Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

(Venn wide)

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2	Approved by	Board of Trustees
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7	Applies to	☒ All staff ☐ Support staff ☐ Teaching staff
8	Available on	☒ Venn website ☒ School website ☒ SharePoint

Venn Academy Trust (VAT) is a charitable company limited by guarantee with registration number 09662303 and Sole Member of the subsidiary company Venn Education Group (VEG). Venn Education Group is a charitable company limited by guarantee with registration number 16743074.

Venn wide policies are centrally held policies and are the direct responsibility of VAT. Venn wide policies are created by the VAT Central Team and adopted by the VEG Board.

Contents

1. Our strong safeguarding culture 4
2. Safeguarding legislation and guidance 5
3. Introduction and aims 6
4. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) DFE 2026 6
5. Our commitment 8
6. School commitment and values 8
7. Multi-agency working in Local Areas 9
8. Local authority key safeguarding contacts 9
9. Roles and responsibilities 10
10. Opportunities to teach safeguarding 16
11. Safeguarding children and young people 16
12. Mental health 18
13. Child-on-child abuse 18
14. Investigating allegations 20
15. Serious violence 21
16. County lines 22
17. Sharing nudes and semi-nudes 23
18. Child Exploitation (CE) includes criminal and sexual exploitation 24
19. Com Networks 25
20. Third Party Intelligence 26
21. Child Victims of Trafficking and/or Modern-Day Slavery 26
22. Children/young people missing 27
23. Children Missing Education (CME / children absent from education) 27
24. Children in Care (CIC) 27
25. Children in Alternative Provision 28
26. Dangerous Dogs 28
27. Domestic Abuse 29
28. Educational Neglect 29
29. Elective Home Education (EHE) 30
30. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Breast Ironing (or flattening) 30
31. Identifying children and young people who may need early help 31
32. Identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm 32
33. Child protection procedures 33

34. Referral to children's social care 35
35. Reporting directly to child protection agencies 35
36. Confidentiality and sharing information 35
37. Forced Marriage 37
38. Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) 38
39. Neglect 38
40. Homelessness 39
41. Honour Based Abuse 40
42. LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) – Managing allegations against staff, carers, and volunteers. 40
43. LGBTQ+ support & Children/Young people who are gender questioning, requesting social transitioning 40
44. Low Level Concerns (concerns that do not meet the LADO harm threshold) 42
45. Mandatory Reporting 42
46. Online Safety (including filtering & Monitoring, AI, and use of social media) .. 43
47. Operation to support Afghan and Ukrainian arrivals in the UK 45
48. Power to Search – searching, screening and confiscation 46
49. Prevent 47
50. Private Fostering 48
51. Reporting systems for our children/young people 48
52. Safer Recruitment 48
53. Suicide Prevention 49
54. The use of 'reasonable force' in schools and colleges 49
55. Visitors to the school 50
56. Whistleblowing 50
57. Young Carer's 51
58.Aerosols…… ……51

Appendix 1: types of abuse 52
Appendix 2 - related safeguarding policies and procedures 54

1. Our strong safeguarding culture

1.1. Why it is important

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and it is the duty of the school/Venn to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This is our core safeguarding principle.

In adhering to this principle, we focus on providing a safe and welcoming environment for all of our children regardless of age, ability, culture, race, language, religion, gender identity or sexual identity. All of our children have equal rights to support and protection.

One of the cornerstones of our safeguarding culture is this policy and the procedures contained within it. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and trustees, all of whom are trained upon its contents and on their safeguarding duties. We update this policy at least annually to reflect changes to law and guidance and best practice.

This policy should be read alongside our other safeguarding policies.

Safeguarding arrangements are implemented in accordance with:

- Part 3 of the Independent School standards Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children/young people at the school.
- Schedule 10 of the Equality Act duties where relevant
- KCSIE 2026

1.2 What it means for our pupils

We work with our local safeguarding partners to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to interagency plans which provide additional support to the child. Early Help offers support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse.

All of our staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may indicate that a child is at risk of harm. Any pupils or staff involved in child protection or safeguarding issues will receive appropriate support.

Our strong safeguarding culture ensures that we treat all pupils with respect and involve them in decisions that affect them. We encourage positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils, and we set a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately.

Identifying safeguarding and child protection concerns often begins with recognising changes in pupils' behaviour and knowing that these changes may be signs of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse.

All of our staff will reassure children that their concerns and disclosures will be taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

All of our staff will put the child's best interests first and ensure children's wishes and feelings are considered when managing child protection issues.

All of our staff will ensure children do not feel that they are creating a problem by raising concern.

2. Safeguarding legislation and guidance

2.1. This policy has been devised in accordance with the Department for Education's Statutory Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026). It is also in accordance with the independent school standards (part 3) and Schedule 10 of the Equality Act duties where relevant.

2.2. We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed with the local safeguarding partners. It is also based on the principles established by the following statutory legislation and guidance.

2.3. Department for Education's statutory guidance publications for schools and local authorities, including:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)
- Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children (2018)
- Human Rights Act (1998) and Equality Act (2010), including the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Data Protection Act (2018) and UK GDPR
- Safeguarding children and young people in Rotherham – Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership
- PACE Code C 2019 – this reflects the 'Appropriate Adult' addition to Annex C of KCSiE.
- The Education Act 2002
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children/young people.

- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children/young people.
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and Childcare Act 2006, which set out who is disqualified from working with children.
- This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Introduction and aims

3.1. This policy applies to all adults, including volunteers, trustees, working in or on behalf of the school. It will provide a framework for staff to meet their statutory duties and to ensure consistency of good practice.

3.2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.

4. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) DFE 2026

4.1. Safeguarding includes the establishment and implementation of procedures to protect children from deliberate harm, however, safeguarding also encompasses all aspects of pupils' health, and safety and well-being (see our related school safeguarding policies).

4.2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children - defined for the purposes of this guidance as: *'**Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)**'*

- 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 impairment of children's mental and physical health or development

- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

- Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children

- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework

4.3. **Child Protection** - Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child/young person and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent. ***See appendix 1: types of abuse.***

Child-to-parent abuse refers to abuse perpetrated by children against parents/carers as a safeguarding issue.

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's/young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's/young person's health or development.

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery) is where children/young people share nude or semi-nude images, videos, or live streams.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role – stepparents, foster parents, carer, and adoptive parents.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school/setting in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with, this may include terms such as person who has been harmed, person who has experienced harm, person subject to abuse or survivor.

Alleged perpetrator(s) and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the alleged perpetrator too. We will, however, decide what is appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis. Language such as "the person who has harmed" should be considered as a more trauma-informed and relational term to avoid stigmatisation.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) - the named person for safeguarding in education establishments.

LADO – Local Authority Designated Officer – deals with any allegation against any member of staff in a public setting.

HSB – Harmful Sexual Behaviour is sexual behaviour displayed by a child or young person that is inappropriate for their age or stage of development, and which may cause harm, distress, or risk to themselves or others.

4.4. Children are defined as anybody under the age of 18 or 25 if a care leaver.

5. Our commitment

Venn is committed to ensuring the welfare and safety of all children in our schools. We will protect and support our vulnerable children, children who need support through early help/family help, children in need and children who have a child protection plan. All schools follow the Local Children's Safeguarding Partnership procedures. The school will, normally, endeavor to discuss all concerns with parents or carers about their child or children. However, there may be exceptional circumstances when the school will discuss concerns with Social Care and/or the Police without parental knowledge (in accordance with Child Protection procedures and in line with Part 2 of KCSIE). The school will, of course, always aim to maintain a positive relationship with all parents. This school's child protection policy is available publicly via our website and is available from the office or the DSL, if required.

6. School commitment and values

Key Contacts	
School Key Contacts	
Principal	Laura Harkin
Regional Director	Nicola Witham
Chair of Trustees	Terry Johnson
Safeguarding Trustee	Shelia Wallace-Marshall
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Laura Harkin Victoria Rogers
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	Rachael Lunn
Designated Teacher (CLA)	Carl Ryde Laura Harkin

Mental Health Lead	Lemise Bassett
Director of Safeguarding, Attendance, Risk and Welfare- Venn	Laura Carr

6.1. Venn and their Trustees are committed to safeguarding and promoting the Welfare of all of its pupils. Each pupil's welfare is of paramount importance. We recognise that some children are potentially at greater risk of harm or abuse eg those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and those living in adverse circumstances. We recognise that children who are abused may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. Whilst at school, their behaviour may be challenging. We recognise that some children who have experienced abuse may harm others. We will always take a considered and sensitive approach in order that we can support all of our pupils.

6.2. We will adopt a child-centred approach to our work, we will act in the best interests of our children, and we will ensure that everyone is aware of their safeguarding responsibilities.

7. Multi-agency working in Local Areas

7.1. Our schools work in partnership with the Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership. Our school has a pivotal role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and contributes to multi-agency working in line with the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026'.

7.2. The three statutory safeguarding partners (Local County Council, Health, and Police) have made arrangements to allow all schools and colleges in the local area to be fully engaged, involved and included in the new safeguarding arrangements. As a named and as a relevant agency, we are under a statutory duty to co-operate with the published arrangements.

8. Local authority key safeguarding contacts

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Telephone: 01709 336 080 Email: LADO@rotherham.gov.uk
Safeguarding Adviser – Local Authority	
Children's Social Care	Rotherham MASH: 01709 336080
Out of hours Children's Social Care EDT	Rotherham MASH: 01709 336080
Professionals line – Social Care	
Prevent	Emergency – 999 Non-emergency 101

Prevent national referral - myAccount | Local City Council	Prevent@ctpne.police.uk Channel Helpline - 020 7340 7264
Local Police – PCSO link	
School Nursing Service	

9. Roles and responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL:

- Is a member of the senior leadership team.
- Takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school, including online safety and understanding our filtering and monitoring processes on school devices and school networks to keep children/young people safe online.
- Ensures the recording system (CPOMS or other) is used appropriately by all staff, providing refresher training where necessary and ensuring that clear chronologies are maintained.
- Ensures that safeguarding records are transferred securely when a child moves settings.
- Is supported by trained deputies (DDSL)
- Is available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters.
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so.
- Contribute to the assessment of children/young people.
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly.
- Lead on Family Help and Multi-Agency working.
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour.
- Have a good understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at our school.
- Promote a strong safeguarding culture

Our schools ensure:

- There are always **robust DSL cover arrangements**, including absence
- There is DSL cover arrangements during school holidays
- The full responsibilities of the DSL and DDSL are set out in their job description.

9.1. The Principal

The principal is responsible for the implementation of this policy and all linked policies, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff, supply) and volunteers:
  - Are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction.
  - Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect.
- Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child/young person joins the school and via the school website.
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training, and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent.
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate.
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL/DOS on this.
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable
- Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person
- Overseeing the safe use of technology, mobile phones, and cameras in the setting
- Ensuring that Inclusion and Belongingness run through all whole school policies and will aim to remove barriers to attendance and inclusion for all learners.
- Regular evaluation of the impact on inclusion of whole school policies and initiatives through an Assess, Plan, Do, Review Cycle, including this in the S175 safeguarding return, and openly sharing findings from the evaluation for peer review.

9.2. Trustees

The Board of Trustees have a strategic leadership responsibility for safeguarding and will comply with their duties under the legislation and guidance. They will facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding and ensure that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development and that all systems, processes, and policies operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

The Board of Trustees and Director of Safeguarding are responsible for all aspects of the implementation, maintenance and review of this policy and will ensure that staff will receive appropriate levels of training and support to undertake their roles as outlined in this policy and that a log of their training is maintained. Trustees will ensure that all safeguarding related policies and procedures are transparent, clear and easy to understand for staff, visitors, pupils, parents and carers.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and trustees in the school and is consistent with the procedures of the 3 safeguarding partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

This list is not exhaustive, please see KCSIE 2026 for more details Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK

All staff

All staff will:

- Read and understand **Part 1 of KCSIE 2026 in full** Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK
- Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance.
- Know the identity of the DSL/DDSL.
- Recognise signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and act without delay.
- Provide a safe space and reassure children they are taken seriously.
- Undertake Safeguarding training

We will ensure that:

- A designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children is in place
- We have sought assurances that Child Protection Files are maintained in line with Annex C of KCSIE
- Appropriate Safer Recruitment Procedures are in place in line with Part 3 of KCSIE 2025, that adequate safer recruitment training has been undertaken and that procedures are embedded and effective
- The school holds more than one emergency contact number for each pupil (where reasonably possible)
- That appropriate risk assessments that keep children safe are in place with assurance that mitigations are followed
- This child protection and safeguarding policy reflects the whole school approach to child-on-child abuse, including child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment, regardless of whether or not this has been reported
- The child protection procedures are in accordance with government guidance and refer to the Local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
- These procedures reference online safety, including in relation to filtering and monitoring and special educational needs and disabilities discretely
- The school has appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place to respond to children who are absent from education, particularly for prolonged periods of time and/or on repeat occasions
- Staff safeguarding training (including online safety and also an appropriate understanding of the expectations, applicable roles, and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) is integrated, regular, aligned and considered as part of the whole school safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning, particularly during induction

- All Trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training that equips them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in school are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding, that this training is regularly updated and that training records are maintained
- The school contributes to multi-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children and meets their statutory duty to co-operate and will act in accordance with the arrangements published by the Safeguarding Partnership
- That access is allowed to children's social care services from the host local authority, and where appropriate, a placing local authority, to conduct, or consider whether to conduct, a Section 17 (S17) or a Section 47 (S47) assessment
- That children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, and recognise that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some children with SEND might be needed
- That the school has an appropriate online filter system in place in order to safeguard children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material whilst accessing school technology and that the school does all they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's IT system
- That online access is routinely and rigorously monitored by all staff in addition to the monitoring that is carried out to check that the school's filtering system is working and fit for purposes
- That the DSL is a member of the School Leadership Team (SLT), is adequately trained to carry out their role and is provided with adequate time to fulfil their role. Furthermore, the governing board is responsible for ensuring that role of the DSL is explicit in the individual's job description and that their job description is in line with KCSIE Annex C
- This policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and updated if needed and made available publicly via the school website
- Our systems, which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff behaviour policy/code of conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy designated safeguarding lead (DDSL), the behaviour policy, the online safety policy, and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.
- The development of Family Help arrangements under the Families First Partnership Programme and will work with local safeguarding partners to ensure children and families receive the right support at the right time.

- The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play.
- The recording system we use (CPOMS), how to appropriately record safeguarding concerns, expectations regarding timeliness (i.e. same day/within 24 hours) and how to form a chronology of events, including context, action taken and rationale. Staff also know how to speak to the DSL/DDSL immediately if the child/young person is at risk of harm.
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child/young person tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as female genital mutilation (FGM), and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals.
- The signs of different types of abuse, neglect and exploitation, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines).
- The importance of reassuring pupils that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- The fact that children/young people can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online.
- The fact that children/young people who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children/young people.
- What to look for to identify children/young people who need help or protection.

All staff must also recognise emerging risks including:
- AI-generated abuse (e.g. deepfakes)
- Online misogyny and harmful online cultures
- Financial exploitation and scams
- Serious violence and weapon-related risks.

Additionally, the chair of Trustees and the Director of Safeguarding are responsible for receiving concerns/allegations about the principal and agreeing any appropriate course of action for investigation. This includes liaison with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if the matter meets the criteria for being considered as an allegation.

9.3. **Venn**

Venn Board of Trustees will ensure structures are in place, so all children and young people are safeguarded across the Trust. Venn has a safeguarding trustee, Shelia Wallace-Marshall. Oversight of safeguarding effectiveness across the Venn sits with the Board of Trustees' Audit & Risk Committee.

Venn has a trust-wide Director of Safeguarding, Laura Carr. The Venn Director of Safeguarding is responsible for developing overarching safeguarding policies and ensuring compliance. The Director of Safeguarding will support the school based DSLS by leading the monitoring and reporting on safeguarding arrangements in all schools and leading the DSL networking group.

9.4. **Designated teacher**

Our Venn Schools have a designated teacher who works with the Local Authority to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked after.

With the commencement of sections 4 to 6 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, designated teachers have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales. The designated teacher has the appropriate training and the relevant qualifications and experience.

The Designated Teacher works with the Virtual School Head, who manages pupil premium plus for looked after children. The designated teacher works with the virtual school head to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school to meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan. The designated teacher works with the virtual school head to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children. In other schools and colleges, an appropriately trained teacher should take the lead.

Virtual School Heads should champion the attendance, attainment and progress of children in kinship care. Venn Schools will ensure kinship care is covered in staff training, including for the designated teacher and DSL.

9.5. **Mental health lead**

The mental health lead is responsible for creating a whole-school approach to supporting mental health and wellbeing by:

- Developing a whole-school approach to support mental wellbeing
- Promoting good mental health and emotional wellbeing for pupils and staff
- Ensuring clear processes to report mental health concerns
- Ensuring clear processes for managing mental health concerns
- Delivering appropriate training
- Liaising with the DSL where a mental health problem could indicate that a pupil has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, or exploitation

10. Opportunities to teach safeguarding

10.1. Venn teaches safeguarding, including online safety and healthy relationships and recognises that effective education is tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse and children with special educational needs or disabilities.

10.2. The safeguarding curriculum is considered as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum, including covering relevant issues for schools through Relationships Education (for all primary pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for all secondary pupils) and Health Education. In teaching these subjects we commit to ensuring that we comply with statutory guidance.

10.3. We recognise that school plays a crucial role in preventative education, in the context of a whole-school approach that prepares pupils for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny / misandry, homophobia, biphobia and sexual violence / harassment. We have a clear set of values and standards, these are upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life. They are underpinned by the school's behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of effective PSHE delivered by Jigsaw and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum. Our programme is fully inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate (particularly when considering the needs of children with SEND and other vulnerabilities).

10.4. Where we invite external organisations and / or visitors to enrich our safeguarding curriculum, we ensure that we review the educational value and age appropriateness of what they will deliver.

10.5. Our programme tackles safeguarding issues (at an age-appropriate stage) in line with KCSIE para 128-133 and the latest DfE guidance on Relationships, Sex, and Health Education.

11. Safeguarding children and young people

11.1 Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children are at greater risk of abuse. This increased risk can be caused by many factors including social exclusion, isolation, discrimination and prejudice.

To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we give special consideration to children who:

- Are vulnerable because of their race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender identity or sexuality

- Are vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- Are at risk of sexual exploitation, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, or being drawn into extremism
- Live in chaotic or unsupportive home situations
- Live transient lifestyles or live away from home or in temporary accommodation
- Are affected by parental substance abuse, domestic abuse or parental mental health needs
- Do not have English as a first language

11.2 Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children, which can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- Being more prone to peer group isolation than other children
- The potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

Our staff are trained to be aware of and identify these additional barriers to ensure this group of children are appropriately safeguarded.

11.3 Children missing education

Children missing education, particularly repeatedly, can be an indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation, child criminal exploitation, mental health problems, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Our staff are alert to these risks.

We closely monitor attendance, absence and exclusions and our DSL will take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day.

Allergy Policy

At ***Venn*** we are aware that from September 2026, we should develop a standalone Allergy Policy under Benedict's Law. We will comply with the following statutory requirements:

- Dedicated Allergy Policy
- Spare Adrenaline Pens
- Mandatory staff training
- Individual Healthcare Plans
- Appointed oversight

We have a designated allergy lead the Director of Safeguarding who will oversee school-wide allergy safety, incident reporting and compliance. Each School will have their own policy and Allergy Lead. Allergy safety is a core safeguarding duty, not optional practice.

Useful links:

Allergy safety in schools - GOV.UK

Welcome to Allergy School, Teaching Children About Food Allergies

For Schools and Childcare Settings | Allergy UK | National Charity

Safer Schools Programme for Allergy Management | Anaphylaxis UK

Schools Allergy Code | The Allergy Team

12. Mental health

12.1. Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils.

12.2. All staff are aware that mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff are also aware that where children have suffered adverse childhood experiences those experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

12.3. Where staff are concerned that a child's mental health is also a safeguarding concern, they will discuss it with the DSL or a deputy.

13. Child-on-child abuse

13.1. Child-on-child abuse – children harming other children - is unacceptable and will be taken seriously; it will not be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys'. It is more likely that boys will be perpetrators of child on child abuse and girls' victims, but allegations will be dealt with in the same manner, regardless of whether they are made by boys or girls.

13.2. All staff should be clear about the school's policy and procedures for addressing child on-child abuse and maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'.

13.3. Child on child abuse can take many forms, including:

- Physical abuse such as shaking, hitting, biting, kicking or hair pulling
- Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- Sexual violence and harassment such as rape and sexual assault or sexual
- Comments and inappropriate sexual language, remarks or jokes causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Upskirting, which involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their knowledge for the purposes of sexual gratification or to cause humiliation, distress or alarm
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) including pressuring others to share sexual content
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers (also known as teenage relationship abuse) - such as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual or emotional abuse
- Initiation / hazing – used to induct newcomers into sports teams or school groups by subjecting them to potentially humiliating or abusing trials with the aim of creating a bond

13.4. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with child-on-child abuse, for example girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence.

13.5. All staff recognise that that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place but is not being reported.

13.6. All staff are trained to recognise that children are capable of abusing other children (including online). We expect all staff to read Part 5 of KCSIE 2025 to ensure that they have a secure understanding of the types of abuse that can occur, including harmful sexual behaviour between children.

13.7. This child protection and safeguarding policy is accompanied by procedures that identifies how we will address child-on-child abuse and minimise the risk of this occurring by:

- Implementing a curriculum that teaches children about healthy relationships and positive influences in an age-appropriate way and signposts children as to what to do if they think they are in an unhealthy relationship or need to address negative influences
- Ensuring that there are systems in place for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously which are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible
- Having clear processes of how allegations of child-on-child abuse will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with in line with Part 5 of KCSIE 2025
- Having clear processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported
- Training staff to recognise that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place (and probably is) and is simply not being reported
- Making clear our zero-tolerance approach to abuse, in line with Part 5 of KCSIE 2025
- Recognising that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators, but that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously

14. Investigating allegations

14.1. All allegations of child-on-child abuse should be passed to the DSL immediately who will investigate and manage the allegation as follows:

- Gather information - children and staff will be spoken with immediately to gather relevant information
- Decide on action - if it is believed that any child is at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made to children's social care. The DSL will then work with children's social care to decide on next steps, which may include contacting the police. In other cases, we may follow our behaviour policy alongside this child protection and safeguarding policy
- Inform parents - we will usually discuss concerns with the parents. However, our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil and so if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to a child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police before parents are contacted
- Recorded – all concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions will be recorded in writing, kept confidential and stored securely on the school's child protection and safeguarding systems and/or in the child's separate child protection file. The record will include a clear and comprehensive

summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, and a note of the action taken, decisions reached and the outcome

14.2. Where allegations of a sexual nature are made, the school will follow the statutory guidance set out in Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

14.3. Children can report allegations or concerns of child-on-child abuse to any staff member and that staff member will pass on the allegation to the DSL in accordance with this policy. To ensure children can report their concerns easily, the school has the following system in place for children to confidently report abuse:

- Staff are trained in how to promote a culture in the school where children feel confident and able to share any concerns / worries they may have
- Children are taught with whom and how they can share any concerns they have and know that that they will be listened to and taken seriously

14.4. Supporting those involved. Our staff reassure all victims that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and that they will be supported and kept safe. Our staff will never give a victim the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment, nor will victims be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

14.5. Abuse that occurs online or outside of school will not be downplayed and will be treated equally seriously. We recognise that sexual violence and sexual harassment occurring online can introduce a number of complex factors. Amongst other things, this can include widespread abuse or harm across a number of social media platforms that leads to repeat victimisation.

14.6. The support required for the pupil who has been harmed will depend on their particular circumstance and the nature of the abuse. The support we provide could include counselling and mentoring or some restorative justice work.

14.7. Support may also be required for the pupil that caused harm. We will seek to understand why the pupil acted in this way and consider what support may be required to help the pupil and/or change behaviours. The consequences for the harm caused or intended will be addressed. Educating the Pupil will be a priority.

15. Serious violence

15.1. All staff are made aware of indicators that children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These include increased absence, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant

change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts could also indicate that children have been approached by or are involved with individuals associated with criminal gangs.

15.2. All staff are made aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

16. County lines

16.1. County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs around the country using dedicated mobile phone lines. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money, with offenders often using coercion, intimidation, violence and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

16.2. County lines exploitation can occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child. This power imbalance can be due to the same range of factors set out at paragraph 10.1 of this policy.

16.3. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations, including schools and colleges. Indicators of county lines include those indicators set out at 13.3 and 13.4 of this policy, with the main indicator being missing episodes from home and/or school.

16.4. Additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited include children who:

- Go missing from school or home and are subsequently found in areas away from their own home
- Are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs
- Are exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection
- Are found in accommodation with which they have no connection or in a hotel room where there is drug activity
- Owe a ‘debt bond’ to their exploiters
- Have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing
- Have been the perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime), as well as the victim.

16.5. All staff are aware of indicators that children are at risk from or experiencing criminal exploitation. The main indicator is increased absence during which time the child may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs or money.

17. Sharing nudes and semi-nudes

17.1. Sharing photos, videos and live streams online is part of daily life for many children and young people, enabling them to share their experiences, connect with friends and record their lives. Sharing nudes and semi-nudes means the sending or posting online of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by young people under the age of 18. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums, or carried out offline between devices via underpinning technology: i.e.
or carried out offline between devices via Bluetooth and peer-to-peer Wi-Fi (e.g. Apple AirDrop).

17.2.

17.3. The term ‘nudes’ is used as it is most commonly recognised by young people and more appropriately covers all types of image sharing incidents. Alternative terms used by children and young people may include ‘dick pics’ or ‘pics’. Other terms used in education include ‘sexting’, ‘youth produced sexual imagery’, and ‘youth involved sexual imagery’.

17.4. The motivations for taking and sharing nudes and semi-nudes are not always sexually or criminally motivated. Such images may be created and shared consensually by young people who are in relationships, as well as between those who are not in a relationship. It is also possible for a young person in a consensual relationship to be coerced into sharing an image with their partner. Incidents may also occur where:

- Children and young people find nudes and semi-nudes online and share them claiming to be from a peer
- Children and young people digitally manipulate an image of a young person into an existing nude online
- Images created or shared are used to abuse peers e.g. by selling images online or obtaining images to share more widely without consent to publicly shame

17.5. All incidents involving nude or semi-nude images will be managed as follows:

- The incident will be referred to the DSL immediately and the DSL will discuss it with the appropriate staff. If necessary, the DSL may also interview the children involved

- Parents will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put a child at risk of harm
- At any point in the process, if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm we will refer the matter to the police and/or children's social care

17.6. The UK Council for Internet Safety updated its advice for managing incidences of sharing nudes and semi-nudes in December 2020 - UKCIS advice 2020. The school will have regard to this advice when managing these issues.

18. Child Exploitation (CE) includes criminal and sexual exploitation

At ***Venn*** we recognise that child exploitation is a form of abuse and often involves an imbalance of power. We understand that children/young people often trust their abuser and do not know that what is happening is wrong, or they feel they are unable to tell anyone due to fear, intimidation, coercion and violence. We recognise that we all have a role to play to spot the signs and help keep children/young people safe. All our staff are clear about the policy and procedures with regards to child exploitation and will report concerns to Children's Social Care

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
This can include County Lines Activity, drug supply, thefts and other offending. It may include forced labour or children being used to facilitate fraud. This can happen both online and in local communities, or a combination of these.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
This can occur when children are sexually abused in exchange for something they need or want, or for the financial gain/status of another/others. Grooming of victims can take place online or in communities and may be perpetrated by individuals or groups.

Group-based child sexual exploitation and abuse is a kind of child sexual abuse, involving two or more perpetrators who are connected through formal or informal associations who are involved in or facilitate the sexual exploitation and abuse of children. This involvement may take many forms, including introducing children to others for the purpose of exploitation, trafficking a child for sexual exploitation, taking payment for sexual activity with a child, or allowing premises to be used for such activities.

Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) panel
Any child deemed to be at risk of/or currently subject to exploitation will be referred into the MACE process. A panel that consists of Specialist Exploitation staff, Police, Social Care, Health, Probation. Education and other partners, sits weekly to share information regarding those deemed at risk and an action plan will be developed and reviewed to manage the concerns.

We understand that the requirement to report child sexual abuse for anyone working in regulated activity with children/young people has now received Royal Assent and forms part of the Crime and Policing Act 2026. More guidance and training is expected from the government, however, It introduces a new statutory duty for individuals undertaking key roles with responsibility for children and young people in England to report sexual abuse when they are made aware of it. It also includes a new criminal offence of attempting to prevent someone reporting child sexual abuse.

Staff will report any concerns around child sexual abuse immediately to the police and children's social care.

Mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse in England: update on the Crime and Policing Act | NSPCC Learning

Crime and Policing Act 2026: Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse recommendations factsheet - GOV.UK

19. Com Networks

At **Venn,** staff are aware of 'Com Networks' which can be defined as:

Transnational Virtual Networks (TVN) of criminal actors which engage in a variety of illegal acts or coerce others to do so in furtherance of their own personal gain, development of their infamy, or in furtherance of their ideologies.

The networks can broadly be broken down into three identifiable subgroups:

- A group operating online primarily involved in extorting minors to commit digital and real-world sex crimes, criminal acts against the person, property & animals; and the promotion of self-harm and suicide: (Sextortion Com)
- A group acting online who hold extremist mind-set who promote a violent Nihilistic worldview encourages damage to property, harm to individuals & potentially acts of terrorism. (Offline Com)
- A group who have a common purpose to conduct criminal activities that maliciously use digital technologies that target commerce/ infrastructure by means of Network Intrusions/ Ransomware etc. (Cyber Com)

Com Networks should be assessed as potential child criminal exploitation, and it is likely that the online nature of these crimes will involve multiple perpetrators and victims across a geographical span.

Where staff have concerns, referrals will be made in line with local procedures including sharing intelligence with the police.

Useful links

Child Sexual Exploitation & How to Keep Your Child Safe | NSPCC

Child exploitation disruption toolkit - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Stop child exploitation - SYP (southyorks.police.uk)

Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation | The Children's Society

Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK

The National Cyber Security Centre | National Cyber Security Centre

20. Third Party Intelligence

Any intelligence around actual or suspected criminal activity including child exploitation, concerning associations and notable changes can and should be shared with the police via Third Party Intelligence. This can often add a richer picture for the police and statutory partners, if sharing is appropriate in the circumstances. These particular pieces of information are often equally as important when assessing CE, CSE and other exploitative crimes which involve children. Information should be shared with Police using the Third-Party Intelligence online portal (link below). The source of the information is always protected and not disclosed, even to other police officers.

http://www.southyorkshire.police.uk/partners/partner-services/community-partner-intelligence/v2/share-community-partnership-intelligence/

21. Child Victims of Trafficking and/or Modern-Day Slavery

At ***Venn*** we recognise that 'Trafficking of persons' means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.

'Modern slavery' is a form of organised crime in which individuals including children and young people are treated as commodities and exploited for criminal and financial gain. It encompasses human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced labour.

Children of all ages are affected and can be trafficked into, within ('internal trafficking'), and out of the UK for many reasons and all forms of exploitation.

Parents, carers, or family members may exploit children and young people. Often the child or young person will not realise that family members are involved in the exploitation.

Modern slavery and trafficking are child abuse, and any potential victim of child trafficking or slavery, servitude, or forced or compulsory labour should immediately be referred to Children's Social Care, as they may be suffering significant harm.

Useful links:

Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK

22. Children/young people missing

At ***Venn*** our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child/young person is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child/young person goes missing, we will:

Follow our absconding policy.

If there are significant concerns for a child's/young person's safety, we will call the police using 101 or in an emergency 999. Children's social care will also be informed.

23. Children Missing Education (CME / children absent from education)

At ***Venn*** we recognise that all children/young people, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have.

We also recognise that being absent as well as missing from education can be a safeguarding indicator, including sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or child criminal exploitation. Attendance is a key safeguarding priority. Persistent absence and severe absence will be treated as potential indicators of harm and responded to accordingly.

We will comply with our statutory duty to inform the Local Authority of any child/young person identified as CME or absent from education and this indicates safeguarding concerns. We will follow Working together to improve school attendance, LA procedures and statutory guidance outlined in children missing education – statutory guidance for local authorities.

Useful links:

Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK

Children missing education - GOV.UK

Children Missing Education and Children in Education...

24. Children in Care (CIC)

At ***Venn*** we recognise that children in care are likely to have experienced some form of abuse, neglect, or trauma prior to entering care and be living with those consequences.

Children in care are given the highest priority within school admission arrangements, and we are guided by the requirements set out in the school admissions code School admissions code - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

At ***Venn*** we have a Designated Teacher (DT) who is responsible for championing the needs of children in care in our school.

25. Children in Alternative Provision

At ***Venn*** we know that where we place a child/young person with an alternative provision provider regulated or unregulated, we continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that child/young person and should be satisfied that the placement meets their needs. We will obtain written information from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at their establishment. Schools will complete quality assurance using the Venn QA documents prior to discussing a placement with the Director of Safeguarding. More information can be found in KCSIE 2026.

Useful links:

Alternative provision - GOV.UK

Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK

Non-school alternative provision: voluntary national standards - GOV.UK

26. Dangerous Dogs

At ***Venn*** we are aware of the Dangerous Dogs Practice Guidance and the definition of dangerous dogs as follows:

The Dangerous Dogs Act (1991) prohibits persons from having in their possession or custody dogs belonging to types bred for fighting, enables restrictions to be imposed in relation to other types of dogs which present a serious danger to the public and makes further provision for securing that dogs are kept under proper control.

At ***Venn*** any member of staff who becomes aware of a dog that could be prohibited or considered dangerous will refer to the Police and/or the Children's Social Care without delay.

Where there is a report of a child/young person having been injured by a dog (or exposed to the risk of injury/significant harm either directly due to the dog's behaviour or indirectly due to the dog's impact on hygiene in the home) a referral to Children's Social Care will be considered. In deciding whether to make a referral, consideration will be given to:

- The nature of the injuries.
- The circumstances of the attack / incident.
- Whether the parents or dog owner sought medical advice.
- Whether the dog has previously shown any aggression; and
- What action the pet owner has taken to prevent a recurrence of any attack.

Useful links:

14865_proof_4LR_WEB.pdf (bluecross.org.uk)

Dog Help and Advice | Dogs Trust

Pet advice | Battersea Dogs & Cats Home

Safe and Sound Award Scheme | Dog training | The Kennel Club

27. Domestic Abuse

At ***Venn*** we recognise that prolonged or regular exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious impact on a child's/young person's development and emotional well-being, despite the best efforts of the non-abusing parent to protect the child. We recognise that witnessing ill treatment of others is harmful to children including where children can see, hear or experience its effects.

Domestic abuse impacts on children/young people in a number of ways. The impact of domestic abuse is likely to be exacerbated when combined with any form of substance misuse or mental ill health.

For children/young people living in situations of domestic abuse, the effects may also result in behavioural issues (including anti-social behaviour), absence from school, difficulties concentrating, lower school achievement, ill health, bullying, substance misuse, self-harm, running away, anti-social behaviour, depression and anxiety and physical injury.

At ***Venn*** if we become concerned that a child/young person is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, we will make a referral to Children's Social Care. We will ensure that children/young people in our setting receive the appropriate support and will use the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Toolkit for Education to identify abuse and teach about healthy relationships.

We are aware of the MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) process and work with the Local Authority to ensure relevant information is shared in respect of children in our school who are linked to those being discussed at the MARAC panel due to domestic abuse.

At ***Venn*** appropriate staff understand Operation Encompass, have accessed the appropriate training, and signed the agreement in order to receive notifications of domestic abuse.

28. Educational Neglect

At **Venn** staff recognise the indicators of educational neglect which can include:

- **Persistent Absence**: Missing school regularly or for long periods without a substantiated reason. Falling below 90% attendance is a recognised academic risk, while severe absence (below 50%) is heavily linked to neglect.
- **No Alternative Provision**: A child is not registered at a school and is not receiving any other suitable education.
- **Lack of parental Engagement**: Caregivers refuse to engage with the school, the local council, or relevant support agencies to improves their child's attendance.

- **Developmental Delay**: Falling significantly behind age-related educational expectations and failing to reach academic potential.

Persistent and severe absence will be treated as potential indicators of harm and responded to accordingly.

We recognise the risks and impacts as:

- Becoming Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) in later life.
- Extra-familial harms, including criminal or sexual exploitation.
- Being victims of wider abuse or neglect.

Where we have concerns of educational neglect, appropriate referrals will be made.

29. Elective Home Education (EHE)

The overall aim is for all children and young people in to have the opportunity to fulfil their potential through access to a suitable education appropriate to their age, ability, and aptitude (section 7, The Education Act, 1996)

At ***Venn*** we respect that parent's may decide to educate their children/young people at home. However, we recognise that home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

If we become concerned that a child/young person is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, we will make a referral to Children's Social Care.

The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill was signed by the King on 29th April 2026, meaning that is it now an act of law. The Act will make important changes to protect children and improve education with work beginning from now to put these changes into place over the coming year, including:

- Local Authorities maintaining a 'Children Not in School' register.
- A new requirement for parents to obtain consent from the Local Authority to withdraw their child from school to home educate them if their child is:
  - Subject to an enquiry under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
  - On a Child Protection Plan
  - At a special school.

Useful links:

Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill 2024: policy summary - GOV.UK

Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026

30. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Breast Ironing (or flattening)

At ***Venn*** we recognise that FGM is illegal in the UK and section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 places a statutory duty upon teachers, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to report to the police where they discover

FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. We also recognise that this does not replace safeguarding children actions, therefore a referral will also be made to Children's Social Care.

At ***Venn*** all staff have received FGM awareness training as part of the whole school safeguarding training.

We also recognise that Breast Flattening is child abuse, illegal and as with female genital mutilation it is pre-pubescent girls that are most at risk.

Useful links:

Female Genital Mutilation

Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Female Genital Mutilation - Prevent & Protect | NSPCC

Breast Flattening – National FGM Centre

31. Identifying children and young people who may need early help

31.1. Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. It is not an individual service, but a system of support delivered by local authorities and their partners working together and taking collective responsibility to provide the right provision in their area. Some early help is provided through "universal services", such as education and health services. They are universal services because they are available to all families, regardless of their needs.

31.2. Other early help services are coordinated by a local authority and/or their partners to address specific concerns within a family and can be described as targeted early help. Examples of these include parenting support, mental health support, youth services, youth offending teams and housing and employment services.

31.3. Early help may be appropriate for children and families who have several needs, or whose circumstances might make them more vulnerable. It is a voluntary approach, requiring the family's consent to receive support and services offered. These may be provided before and/or after statutory intervention (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023).

31.4. Venn Schools will support local organisations and agencies to work together to support families within the early help service and will:

- Identify children and families who would benefit from early help
- Undertake an assessment of the need for early help which considers the needs of all members of the family

- Ensure good ongoing communication, for example, through regular meetings between practitioners who are working with the family
- Co-ordinate and / or provide support as part of a plan to improve outcomes. This plan will be designed together with the child and family and updated as and when the child and family needs change
- Engage effectively with families and their family network, making use of family group decision-making to help meet the needs of the child
- The school recognises the development of Family Help arrangements under the Families First Partnership Programme and will work with local safeguarding partners to ensure children and families receive the right support at the right time.
- All staff are clear of the expectation of 'professional curiosity' to enable them to identify safeguarding concerns. Staff will exercise 'professional curiosity', respectfully exploring inconsistencies and seeking further information where required to safeguard children.
- All staff are alert to the potential need for Early Help for pupils who have 'experienced multiple suspensions, are at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provisions or a Pupil Referral Unit'.
- All staff acknowledge that Early Help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse.

32. Identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm

32.1. Our staff understand that behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, unexplained and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can indicate that children are at an increased risk of harm.

32.2. Our requirements of staff are aligned to para 19-28 of KCSIE 2025, to ensure that:

- All staff understand abuse, neglect or exploitation
- All staff are aware of indicators of abuse, neglect or exploitation to assist in the early identification of abuse, neglect or exploitation
- All staff are aware that harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing the ill treatment of others, for example, all forms of domestic abuse

- If staff are unsure, they understand that they must speak to the designated safeguarding lead, or deputy
- All staff are aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, therefore staff should always be vigilant and always raise any concerns with their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy)
- All staff are aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments
- All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation in situations outside their families
- All staff are aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues

32.3. In all cases, if staff are unsure, they must always speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) who will follow the child protection procedures. Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, the DSL will complete a referral to the local authority children's social care team (and if appropriate the police).

33. Child protection procedures

33.1. Recognising abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.

Keeping Children Safe in Education refers to four categories of abuse. These are set out at Appendix One along with indicators of abuse.

32.2 Taking action

Any child could become a victim of abuse. Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- In an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, if necessary, call 999
- Complete a record of concern (on CPOMS) and report your concern to the DSL as soon as possible
- Share information on a need-to-know basis only and do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family

If you are concerned about a pupil's welfare

Staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk. This may be because the pupil's behaviour has changed, their appearance has changed, or physical signs are noticed. In these circumstances, staff will give the pupil the opportunity to talk and ask if they are OK.

If the pupil does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below.

Staff are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. Children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened, which could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This will not prevent our staff from having professional curiosity and speaking to our DSL if they have concerns about a child.

If a pupil discloses to you

If a pupil tells a member of staff about a risk to their safety or wellbeing, the staff member will:

- Remain calm and not overreact
- Allow them to speak freely
- Not be afraid of silences
- Not ask investigative questions
- Give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me'
- Not automatically offer physical touch as comfort
- Let the pupil know that in order to help them they must pass the information on to the DSL
- Tell the pupil what will happen next
- Complete a record of concern (on CPOMS) and notify the DSL as soon as possible
- Report verbally to the DSL immediately even if the child has promised to do it by themselves

Notifying parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. If the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the

child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police before parents are notified.

34. Referral to children's social care

The DSL will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

- If there are concerns that a child/young person has experienced or is at risk of suffering significant harm, the DSL/DDSL will consult with Children's social Care, making a telephone referral or in an emergency, reporting to the police.

- All staff are aware of the Early Help and Safeguarding hub/Multi agency safeguarding hub. The Early Help Enquiry through the hub has been established to improve communication, information sharing and to support more effective delivery of services where there is a need. All enquiries are triaged by a Social Worker, where threshold for Early Help is clear, contacts will be screened within the Early Help Hub, where threshold is unclear the process will be used. Staff are aware of the threshold for Early Help.

- The school will ensure that an appropriate representative attends Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups and Child in Need meetings and where this is not possible, apologies given and a comprehensive report shared with the Chair or Social Worker using the appropriate format. Staff are aware of the expectations placed on them to contribute to the planning within child protection procedures

- The school are aware of the process of escalation should there be differences of opinion regarding safeguarding concerns and will professionally challenge where appropriate.

35. Reporting directly to child protection agencies

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care or the police if they are convinced that a direct report is required or if the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the deputies, the principal or the board of Trustees are not available, and a referral is required immediately.

36. Confidentiality and sharing information

Child protection issues necessitate a high level of confidentiality. Staff should only discuss concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Principal or Director of Safeguarding.

Confidentiality

The school will ensure that:

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.
- 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/young people.
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children/young people safe.
- If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or if to gain consent would place a child/young person at risk.
- Staff should never promise a child/young person that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests.
- If a child/young person asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:
    - There is no definitive answer, because even if a child/young person does not consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies.
    - The DSL will have to balance the child/young person's wishes against their duty to protect them and other children/young people.
    - The DSL should consider that:
        - Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the child/young person at greater risk).
        - The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child/young person is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care.
        - Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains.
- Regarding anonymity, all staff will:
    - Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system.
    - Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children/young people involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children/young people involved.
    - Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities.

- The government's information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information.
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL (or deputy).

The DSL will normally obtain consent from the pupil and/or parents to share child protection information. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL may share information without consent and will record the reason for deciding to do so.

Information sharing will take place in a timely and secure manner and only when it is necessary and proportionate to do so and the information to be shared is relevant, adequate and accurate.

Families First Partnership Programme (FFPP)

FFPP has been launched by the DfE, delivering the most significant reform in children's social care in the past 30 years. This will be a transformative year, and this policy will continue to be updated as and when changes are implemented.

This programme will take a family-focused approach involving family group decision-making and enhanced multi-agency collaboration. Families will be able to access the right help and support at the right time with early intervention being key to prevent problems from escalating.

To ensure all professionals working with children, young people and families are equipped to embrace and lead on this change, each Local Authorities are launching a clear practice framework.

Venn are committed to this way of working and will ensure that all staff are appropriately trained and equipped to work with all safeguarding partners.

Families First Partnership programme - GOV.UK



37. Forced Marriage

At ***Venn*** we recognise that, in a forced marriage, one or both spouses do not consent to the arrangement of the marriage, and some elements of duress are involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual, and

emotional pressure. Forced Marriage is an abuse of human rights and, where a child is involved, an abuse of the rights of the child. Staff are aware that child marriage is a human rights violation. It refers to any formal marriage or informal union of a child under the age of 18 with an adult or another child. Despite laws against it, the practice remains widespread.

Where there are concerns about the welfare or safety of a child/young person, we will report this immediately to Children's Social Care.

Useful links:

Forced Marriage

Forced marriage - GOV.UK
Child marriage | United Nations Population Fund
Forced Marriage, FGM & Dishonour Abuse | Freedom Charity

38. Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)

At ***Venn*** the DSL and DDSL and other relevant safeguarding staff have a knowledge and understanding of HSB and are aware of support that is available for children/young people displaying harmful sexual behaviours, and know that the extent of these behaviours range between concerning internet usage and lower-level sexualised language all the way to allegations and convictions of rape or sexual assault.

Where there are concerns around HSB, staff will seek advice from the CYPF Psychology service and where appropriate report to Children's Social Care and the Police.

Any incident of HSB will mean an individual safety plan/risk assessment will be completed and implemented.

Our staff have undertaken Brooke Traffic light tool training and use this to identify and respond to HSBS. In addition to this our schools will consult the Hackett Continuum.

Useful links:

Lucy Faithfull Foundation - Preventing child sexual abuse

Stop It Now - Preventing child sexual abuse

Home - Shore

Eliminating Child Sexual Abuse Online | Internet Watch Foundation IWF

39. Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal

substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

Indicators of neglect

The following may be indicators of neglect:

- Constant hunger or stealing, scavenging and/or hoarding food
- Frequent tiredness
- Frequently dirty or unkempt
- Poor attendance or often late
- Poor concentration
- Illnesses or injuries that are left untreated
- Failure to achieve developmental milestones or to develop intellectually or socially
- Responsibility for activity that is not age appropriate such as cooking, ironing,
- caring for siblings
- The child is left at home alone or with inappropriate carer

KCSIE acknowledges that exploitation was not adequately represented as a form of abuse therefore Exploitation has been added through the document.

40. Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's/young person's welfare.

At ***Venn*** the DSL is aware of contact details and referral routes into the local housing authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity (where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures).

Designated Safeguarding Leads are aware of the new guidance in relation to notifications when children/young people are moved into temporary accommodation. On receipt of a notification, staff will offer appropriate support to the family. We understand that notifications are only sent with parent consent.' Please include this link Temporary accommodation notification duty: information to accompany the homelessness code of guidance - GOV.UK

Where a child/young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will also make a referral to children's social care.

Useful links:

St.Leger Homes | St.Leger Homes | Home Options (stlegerhomes.co.uk)

Ending Homelessness Together - Riverside

41. Honour Based Abuse

At ***Venn*** we recognise that Honour based Abuse is a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such violence can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and / or community by breaking their honour code.

For young victims it is a form of child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

Any suspicion or disclosure of violence or abuse against a child in the name of honour will be referred to Children's Social Care.

Useful links:
Tackling violence against women and girls strategy - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)So

42. LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) – Managing allegations against staff, carers, and volunteers.

At ***Venn*** we understand that relevant procedures should be applied when there is an allegation that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way which has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- Behaved, or may have behaved, in a way towards a child or adult that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

The issue could also be about the behaviour of an individual outside of their work environment, and which would raise concerns about their suitability to work with children. For example, where a domestic abuse incident has taken place or where there are concerns about the individual's own children.

We will follow local procedures and where appropriate will make a referral to LADO within 24 hours/1 working day of the allegation being made. If the concerns are more urgent in regard to the safety of the child, a referral to the Police and/or Children's Social Care will be made.

Where there is uncertainty as to if LADO thresholds have been met, we will call the LADO for advice/consultation.

Appropriate staff in school will access LADO training.

43. LGBTQ+ support & Children/Young people who are gender questioning, requesting social transitioning

At ***Venn*** the DSL understands how to support children/young people and families to access LGBTQ+ support through family and Youth Hubs. Children/Young people requiring additional support may access CAMHS provision or School Nursing services.

Venn plays a vital role in supporting LGBTQ+ children/young people, those who are gender questioning or requesting social transitioning. We create an inclusive environment where all learners feel welcome and valued.

- The fact that a child or young person being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, they can sometimes be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are.
- However, the Cass review identified that caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there remain many unknowns about the impact of social transition and children may well have wider vulnerabilities, including having complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases additional diagnoses of autism and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.
- Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where they can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.
- The Cass review is clear that outcomes for children and adolescents are best if they have a supportive relationship with their families. Involving a child's/young person's parents/carers will enable school to promote a child's/young person's wellbeing and protect them from harm.
- LGBTQ+ inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum and our school/setting will access the range of support available to help counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

The school are aware that revised guidance has been released and is detailed in KCSIE 2026. Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education will become part of the school's curriculum from 1st September 2026. All staff will read the guidance and will continue to work in partnership with families and agencies to ensure all children and young people feel supported and our LGBTQ+ community feel safe. Staff will offer support within a clear decision-making framework which includes:

- Individual risk assessments
- Parental involvement presumption unless safeguarding risk exists
- DSL involvement in significant decisions affecting safeguarding
- Recording requirements
- Reference to school guidance/policies on gender-questioning children

Useful links:

Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK

Schools & colleges | Stonewall

Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

44. Low Level Concerns (concerns that do not meet the LADO harm threshold)

At ***Venn*** we recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to confidentially share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately.

The term 'low-level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, **and**
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being overly friendly with children/young people
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children/young people on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child/young person on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating children/young people

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner to safeguard the welfare of children/young people.

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any action taken and the rationale for decisions and actions taken.

Useful links:

Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK

Developing and implementing a low-level concerns policy: a guide for organisations which work with children (farrer.co.uk)

Responding to low-level concerns in education | NSPCC Learning

45. Mandatory Reporting

The requirement to report any known or suspected child sexual abuse for anyone working in regulated activity with children/young people has now received Royal Assent and forms part of the Crime and Policing Act 2026. More guidance and training is expected from the government, however, It introduces a new statutory duty for individuals undertaking key roles with responsibility for children and young people in England to report sexual abuse when they are made aware of it and

failure to do this may constitute a criminal offence. It also includes a new criminal offence of attempting to prevent someone reporting child sexual abuse.

The DSL will report any concerns around child sexual abuse immediately to the police and children's social care. Staff will not delay reporting for further evidence gathering.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 places a statutory duty upon teachers, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to report to the police where they discover FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. We also recognise that this does not replace safeguarding children actions, therefore a referral will also be made to Children's Social Care.

46. Online Safety (including filtering & Monitoring, AI, and use of social media)

Online safety is a key safeguarding priority.

Risks include:

Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.

Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them.

Conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos including those generated using AI e.g. deepfakes, sharing other explicit images and online bullying, and

Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. Report to https://apwg.org/

At ***Venn*** we will ensure that in accordance with KCSIE, appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place and reviewed by the Director of Safeguarding and Alamo IT provider at least once every academic year to protect children/young people when they are online in school. We will follow the guidance in KCSIE and ensure that all staff will receive training on the expectations, applicable roles, and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring on school devices and networks. With support from the Trustees and Senior Leadership Team, the DSL will take responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place. We will adhere to the DfE guidance on 'Generative AI: Product Safety Expectations' to ensure that capabilities and features of generative AI products and systems are considered safe for users in schools. There will be

trustee oversight on this and they will seek evidence of the review cycle and assurances.

Generative AI: product safety expectations - GOV.UK

Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) in education - GOV.UK

At ***Venn*** we will adhere to the filtering and monitoring standards set by The Department for Education. Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK

- identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems.
- review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.
- block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.
- have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs.
- Schools can use the DfE https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-technology-for-your-school to self-assess against the filtering and monitoring standards and receive personalised recommendations on how to meet them.

If there are any immediate safeguarding concerns in respect of online usage, the DSL will follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures.

Risk assessments relating to online safety will include consideration of AI-enabled harms, including nudification apps, deepfakes, AI-generated intimate imagery, impersonation and AI-assisted grooming.

The DfE have issued guidance relating to the use of mobile phones in school and how schools should implement a policy that prohibits the use of mobile phones throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime. At **Venn** we have a mobile phone protocol which is referenced in our Behaviour and Relationships policy which all staff are aware of and will implement.

Please see other policies linked to Online Safety ie ***acceptable use of IT, social media, behaviour, anti-bullying, Artificial Intelligence)***

Useful links:

Using AI in education settings: support materials - GOV.UK

Appropriate Filtering and Monitoring - UK Safer Internet Centre

https://www.nen.gov.uk/

Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Cyber security standards for schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Cyber security training for school staff - NCSC.GOV.UKKeeping children safe online | NSPCC

Mobile phones in schools - GOV.UK

At Venn staff are aware of the risks to children/young people when online and using social media. Education around this is included in our curriculum and information, guidance and advice shared with parents/carers.

Where incidents involving the misuse of social media are identified, whether at home or at school, these are taken seriously and appropriate actions taken including referrals to external agencies where required.

At ***Venn*** if staff are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery,' they will report it to the DSL immediately.

Staff will **not**:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery, or ask a child/young person to share or download it (if staff have already viewed the imagery by accident, they must report this to the DSL).
- Delete the imagery or ask the child/young person to delete it.
- Ask the child/young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility).
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the child/young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any children/young people involved.

Staff will explain that they need to report the incident and reassure the child/young person(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

Useful links:

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

CEOP Safety Centre

Childnet — Online safety for young people

'Adolescence' The Netflix Series - What Does it Tell Us and How Can We Respond? - Services For Education

47. Operation to support Afghan and Ukrainian arrivals in the UK

DSLS will consult with appropriate professionals regarding Afghan and Ukrainian arrivals following guidance, which can be found at:

Education and childcare: Homes for Ukraine - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

For more information about supporting Ukrainian arrivals in the UK:

Situation in Ukraine: Information for guests, sponsors and families - City of Doncaster Council

Our schools will:

- Provide bilingual support to enable children to access the full curriculum.
- Provide pastoral care for those children who need it.
- Provide a Key Person in school who will liaise with families and their sponsors as required.
- Be aware of vulnerabilities for the children and seek advice where needed.

48. Power to Search – searching, screening and confiscation

At ***Venn*** we recognise that children/young people may bring prohibited items onto the school site. To ensure the safety of all children/young people and staff on site, Principals and staff authorised by them, have a statutory power to search pupils and their possessions, without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil may have a prohibited item. School staff can also search a pupil for any item if the pupil agrees. Staff will always follow DfE guidance regarding searching, screening and confiscation.

Prohibited items are:

- knives or weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that is suspected to have been used or is likely to be used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to or damage to the property of any person.
- banned items.

Key Rules and Procedures:

- **Reasonable Suspicion:** Staff must have reasonable grounds to believe a banned item is concealed before conducting a search without consent.
- **Consent:** Teachers can search students with their agreement (under common law), and schools can routinely search lockers or desks as a condition of use.
- **Witnesses:** A search must generally be carried out by a staff member of the same sex as the pupil, and another staff member should be present as a witness.
- **Strip Searches:** School staff cannot carry out strip searches. If a strip search is deemed necessary, the police must be called.
- **Force:** Staff may use reasonable force when conducting a search for prohibited items like weapons, alcohol, or drugs, but not for items solely banned under school rules.
-

Useful Links:

Searching, screening and confiscation at school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

49. Prevent

At ***Venn*** we recognise that all schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The school has a Prevent Risk Assessment in place which is reviewed and updated based on the current threat level.

All DSL/DDSL and Senior Leaders at Venn have familiarised themselves with

Prevent duty guidance: Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales (publishing.service.gov.uk) and are aware of local procedures for making a referral.

From information provided through the annual Counter Terrorism Local Profile briefing, we recognise that there are some emerging issues that are particularly relevant to education settings:

- A rising number of young people becoming involved in terrorism-related offending.
- The impact of gore and exploitation content on young people's susceptibility to radicalisation.
- The role of online spaces, including platforms such as Terror-gram, gaming communities, and emerging technologies like 3D printed firearms.
- Risks related to Violence Fixated Individuals.

All staff and trustees have access Prevent training and know how to recognise and respond to any behaviour that could link to radicalisation/extremism. Any concerns will be reported using the appropriate safeguarding procedures.

Useful links:

Prevent duty training: Learn how to support people susceptible to radicalisation | Prevent duty training

https://educateagainsthate.com/

Managing risk of radicalisation in your education setting - GOV.UK

The Prevent Duty | LGFL

Prevent duty: risk assessment templates - GOV.UK

Controlling access to school premises - GOV.UK

Designated Safeguarding Lead Handbook - Educate Against Hate

Home | Police.uk

Notice, check, share - GOV.UK

50. Private Fostering

Private Fostering is when a child is cared by someone who isn't a close relative for 28 days or longer. A close relative means either, a stepparent, grandparent, brother, sister, aunt or uncle – either by blood or marriage. A child in this context is anyone under the age of 16 or a disabled young person under 18. All private fostering arrangements must be reported to the Local Authority. In principle this should be before the arrangement is made but if this has not happened the arrangement should be reported immediately.

At ***Venn*** staff recognise that that we have a statutory duty to encourage parents to notify the Local Authority of a private fostering arrangement and to follow this up by reporting to the Local Authority.

51. Reporting systems for our children/young people

Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the child's/young person's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

We recognise the importance of ensuring children/young people feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns and/or allegations.

To achieve this, we will:

- Put systems in place for children/young people to confidently report abuse.
- Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children/young people.
- Make it clear to children/young people that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback.

52. Safer Recruitment

At ***Venn*** we are committed to safer recruitment, will ensure relevant staff are trained and follow our safer recruitment policy and KCSIE 2026 when recruiting all staff and volunteers. This includes the whole process from application stage through to pre-appointment vetting checks. The school will undertake online searches on shortlisted candidates in accordance with KCSIE requirements and maintain robust processes for recording and reviewing pre-employment checks.

At ***Venn*** we are aware that, as part of the Crime and Policing act 2026, the supervision exemption will be removed from 1.9.26, so any unpaid person who "teaches, trains, instructs, cares for, or supervises" children will be considered to be in "regulated activity" if it is carried out frequently, or if it meets the period condition.

The period condition means:

- on more than three days in a 30-day period
- overnight

All those who fall into this category must have undergone an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information.

As per KCSIE, when asked to provide references, schools and colleges should ensure the information confirms whether they are satisfied with the applicant's suitability to work with children and provide the facts (not opinions) of any substantiated safeguarding concerns/allegations that meet the harm threshold.

The school will maintain a single central record (SCR) which will include all staff, including trainee teachers, agency and third-party supply staff. The SCR will document the statutory pre-appointment checks that have been carried out as follows:

- Identity check
- Right to Work
- Enhanced DBS Check
- Prohibition from Teaching
- Section 128 Check
- Overseas Checks
- Professional Qualifications

The SCR will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Venn, any required amendments identified will be actioned immediately.

Useful links:

Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK

Safer recruitment | NSPCC Learning

53. Suicide Prevention

At ***Venn*** staff are trauma informed and know where to signpost to support children/young people and families who are affected by suicide.

Useful Links:

Contacting Childline | Childline

Support After Suicide

Get help now. Free and confidential,for as long as you need it. (amparo.org.uk)

54. The use of 'reasonable force' in schools and colleges

At Venn we recognise that there are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools and colleges to use 'reasonable force' to safeguard children. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a child needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as

standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom.

At ***Venn*** we will:

- Only use 'reasonable force' as a last resort, and the staff who are likely to use 'reasonable force' will be appropriately trained.
- Log all incidents where 'reasonable force' has been used and inform parents/carers.
- Recognise the additional vulnerability of children with SEND, mental health problems or medical conditions when using 'reasonable force.'

Useful links:

Use of reasonable force in schools - GOV.UK

Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

55. Visitors to the school

At ***Venn*** all visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff. All visitors will be provided with safeguarding information on their arrival.

If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification.

Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, will be asked to show photo ID and are expected to sign in on the schools system and wear a visitor's badge/lanyard.

All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise children/young people or staff. Materials of speakers will be quality assured prior to the visit to ensure there are no extremist views or that the speaker does not reference a child within one of our schools.

56. Whistleblowing

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the leadership team.

At ***Venn*** all staff are aware of the Whistleblowing policy and know what to do if there are concerns about safeguarding practices within the setting.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them.

- Contact the Safeguarding Adviser or Lado at the LA.
- If the concerns relate to the Principal, these should be raised with the Chair of Trustees.
- If the concern relates to a member of Venn this should be referred to the Chair of the Trustees.
- Ofsted may request that the Local Authority investigate any whistleblowing concerns.

Useful links

Whistleblowing Advice Line | NSPCC

Whistleblowing procedure for maintained schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

57. Young Carer's

At ***Venn*** we recognise that a young carer is a child or young person who provides regular and on-going care and emotional support to a family member with physical or mental health problems, has a disability, or misuses drugs or alcohol.

Staff understand that the key feature of being a 'young carer' is that caring responsibilities continue over time and can make a young carer vulnerable, when the level of care and their responsibility to the person they look after, becomes excessive or inappropriate and risks impacting on emotional or physical wellbeing, educational achievement, and life chances.

Staff are aware that our local authorities have a team of workers who can support children who are identified as being Young Carers.

Useful links

Young carers | Barnardo's (barnardos.org.uk)

Aerosols

Aerosols are strictly prohibited in each of our schools. Aerosols can be a health trigger and can quickly cause an asthma attack or a severe allergic reaction in enclosed spaces such as classrooms or changing rooms.

Aerosols are a safety risk, pressurised cans pose a physical safeguarding and misuse hazard. Aerosols also carry an extreme health risk including sudden sniffing death syndrome.

Alternatives to aerosols are roll on/stick on deodorants.

Appendix 1: types of abuse

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and 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 verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling, or name-calling, as well as not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children 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.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in

education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Appendix 2 - related safeguarding policies and procedures

1. Code of conduct- Venn wide policy
2. Restrictive Physical Intervention- Venn based policy
3. Behaviour and Relationships-Venn based policy
4. Personal and intimate care- School based policy
5. Complaints procedure-Venn wide policy
6. Anti-bullying-School based policy
7. Safe working practice - Professional and Personnel Relationships- School based policy
8. Whistleblowing-Venn wide policy
9. SEN- School based policy
10. Recruitment and selection-Venn wide policy
11. Grievance and disciplinary-Venn based policy
12. Data Protection Policy- Venn based policy
13. Parent and pupil privacy notice-Venn wide policy
14. Unregulated Alternative Provision Policy- Venn wide
15. Searching, screening and Confiscation-Venn Wide

Policy references

This policy references:

- The Education Act 2002 (sections 157 / 175)
- Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 and Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 applies to the proprietors of independent schools, including academies and city technology colleges
- Sections 175 of the Education Act 2002 and Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 applies to local education authorities and the Trustees of maintained schools and Further Education Colleges Homepage – Local Safeguarding Children Partnership- Local Safeguarding children partnership
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Keeping Children Safe In Education
- School's duty under the Children Act 2004, to co-operate with other organisations and agencies.
- *What To Do If You Are Worried A Child is Being Abused* 2015
- Recommendations from national and local Serious Case Reviews:
- Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- *Sexual Violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges DfE 2021*
- Sections 26 & 29 of the Counter Terrorism Act 2015
- Sections 1 and 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 & Section 70 of the Serious Crime Act 2015
- Section 3 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021