision are made aware of any ongoing support needs and any potential risks to other children, young people and the staff.
- 13.3.12. **Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false, or malicious reports** – all concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing. should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified and addressed. If a report is found to be unfounded, or false the DSL should consider whether this is a cry for help or that the child/young person could have been abused and in such circumstances a referral to Children’s Services may be appropriate. If a report is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious the schools will consider if any action is appropriate in accordance to their behaviour policy.

14. Further Information - Safeguarding Children in Specific Circumstances

14.1. Children and the Court System

- 14.1.1. Guidance is available for when children or young people are required to give evidence in

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

criminal courts [5-11 year olds](#) and [12-17 year olds](#). Making arrangements for children/young people via the **family courts** following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. The Ministry of Justice has launched useful online guidance [Get help with child arrangements](#) (also known as contact, access, or custody).

14.2. Children with Disabilities or Special Educational Needs

- 14.2.1. Our schools are committed to ensure that children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities have exactly the same human rights to be safe from abuse, neglect and exploitation, to be protected from harm and achieve the same outcomes as non-disabled children/young people. We recognise that disabled children and young people do however require additional action because they can experience greater vulnerability as a result of negative attitudes and because they may have additional needs relating to physical, sensory, cognitive and/or communication impairments.
- 14.2.2. This understanding is incorporated into our staff training, so that we all remain vigilant to identifying the additional vulnerabilities for these children and young people in our care and provide the appropriate level and type of pastoral support.
- 14.2.3. Staff should bear in mind that additional difficulties may exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This can include assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child or young person's disability without further exploration, that children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by, for example, bullying without outwardly showing any signs, and there can be communication barriers in overcoming these difficulties.
- 14.2.4. Further detail is set out in the [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policy](#).

14.3. Children with a family member in prison or custody

- 14.3.1. These children and young people are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation, and poor mental health. [NICCO](#) (National Information Centre on Children of Offenders) provides information to support professionals working with offenders and their children/young people, to help mitigate negative consequence for those children/young people.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

14.4. Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation

- 14.4.1. These are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual or criminal activity. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or will be to the financial benefit or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.
- 14.4.2. Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Like all forms of abuse exploitation:
- 14.4.2.1. Can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex.
 - 14.4.2.2. Can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual.
 - 14.4.2.3. Can include both contact (penetrative and non- penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity.
 - 14.4.2.4. Can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both.
 - 14.4.2.5. Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.
 - 14.4.2.6. May occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posting on social media).
 - 14.4.2.7. Can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time,
 - 14.4.2.8. and range from opportunistic to complex organized abuse; and
 - 14.4.2.9. Is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse.
 - 14.4.2.10. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- 14.4.2.11. Some of the following signs may be indicators of Child Criminal Exploitation:
- 14.4.2.12. Children or young people who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions.
- 14.4.2.13. Children or young people who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- 14.4.2.14. Children or young people who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- 14.4.2.15. Children or young people who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- 14.4.2.16. Children or young people who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late;
- 14.4.2.17. Children or young people who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

14.4.3. The above Child Criminal Exploitation indicators can also be indicators of Child Sexual Exploitation, as can:

- 14.4.3.1 Children or young people who have older partners.
- 14.4.3.2. Children or young people who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.

14.4.4. Our schools will support the multi-agency activity to combat these crimes and help to divert and support any young children or young people affected by CSE and CCE. Each school will follow their local Safeguarding Children's Board protocol for identifying and managing cases of CSE and/or CCE and promote the use of their Safeguard Identification Tool (if they provide one). Also see section 'Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment.

14.5. Gangs and Youth Violence

14.5.1. Schools are increasingly recognised as places where early warning signs can be spotted that younger children may be at risk of getting involved in gangs or youth violence. Crucial preventive work can be done at this stage to prevent negative behaviour from escalating and becoming entrenched. We recognise that even low levels of youth violence can have a disproportionate impact on a child/young person or the wider school/community environment. We will therefore, support children/young people in developing

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

safeguarding skills to prevent involvement in risky behaviours, and where serious concerns arise, we will work collaboratively with our partner agencies to help prevent escalation of harm.

14.5.2. For further information refer to government guidance [advice to schools on gangs and youth violence](#) and [Preventing serious violence: a multi-agency approach](#).

14.5.3. Support for young people affected by gang association can be obtained via each local authority for example: [London gang exit](#).

14.6. County Lines

14.6.1. This is a geographically widespread form of criminal activity involving drug networks or gangs that groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural or seaside areas. Missing episodes can be an important identifying factor, where the victim may have been trafficked for these purposes. In close working relationship with the local MASH a referral to the National Referral Mechanism will be considered for any such concerns.

14.6.2. Further advice can be obtained from Home Office guidance [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults - county lines](#)

14.7. Domestic Abuse

14.7.1. The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional. All children and young people can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their homelife where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and young people. In some cases, a child or young person may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

14.8. Operation Encompass

14.8.1. Operation Encompass operates in the majority of police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children and young people. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

domestic abuse, where there are children or young people in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead) in school before the child/young person or children/young people arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child/young person's circumstances and can enable support to be given to the child/young person according to their needs. Police forces not signed up to operation encompass will have their own arrangements in place.

- 14.8.2. National Domestic Abuse Helpline Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a safe time from the team for a call can be booked.
- 14.8.3. Additional advice on identifying children or young people who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:
- 14.8.3.1. NSPCC-UK domestic abuse Signs Symptoms Effects.
 - 14.8.3.2. Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children.
 - 14.8.3.3. Safelives: young people and domestic abuse.
- 14.8.4. The Domestic Abuse Bill 2020 sought to improve awareness and understanding of coercive control offence and review effectiveness of offence. The Bill also recognises the devastating impact that domestic abuse can have on children and young people exposed to it in their own home. Part 1 of the Bill provides that a child who sees or hears, or experiences the effects of, domestic abuse and is related to the person being abused or the perpetrator is also to be regarded as a victim of domestic abuse. This will help to ensure that locally commissioned services consider and address the needs of children and young people affected by domestic abuse.
- 14.8.5. Our schools recognise the immediate and long-term impact of domestic abuse on a child or young person's development and emotional wellbeing. All staff will remain vigilant to identifying the signs so that early help and protective action can be instigated where appropriate. We endeavour to provide the child/young person with a safe and caring environment at school to help mitigate the impact of home-life stresses.
- 14.8.6. Any notifications received from the police/MASH of domestic abuse incidents, will be promptly reviewed by the DSL. This will enable the school to respond appropriately to the impact on the child/young person and to share any additional information with MASH to assist in the overall identification and assessment of risk.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

14.9. So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA)

14.9.1. So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child or young person being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

14.10. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

14.10.1. FGM comprises all non- medical procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

14.10.2. Each school recognises that whilst there is not necessarily an intention to harm a girl through FGM, the practice has serious short and long- term medical and psychological implications. We are committed to work with families, partner agencies to promote understanding and safeguard children and young people who may be at risk of this practice.

14.10.3. We aim to work sensitively with community groups where this may be a cultural belief and practice, however we will act to safeguard and promote our young people welfare where required and will fulfil our duties under the *Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003* (as inserted by section 74 of the *Serious Crime Act 2015*). This places a statutory duty upon teachers to personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. This can be done with support from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

14.10.4. Where it is suspected that a girl is at risk of FGM being undertaken then child protection procedures must be followed.

14.10.5. Further information can be found in:

14.10.5.1. [Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation](#) and

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

14.10.5.2. [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation - procedural information](#)

14.11. Forced Marriage

14.11.1. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN ARRANGED AND FORCED MARRIAGE?

14.11.1.1. **Arranged marriage:** Both participants give their full consent and enter the marriage willingly.

14.11.1.2. **Forced marriage:** One or both participants enter the marriage without giving their consent. They go through with the wedding under duress from their families.

14.11.2. Forcing someone into marriage is a criminal offence in the UK.

14.11.3. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. A lack of consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent e.g. if they have learning disabilities. There can also be links to so-called 'honour based' abuse. The Forced Marriage Unit can be contacted for advice or information on 020 7008 0151 or email: fmf@fco.gov.uk Our school recognises that it has an important role in safeguarding children and young people from forced marriage by educating children and young people about the law and their rights and in identifying signs of risk. Further information can be found in the [Government Guidance on Forced Marriage](#).

14.12. Homelessness

14.12.1. Our staff will alert the DSL of families becoming or at risk of becoming homeless, so that the DSL can refer to housing services at the earliest opportunity. Indicators for the risk of homelessness can include debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse, and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Duties introduced under The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 shift focus to early intervention. For further information refer to [Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets](#).

14.13. Homestay – children staying with host families

14.13.1. Children and young people may as part of their learning experience, stay for short periods with a host family (homestay) e.g. as part of a foreign exchange visit or sports tour.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

14.13.2. We will ensure the suitability of the adults in their respective families who will be responsible for the visiting child or young person during the stay. See Avanti Schools Trust [Safer Recruitment Policy](#) for further details on our specific duties.

14.14. Missing education or missing from home and care

14.14.1. A child or young person going missing from education, particularly repeatedly, is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and such children/young people are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation.

14.14.2. Staff should follow the School's procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children and young people that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risks of abuse, neglect and exploitation, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future. The School's procedures are set out in the Attendance Policy. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will monitor unauthorised absence particularly where children or young people go missing on repeated occasions.

14.14.3. The schools in the Avanti Schools Trust will fulfil their statutory duty in notifying the local authority when removing a child/young person's name from the admission's register outside of the normal transition points. They will make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child or young person jointly with the local authority before deleting their name from the register. They will also notify the local authority within five days of adding a child or young person's name at a non-standard transition point.

14.14.4. When one of our children or young people go missing from home or care we will contribute to the police and local authority's efforts to identify and locate the child/young person by completing the [Grab Pack for a Missing Children](#). For further guidance see [Children missing education](#).

14.15. Preventing Radicalisation

14.15.1. Radicalisation refers the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Each school and its staff have a duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (the Prevent duty). [Protecting children from radicalisation: the Prevent Duty](#) provides guidance for schools and childcare providers on preventing children and young people from being drawn into terrorism.

14.15.2. Being drawn into terrorism includes not just violent extremism but also non- violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

views which terrorists exploit.

- 14.15.3. The Government's Counter Extremism Strategy defines 'Extremism' as: "the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including, democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces, as extremist."
- 14.15.4. Each school seeks to promote an understanding of and commitment to fundamental British values such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, tolerance, and respect for other people. Young people are able to discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas. The Prevent duty is not intended to limit discussion of these issues and each School in the Avanti Schools Trust and its staff should be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children/young people's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgment in identifying children and young people who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately. Staff are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead who can advise on assessing the level of risk to identify the most appropriate referral, which could include making a referral to the Channel programme or Children's Social Care.
- 14.15.5. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. It is a voluntary process which allows the individual to withdraw from the programme at any time.
- 14.15.6. All staff are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the government's website www.educateagainsthate.com. The website is designed to equip school leaders, teachers and parents with the information, tools, and resources they need to recognise and address extremism and radicalization in young people.
- 14.15.7. Each school will help to identify young people at risk and work with local partnership arrangements including the Channel Programme to help support and divert any young people from associated harm: Click here for further guidance [Channel Duty Guidance](#).
- 14.16. Private Fostering**
- 14.16.1. We recognise the importance of identifying children and young people in Private Fostering arrangements so that their needs can be fully assessed by the local authority. In

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

all schools in the Avanti Schools Trust, we will confirm the status of every child/young person's care arrangements on admission (or when a child/young person's care arrangements change) and notify the local authority of any known or suspected Private Fostering arrangement. We will support any subsequent assessment and remain alert to any additional needs that children and young people placed away from their immediate families might face. See links for information on what constitutes [private fostering](#) and details of [The Children's Act 1989: private fostering](#).

14.17. Substance Misuse

- 14.17.1. **Young people:** We recognise the clear role each school has to play in preventing drug misuse as part of our pastoral responsibilities. We will provide age-appropriate information on drugs and alcohol and tackle problem behaviour, working with local partners to prevent drug or alcohol misuse. For further guidance refer to [DfE and ACPO Drug Advice for schools](#). (ACPO has changed to the National Police Chiefs' Council).
- 14.17.2. **Parental Substance Misuse:** Substance misuse (drugs or alcohol) may impact on parental capacity and can significantly exacerbate other concerns such as domestic violence or mental health issues. We will remain vigilant in identifying and supporting children/young people and their families facing such issues, and work in collaboration with other agencies where necessary to prevent significant harm.

14.18. Mental Health Children/Young People

- 14.18.1. Each school seeks to promote positive mental health in our children and young people and to identify and address those with less severe problems at an early stage and build their resilience. We are also committed to identifying and supporting children and young people with more severe needs and to help make appropriate referrals to specialist agencies such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) where necessary.
- 14.18.2. All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child or young person has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- 14.18.3. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children and young people day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- 14.18.4. Where children or young people have suffered abuse, neglect, exploitation or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children/young people's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

14.18.5. If staff have a mental health concern about a child or young person that is also a safeguarding concern, they must immediately speak to the DSL or a Deputy DSL.

14.18.6. The Department for Education has published advice and guidance on [Preventing and Tackling Bullying](#), and [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#). In addition, Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among young people including its guidance '[Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing](#)'. Its resources include social media, forming positive relationships, smoking and alcohol.

14.19. Parental Mental Health

We recognise that some parents with mental health issues may experience difficulties at times with their parenting responsibilities. We are committed to supporting such families and will endeavour to identify those who would benefit from early help from local services and work with them to avoid any adverse impact on their children and young people. For further guidance refer to [Parental mental health](#).

14.20. Trafficking and Modern-Day Slavery

14.20.1. All Avanti Trust Schools will remain alert for children and young people trafficked into the country who may be registered at our school for a term or longer, before being moved to another part of the UK or abroad. We will bear in mind that not all children and young people who go missing from education have been victims of trafficking. For example, there may be instances of children or young people from communities that move around – Gypsy, Roma, Traveller or migrant families – who collectively go missing from school. For further government guidance refer to [Safeguarding Children who may have been trafficked practice guidance](#).

14.21. Young carers

14.21.1. With so many adult responsibilities, young carers often miss out on opportunities that other children and young people have to play and learn. We in Avanti Trust Schools are uniquely placed to identify and respond to concerns and 'triggers' where children and young people may require additional help as carers. We will aim to respond early with our own pastoral support and where appropriate seeking help from local authority support services for young carers.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Appendix A. Role Description for Designated Safeguarding Lead

- A.1. Trustees should appoint an appropriate **senior member** of staff, from the school **leadership team**, to the role of designated safeguarding lead.
- A.2. This person should have the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post. They should be given the time, funding, training, resources, and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions, inter-agency meetings, contribute to the assessments of children and young people – and/or to support other staff to do so.
- A.3. Any deputy should be trained to the same standard as the DSL, but the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection remains with the DSL.
- A.4. In accordance with Annex C of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2024, the main responsibilities of the DSLs are:
- A.5. Managing referrals**
- A.5.1. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to refer cases:
- A.5.1.1. Of suspected abuse to the local authority children’s social care as required.
 - A.5.1.2. Support staff who make referrals to local authority children’s social care.
 - A.5.1.3. Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalization concern as required.
 - A.5.1.4. Support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme.
 - A.5.1.5. To take lead responsibility for promptly making referrals to the police where a crime may have been committed which involves a child or young person. The National Police Chiefs’ Council advice ‘[When to call the police](#)’ should assist Designated Safeguarding Leads understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do.
 - A.5.1.6. Explicitly state that concerns that a young person may be in need or at risk of abuse to be recorded and placed on the young person’s record, together with details on how the concerns have been dealt with.
- A.6. Working with others**
- A.6.1. The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- A.6.1.1. To take lead responsibility in early help cases and liaise with other agencies.
- A.6.1.2. Act as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners (Local Authority, Police and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)).
- A.6.1.3. As required liaise with the case manager and the LADO for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member.
- A.6.1.4. Liaise with the Principal to inform him or her of issues especially.
- A.6.1.5. Ongoing enquiries under *section 47* of the *Children Act 1989* and police investigations.
- A.6.1.6. Liaise with staff (especially pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians, and SENDCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN In a college) on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- A.6.1.7. Act as a source of support, advice, and expertise for staff.

A.7. Training

- A.7.1. To undergo training, at least every two years, to acquire the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role.
- A.7.2. To undertake Prevent awareness training; and
- A.7.3. To ensure knowledge and skills are refreshed at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually to keep abreast of developments relevant to their role so they:
 - A.7.3.1. Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention;
 - A.7.3.2. Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and effectively contribute when required to do so;
 - A.7.3.3. Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands this Policy and child protection procedures, and in particular, new and part-time staff;
 - A.7.3.4. Are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;
 - A.7.3.5. Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation;
 - A.7.3.6. Are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals, including a rationale for decisions;
 - A.7.3.7. Understand and support the School with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children and young people from the risk of radicalisation;
 - A.7.3.8. Are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

required to keep children and young people safe whilst they are online at School;

- A.7.3.9. Can recognise the additional risks that children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities to stay safe online;
- A.7.3.10. Obtain access to resources and attend relevant refresher training courses; and
- A.7.3.11. Encourage a culture of listening to children and young people and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measure the School puts in place to protect them.

A.8. Raising Awareness

A.8.1. The designated safeguarding lead should:

- A.8.1.1. Ensure the school's child protection policies are known, understood, and used appropriately.
- A.8.1.2. Ensure the school or college's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with The Executive, The Trustees and SSCs regarding this.
- A.8.1.3. Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this; and
- A.8.1.4. Link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- A.8.1.5. To help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children and young people, including children/young people with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and Senior Leadership Team;

A.9. Transfer of child protection files

A.9.1. When a child or young person transfers to another school or college, the DSL should inform the receiving school within five school days that a child protection/ safeguarding file exists. The receiving school should routinely ask the previous school if a child protection/safeguarding file exists, for all transfers. The original child protection/safeguarding file must be passed on either by hand or sent recorded delivery, separate from the child/young person's main school file, within five school days from notification.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Care must be taken to ensure confidentiality is maintained and the transfer process is as safe as possible. Parents should not be used as couriers for such files. [Guidance on the Transfer of a Child Protection or Safeguarding File to another education setting – July 2017](#).

A.10. Availability

- A.10.1. During term time the DSL or Deputy should always be available (during school hours) for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the DSL or Deputy would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools, working with the DSL to define what “available” means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Skype or other such media is acceptable.
- A.10.2. It is a matter for individual schools and the DSL to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Appendix B Record of Concern (where required if cannot access CPOMS)

Child's Name:			
Child's DOB:			
Gender:	Ethnic Origin:	Disability Y/N:	Religion:
Date and time of concern:			
Your account of the concern: (what was said, observed, reported and by whom)			
Additional Information: (your opinion, context of concern/disclosure)			
Your response: (what did you do/say following the concern)			
Your name:		Your signature:	
Your position in school:		Date and time of this recording:	
Action and response of DSP/Principal:			

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Feedback given to member of staff reporting concern:	Information shared with any other staff? If so, what information was shared and what was the rationale for this?
Name:	
Date:	

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Checklist for DSL (to be printed on back of record of concern form)

1.	Child clearly identified
2.	Name, designation and signature of the person completing the record populated?
3.	Date and time of any incidents or when a concern was observed?
4.	Date and time of written record?
5.	Distinguish between fact, opinion and hearsay
6.	Concern described in sufficient detail, i.e. no further clarification necessary?
7.	Child's own words used. (Swear words, insults, or intimate vocabulary should be written down verbatim.)
8.	Record free of jargon?
9.	Written in a professional manner without stereotyping or discrimination?
10.	The record includes an attached completed body map (if relevant) to show any visible injuries

BODY MAPS: (If cannot access and record on CPOMS)



Body Chart 1.pdf

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Appendix C Types of abuse, neglect and exploitation

- C.1. All staff should be aware that firstly; abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition, and, in most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another. Secondly, harmful behaviours such as substance abuse, sexting and truanting can put children and young people in danger. Thirdly, that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the School and/or can occur between children and young people outside of these environments.
- C.2. All staff, but especially the DSLs and their Deputies should consider whether children or young people are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children and young people can be vulnerable to multiple harms including but not limited to sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.
- C.3. [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2024\)](#) defines types of abuse and neglect as follows:
- C.3.1. **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.
- C.3.2. **Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
- C.3.3. **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

- C.3.4. **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.
- C.3.5. **Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
- C.3.6 All staff should be aware that **child sexual and child criminal exploitation** are forms of child abuse.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Appendix D

Actions where there are concerns about a child



