RIPLEY ST THOMAS
CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Originator	Mr J Quarry
Revised	September 2026
Next Review Date	September 2027 (or soon as required)

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Our vision

We aim for all members of our Christian community to flourish spiritually, academically and personally so that they can live life in all its fullness.

'I have come in order that you might have life – life in all its fullness.'
(John 10:10)

Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2026 - 27

Designated Safeguarding Lead	**Mr J Quarry,** **Deputy Headteacher**
Non-Teaching Safeguarding Lead	**Miss L Johnson**
Deputy DSLs	**Mrs L Slinger** **Mrs S Taylor** **Mrs J Webster** **Mr P Wilson**
Safeguarding Governor	**Mrs J Hodgson, Chair of Governors**
Last Updated	September 2026
Date to Review	September 2027 (at the latest)

Table of Contents

1	Context & Rationale	19	Extremism & Radicalisation
2	Definition	20	Private Fostering
3	Law and Guidance	21	Pupils with Family Members in Prison
4	Roles and Responsibilities	22	Child-on-Child Abuse including Sexualised Abuse
5	Training and Induction	23	Serious Violence
6	Multi-Agency Working	24	Online Safety
7	Family help	25	Sharing Nude and Semi-nude images (Including Sextortion)
8	Abuse & Neglect	26	Context of Safeguarding Incidents
9	Domestic Abuse	27	Pupils potentially at greater risk of harm
10	Homelessness	28	Co- Curricular Clubs
11	Children absent from school	29	Alternative Provision
12	Children attending approved educational activity	30	Managing Referrals
13	Child Criminal Exploitation	31	Concerns about staff and safeguarding practices
14	Child Sexual Exploitation	32	Allegations of Abuse against staff
15	Concealed and denied pregnancy	33	Safer Recruitment
16	Modern Slavery	34	Review
17	Female Genital Mutilation	35	Key Contacts, Roles, and Training
18	Forced Marriage		

1. Context and Rationale

Ripley St Thomas CE Academy is committed to providing:

- A safe space for children to learn and grow in order to achieve their aspirations
- A safe space for staff, so that all staff can flourish in a supportive environment
- A safe space for children to talk about their worries and problems

At Ripley St Thomas CE Academy, our vision is that all pupils should *"live life in all its fullness."* Our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy underpins this vision. Guided by our core values of Faith, Hope and Love, we encourage pupils and staff to be attentive to the needs of others within our community and to recognise changes in behaviour that might indicate a safeguarding concern. Staff receive frequent training, and safeguarding procedures are explicitly discussed with pupils of all ages.

We fully recognise the role our school plays in protecting children from harm and in supporting and promoting their welfare. This policy applies to all stakeholders – including pupils, staff, parents, governors, volunteers, placement students, and visitors.

The purpose of this policy is to give clear direction to all stakeholders about our expectations, as well as our legal and moral responsibilities, in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children at our school.

Ripley St Thomas CE Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of every pupil. We adopt a whole-school preventative approach to managing safeguarding concerns, ensuring that pupils' welfare remains at the forefront of all actions taken. We recognise that **no single professional can have a complete picture** of a child's needs and circumstances. Therefore, **everyone** who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information, and taking prompt action.

This policy provides a clear and consistent framework for delivering on this commitment, in line with safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance. We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring that governors, the Co-Headteachers, staff, and all stakeholders understand their responsibilities under safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance, remain alert to the signs of abuse, and know how to refer concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Staff are reminded that anyone can make a referral and that professional challenge is an important safeguarding duty.
- Teaching pupils how to keep safe and recognise unacceptable behaviours.
- Identifying and making provision for any pupil who has been, or is at risk of being, subject to abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- Creating a culture of safer recruitment through robust procedures that deter, reject, or identify individuals who may pose a risk to children.
- Providing a safe, respectful, and welcoming environment where pupils are listened to and valued, and where the voice of the child is paramount.
- Where it is believed that a child is at risk of or is suffering significant harm, the school will follow the procedures set out by our local Lancashire Safeguarding

Children Partnership arrangements. Reporting & Support - Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (safeguardingpartnership.org.uk)

- The school will have due regard to Lancashire Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) Procedures Manual. https://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/contents.html#ind_cases

2. Definitions

The purpose of this safeguarding policy is to ensure every pupil at Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy is safe and protected from harm. The Department for Education (DfE) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2026), states safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

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

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as child-on-child abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; upskirting; initiating/hazing type violence and rituals; abuse in intimate personal relationships between children; consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos, or causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.

	Definition
Child Children	Anyone under the age of 18.
Child-on-child abuse	Children can abuse other children, this is generally referred to as child-on-child abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; upskirting; initiating/hazing type violence and rituals; abuse in intimate personal relationships between children; consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos, or causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
Sexual violence	For the purposes of this policy, 'sexual violence' refers to the following offences as defined under the Sexual Offences Act 2003: • Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if they intentionally penetrate the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with their penis, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents

	• Assault by penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally penetrate the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of their body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents • Sexual assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if they intentionally touch another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents • Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally cause another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
Sexual harassment	For the purposes of this policy, 'sexual harassment' refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline, inside or outside of school. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a pupil's dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and create a hostile, offensive, or sexualised environment. If left unchallenged, sexual harassment can create an atmosphere that normalises inappropriate behaviour and may lead to sexual violence. Sexual harassment can include, but is not limited to**:** • Sexual comments, such as sexual stories, lewd comments, sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, and sexualised name-calling • Sexual 'jokes' and taunting • Physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes, and displaying images of a sexual nature • Online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. This includes: – The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos – Sharing unwanted explicit content – Upskirting – Sexualised online bullying – Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media – Sexual exploitation, coercion, and threats.
Upskirting	The act, as identified in the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, of taking a picture or video under another person's clothing, without their knowledge or consent, with the intention of viewing that person's genitals or buttocks, with or without clothing, to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Upskirting is a criminal offence. Anyone, including pupils and staff, of any gender can be a victim of upskirting.
Nude & semi-nude images	Consensual and non-consensual making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes, including AI-generated or digitally altered images is defined as the sharing between pupils of sexually explicit content, including indecent imagery. This definition does not cover children under the age of 18 sharing adult pornography or exchanging messages that do not contain sexual images.
Indecent imagery	Indecent imagery is defined as an image which meets one or more of the following criteria: • Nude or semi-nude sexual posing • A child touching themselves in a sexual way • Any sexual activity involving a child

	• Someone hurting a child sexually • Sexual activity that involves animals.
Deep fakes and deep nudes	Digitally manipulated and AI-generated nudes and semi-nudes.
Consent	Having the freedom and capacity to choose to engage in sexual activity. Consent may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another and can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. A person only consents to a sexual activity if they agree by choice to that activity and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. Children under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity. The age of consent is 16.

3. Law and Guidance

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation, statutory and non-statutory guidance including, but not limited to:

Legislation

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
- Education Act 2002
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by the Serious Crime Act 2015)
- Apprenticeships, Children and Learning Act 2009
- Equality Act 2010
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Data Protection Act 2018 Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022
- Victims and Prisoners Act 2024.

Statutory guidance

- HM Government (2020) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation'
- HM Government (2013) 'Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of Forced Marriage'
- HM Government (2021) 'Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism'
- Home Office and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (2023) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage and Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage'

- DfE (2026) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2023) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- Home Office (2022) 'Domestic Abuse guidance'
- DfE (2023) 'The Prevent Duty Guidance'
- DfE (2018) 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006'
- DfE (2023) 'Academy Trust Handbook 2023'
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'.

Non-statutory guidance

- DfE (2015) 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'
- DfE (2024) 'Information sharing'
- DfE (2024) 'Academy Trust governance'
- DfE (2017) 'Child sexual exploitation'
- DfE (2024) 'Recruit teachers from overseas'
- DfE (2024) 'Behaviour in schools'
- DfE (2021) 'Teachers' Standards'
- DfE (2024) 'Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges'
- Department of Health and Social Care (2024) 'Virginity testing and hymenoplasty: multi-agency guidance'
- DfE (2024) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Attendance Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Care and Control Policy
- Confiscation and Search Policy
- Mobile Devices Policy
- Online Safety Acceptable Use Policy
- Relationship and Sex Education Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy

and the following Trust policies:

- Complaints Policy
- Pupil Privacy and Data Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

and the following internal policies, available to staff on Firefly

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Managing Allegations of Abuse Made Against Staff Policy

4. Roles and responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to:

- Consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the pupil with a **child-centred approach.**
- Contribute to, and maintain a **high safeguarding ethos** within the setting, with safeguarding pupils at the forefront of practice, at all times.
- Ensure ALL children have opportunities to communicate and know that they are **listened to and understood.**
- Contribute to **providing a curriculum** which will equip all children with the skills to keep themselves safe and develop an attitude which will enable them to enter adulthood successfully and reach their full potential.
- Establish effective, supportive, and **positive relationships** with parents, carers, pupils and other professionals.
- Maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** where safeguarding is concerned.
- Be proactive to provide a **safe and secure environment** in which pupils can learn.
- Be prepared to **identify** pupils or families who may benefit from **family help.**
- Be aware of the **school's individual procedures** that support safeguarding, including all policies, internal reporting procedures, information and engage with training provided.
- Be aware of the role and **identity of the DSL** and deputy DSLs and seek them for advice if required.
- Undertake **safeguarding training**, including online safety training, during induction and subsequently on a regular basis (at least annually), (which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations and responsibilities **relating to filtering and monitoring**) including receiving bulletins, emails and briefings. Staff should undertake **Prevent awareness training** at least every two years.
- Be aware of the **local family help process** and understand their role in it.
- Be aware of, and understand, the process for making referrals to Children's Social Care, understanding that **anyone can make a referral.**
- Understand how to make a referral to CSC and/or the police immediately, if at any point there is **a risk of immediate serious harm to a child.**
- Be aware of and **understand the procedure to follow** in the event that a child confides they are being abused, exploited or neglected, in a timely manner.
- Maintain appropriate **levels of confidentiality** when dealing with individual cases
- **Reassure victims** that they are being taken seriously, that they will be supported, and that they will be kept safe.
- Be aware of **safeguarding issues** that can put pupils at risk of harm.
- **Be aware of behaviours linked to safeguarding issues** such as drug-taking, alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education, sharing indecent images, extremist behaviours and other signs that pupils may be at risk of harm.

- Be fully aware of the importance of **mental health in relation to safeguarding** and that all staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Be aware that **a pupil may not feel ready** or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or may not recognise their experiences as harmful.
- Avoid victim-blaming attitudes, and challenge it in a professional way if it occurs.
- Understand the process for reporting **concerns over staff or adult conduct or behaviours**.
- All staff will be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation and will understand that children can be at risk of harm both inside and outside of the school and home, and online. Staff will also be aware that pupils can be affected by seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of abuse.

Teachers, including the Co-Headteachers, have a responsibility to:

- Safeguard pupils' wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties, as outlined in the '**Teachers' Standards'.**
- Report, by law, any disclosures of FGM to the police.

The governing body has a duty to:

- Take **strategic leadership responsibility** for the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure that the school **complies with its duties** under the above child protection and safeguarding legislation.
- Ensure that all governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training. This should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place are effective. Their training should be regularly updated."
- Ensure all staff, including staff who do not work directly with pupils, read Part One of KCSiE 2026 in full.
- Ensure the school has robust arrangements for safeguarding cover when the DSL is unavailable, so that concerns can be reported, received and acted upon without delay.
- Ensure staff understand their responsibilities for recognising and challenging racism, misogyny, misandry and other prejudice-based behaviour where these may present safeguarding concerns.
- Ensure a **named Governor takes leadership responsibility** for safeguarding arrangements and receives appropriate training in the management of safeguarding. Mrs Julie Hodgson, Chair of Governors, is our lead. Mrs Hodgson meets regularly with Mr Quarry, DSL.
- Attend **Prevent training** at least every two years.
- Appoint an appropriate member of staff from the SLT to the **role of DSL** and one or more deputy DSLs to provide support. Ensure that they are trained to the same standard as the DSL ensuring that the roles are explicit in their job description(s).

Ensure the provision of appropriate support, funding, training, resources, and time to carry out their role effectively.

- Support and monitor a **whole-school approach to safeguarding**; this includes ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and **ethos** remains consistently high.
- Ensure **systems are in place so that children to confidently report abuse**, knowing that their concerns will be treated seriously, and they can safely express their views and give feedback; these systems will be well-promoted, easily understood, and easily accessible. Ensure that the **voice of the child** is heard and acted upon.
- Ensure **effective and appropriate policies** and procedures are in place.
- Make sure that **pupils are taught about safeguarding**, that safeguarding is embedded with the curriculum, including protection against dangers online (including when they are online at home), through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Adhere to statutory responsibilities by conducting **pre-employment checks on staff** who work with children, following safer recruitment protocol.
- Ensure the school has **clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems in pupils,** including clear routes to escalate concerns and clear referral and accountability systems.
- Ensure that at least one person on any recruitment panel has undertaken **safer recruitment training.**
- Ensure that **all staff receive relevant safeguarding and child protection training** updates, including online safety and expectations and responsibilities relating to filtering and monitoring systems e.g. emails, as required, but at least annually, including a thorough induction.
- Confirm that there are transparent procedures in place to handle **allegations against staff,** supply staff, volunteers and contractors, including when the school premises are let out to a third party.
- Confirm that there are **procedures in place to make a referral to the DBS** and the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA), where appropriate, if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned.
- Ensure that appropriate disciplinary procedures are in place, as well as **policies pertaining to the behaviour of pupils and staff.**
- Ensure that **procedures are in place to eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment and victimisation, including those in relation to child-on-child abuse.
- Appoint a **designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of CLA** and ensure that this person has undergone appropriate training. The Deputy Headteachers are currently our lead for CLA pupils.
- Ensure that the **appropriate level of recruitment checks** are completed on Governors.
- Create a culture where **staff are confident to challenge** senior leaders over any safeguarding concerns or lack of action taken.

- Understand that online safeguarding is an interrelated and running theme through safeguarding practice. Ensure that **children are safe online** by ensuring that **appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place** and regularly review their effectiveness, understanding those children that are potentially at greater risk of harm, along with the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks. See Online Safety Policy.
- Put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for pupils who become absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods, to help identify any risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation and prevent the risk of escalation in the future.
- Ensure staff in school are aware of, and policies are personalised to reflect, an understanding of specific issues such as **child-on-child abuse** and safeguarding children with disabilities and special educational needs.
- Partake and complete the **S175/175 audit tool** on a two yearly cycle (at least) as directed by the Local Authority.
- Be aware of their obligations under the **Human Rights Act 1998**, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure there is an effective family help procedure and ensure all staff understand the procedure and their role in it.
- Ensure that all practice and procedures operate with the best interests of the child at the centre with a **firm child centred approach.**
- Ensure that the school contributes to multi-agency working in line with the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023'.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at Ripley is Mr Jamie Quarry

The DSL has a duty to:

- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place, ensuring their effectiveness) whilst creating a culture of safeguarding throughout the setting, continually raising the profile of safeguarding.
- Provide **advice, support and expertise to other staff** on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters.
- **Take part in strategy discussions,** inter-agency meetings and Child Protection Conferences and/or support other staff to do so.
- **Contribute to the** assessment of children, and/or support other staff to do so
- Ensure that all staff receive appropriate safeguarding training at induction, including online safety and expectations and responsibilities relating to filtering and monitoring. This updated regularly, at least annually
- **Be available** during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns
- Arrange, alongside the school, adequate and **appropriate cover** for any activities outside of school hours or terms.
- Ensure safeguarding records clearly document the concern, actions taken, decisions made, the rationale for those decisions and the outcome.

- Ensure transferred child protection files include a clear, structured summary of current concerns, relevant context and ongoing support needs, and that receipt is confirmed.
- Refer cases:
    - To CSC where abuse and neglect are suspected, and support staff who make referrals CSC.
    - To the Channel programme where radicalisation concerns arise, and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme.
    - To the DBS where a person is dismissed or has left due to harm, or risk of harm, to a child.
    - To the police where a crime may have been committed, in line with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) guidance.
- Act as a **point of contact** with the multi-agency partners
- Ensure **effective communication** and information sharing (when appropriate) between Deputy DSLs/ Pastoral Team/ SLT/Governance/ Headteacher/Staff
- Liaise with staff when deciding whether to make a referral by **liaising with relevant agencies** so that children's needs are considered holistically
- Liaise with the **senior mental health lead** and, where available, the Mental Health Support Team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- Promote **supportive engagement with parents** in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances
- Work with relevant staff, **taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes** for children, by understanding the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, knowing the safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on their attendance, engagement and achievement at school. This includes:
    - Ensuring that the school knows which pupils have or had a social worker
    - Understanding the academic progress and attainment of these pupils
    - Maintaining a culture of high aspirations for these pupils
    - Supporting teachers to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help these pupils reach their potential
- Ensure safeguarding records clearly document the concern, actions taken, decisions made, the rationale for those decisions and the outcome.
- Ensure transferred child protection files include a clear, structured summary of current concerns, relevant context and ongoing support needs, and that receipt is confirmed.
- Ensure **all stakeholders understand the Child Protection Policy**, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 statutory guidance and internal procedures to report any concerns are transparent and understood by all. Ensure this information is given in **induction** and at regular intervals/ training
- Work with the governing board to ensure the school's Child Protection and **Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually**, and the procedures are updated and reviewed regularly

- Undergo **DSL initial training**, and update this training with refresher training at least every two years to remain compliant
- Ensure opportunities for **further training** and opportunities for upskilling are taken
- Have due regard to the PACE Code C 2023 in regards to the role of an appropriate adult
- Encourage a culture of listening to children promoting **the voice of the child**
- **Recognise the importance of information sharing**, including within school, with other schools and with the safeguarding partners and other agencies by understanding relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR
- Undertake **Prevent** awareness training (at least) every two years
- Be provided with appropriate support and **supervision** in order to carry out the role safely and effectively
- Liaise with the Local Authority Personal Advisors for any Care Leavers
- Have due regard to Appendix C of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026– 'The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead'

Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy recognises that Deputy DSLs must be trained to same standard as the DSL. Mr Quarry meets with the DSL team once a fortnight and this ensures that thorough consideration is made to all pupils where there is a concern.

The designated teacher has a responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of CLA and previously CLA (PLAC), and for children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales. In our setting, this is currently the Deputy Headteacher.

Site Security and Fire Safety

The Academy recognises that safeguarding includes maintaining a secure and safe physical environment for pupils, staff, and visitors.

At Ripley St Thomas CE Academy, we ensure this through:

- **Controlled site access**, including secure entry points during the school day and clear visitor sign-in procedures, with all visitors supervised and identifiable.
- **Clear safeguarding expectations for visitors**, including safeguarding information displayed at reception and visitor badges issued at all times.
- **Regular monitoring of the site**, including staff presence, duty systems, and use of appropriate surveillance (e.g. CCTV) in line with data protection requirements.
- **Clear procedures for managing incidents**, including intruder alert/lockdown procedures where necessary.

Fire safety arrangements include:

- Regularly reviewed fire risk assessments
- Clearly communicated evacuation procedures
- Termly fire drills

- Maintenance and testing of fire alarms and detection systems
- Staff training to ensure all are confident in emergency procedures

All staff share responsibility for:

- Reporting concerns relating to site security or fire safety
- Maintaining vigilance regarding unknown individuals on site
- Ensuring that safeguarding risks relating to the physical environment are escalated promptly

These arrangements operate in conjunction with the school's:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Critical Incident / Lockdown Procedures

5. Training and Induction

Ripley St Thomas recognise the importance of **ongoing staff training and development** in maintaining a strong safeguarding culture and ensuring staff remain alert to emerging issues. At Ripley St Thomas CE Academy, safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone, and we strive to ensure that all staff are well informed and confident in knowing what to do if they have any concerns. All staff members, governors, and volunteers will receive safeguarding and child protection training as part of their induction. This training will be updated regularly, and additionally whenever there are changes in legislation or statutory guidance.

The induction and annual safeguarding training covers:

- The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Child-On-Child Abuse procedures
- The Staff Code of Conduct
- Part one of 'Keeping children safe in education' (KCSIE 2026)
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Attendance Policy, including the safeguarding response to children who have unexplained absences or go missing from education
- Appropriate child protection and safeguarding training, including online safety training
- Information about the role and identity of the DSL and deputy DSL(s)
- How to record concerns in your setting
- Records will be kept of all inductions.

Following induction, Ripley St Thomas CE Academy recognises the need to ensure continual, effective training to staff and other stakeholders. We will ensure:

- ALL staff, Governors and volunteers will receive Safeguarding Training (at least) annually
- The DSL/s will provide ALL staff, volunteers and governors with regular safeguarding updates
- ALL staff, volunteers and governors will read and show an understanding of any updates that are provided

- DSLs will attend DSL training every 2 years and update their knowledge, skills and understanding of relevant safeguarding issues on a regular basis
- The DSL, along with Governors and all staff will undertake Prevent awareness training (at least) every two years
- That at least one person on any recruitment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training
- ALL staff, volunteers and governors will undertake any additional specialised training on matters such as Child Sexual Exploitation, Prevent, Child-on-Child abuse, Online Safety, FGM etc as is deemed necessary by the DSL and that is particularly relevant to the context and needs of the setting
- ALL staff, volunteers and governors will undertake any additional specialised training on matters such as misogyny, misandry, prejudice-based harm, online safety, AI-generated imagery and the revised safer recruitment requirements.
- Any staff member will discuss any specific training requirements or gaps in knowledge or understanding with the DSL/s
- Staff will receive opportunities to contribute towards and inform the safeguarding arrangements in the school
- Detailed records will be held of staff safeguarding training and ensure that no training becomes out of date.

6. Multi-Agency Working

Ripley St Thomas CE Academy contributes to **multi-agency working** as part of its statutory safeguarding duty. The school is aware of, and will adhere to, the local safeguarding arrangements as set out by the **Lancashire Safeguarding Children Partnership**. Further details can be found at: www.safeguardingpartnership.org.uk.

The school will be fully engaged and actively involved in these arrangements, ensuring that relevant information is shared appropriately with safeguarding partners. Once named as a *relevant agency* by local safeguarding partners, the school will comply with its statutory duty to cooperate with the published arrangements in the same way as other relevant agencies.

We will work closely with the **Children & Family Wellbeing Team, Children's Social Care (CSC), the Police, Health services**, and other relevant partners and agencies to support children and families. The school is committed to contributing to multi-agency plans designed to provide additional support and ensure the best outcomes for pupils.

Where a need for **family help** is identified, the school will facilitate access for CSC from the host Local Authority (LA) and, where appropriate, any placing LA, in order for that authority to conduct (or consider whether to conduct) a **section 17** or **section 47** assessment.

Ripley St Thomas CE Academy also recognises the particular importance of **inter-agency collaboration** in identifying, preventing, and responding to **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** and **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**.

- **Information sharing**

The school recognises the importance of proactive information sharing between professionals and local agencies in order to effectively meet pupils' needs and identify any requirement for family help.

While the **UK GDPR** and the **Data Protection Act 2018** place duties on schools to process personal information fairly and lawfully, these regulations also allow for information to be stored and shared for safeguarding purposes. Data protection legislation must never be seen as a barrier to sharing information where failure to do so would place a pupil at risk of harm.

Staff members are expected to ensure that concerns about data protection do not stand in the way of fulfilling their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils. Where staff are uncertain about whether information should be shared, they must seek guidance from the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or a **Deputy DSL**.

7. Family help

Family help means providing support as soon as a need emerges, at any point in a child's life. Staff at Ripley St Thomas CE Academy recognise that any professional working with a child may provide family help.

At Ripley St Thomas, each pupil is supported by their Progress Tutor in Years 7–11 and by their Registration Tutor and Personal Tutor in the Sixth Form. Oversight of pupils' needs is provided by the Progress Leader and Assistant Progress Leader**.** Regular discussions with Mr Quarry, Deputy Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), ensure that pupils who may benefit from family help are identified at the earliest opportunity.

Once a need is identified, a range of targeted strategies will be used appropriately to support the pupil and their family. Any pupil or family may benefit from family help, but staff will be especially alert to the potential need for family help for pupils who:

- Are disabled, have certain health conditions, or have specific additional needs
- Have SEND, regardless of whether they have a statutory EHC plan
- Have mental health needs
- Are young carers
- Show signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- Are frequently missing or going missing from care or from home
- Are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or sexual or criminal exploitation
- Are at risk of being radicalised
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol
- Have family members in custody, or are affected by parental offending
- Are in a family circumstance presenting challenges for them, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health problems, or domestic abuse
- Have returned home to their family from care
- Are at risk of HBA, such as FGM or forced marriage
- Are privately fostered
- Are displaying harmful sexual behaviours which may pose a risk to other children and themselves

- Are persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day, or not in receipt of full-time education
- Show any other early signs of abuse, neglect any other identified reason not listed above that requires extra support or intervention to improve outcomes for families and children
- Have experienced multiple suspensions and are at risk of, or have been, permanently excluded from school, alternative provision or a PRU
- Have experienced bereavement
- Viewing problematic or inappropriate online content or developing inappropriate relationships online.

The DSL, Progress Leader or Miss Laura Johnson, our Non-teaching Safeguard Lead will take the lead where family help is appropriate and consent has been gained. This includes liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. The local family help process will be followed as required to help provide the right, effective support at the right time.

family help Assessment - information for professionals - Lancashire County Council

Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in a family help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Any such cases will be kept under constant review assessing the impact of the support.

We therefore ensure that:

- All staff and volunteers can identify the risk factors that indicate a family or pupil may benefit from family help and can follow school procedures to share this with the DSL
- DSLs will undertake a family help Assessment, when appropriate, to identify what family help is required
- DSLs will signpost and refer to appropriate support agencies
- DSLs will lead on TAF meetings where is it appropriate for them to do so
- DSLs will follow the local safeguarding processes and refer to Working Well with Children and Families in Lancashire guidance using the Continuum of Need; wwwcf-part-1-and-2-final.pdf.

8. Abuse and neglect

Staff should be aware that:

- Safeguarding concerns may overlap and should not be considered in isolation.
- Child-to-parent or carer abuse can be a safeguarding concern.
- Abuse may involve organised criminal networks, financial exploitation, coercion or modern slavery.
- Harmful behaviour by a child may indicate that the child themselves needs protection and support.

	Definition
Abuse	A form of maltreatment of a child which involves inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing the 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, institutional or community setting by those known to them or by others, e.g. via the internet. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by one or multiple adults or other children.
Physical abuse	A form of abuse which may involve actions such as hitting, shaking, throwing, biting, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse can also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. Staff are aware of Female Genital Mutilation, a form of Physical abuse.
Emotional abuse	The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. This may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child the opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, such as interactions that are beyond their developmental capability, 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 the child to frequently 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, but it may also occur alone.
Sexual abuse	Abuse that involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, and regardless of whether the child is aware of what is happening. This may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration, or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by people of any gender and age. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.
Neglect	The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of a child's health or development. This may involve a parent or carer failing to provide a child with adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); failing to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger; failing to ensure adequate supervision (including through the use of inappropriate caregivers); or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

- All staff will be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect and be vigilant and always raise concerns with the DSL. All staff, especially the DSL and deputy DSL(s), will be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with contextual

factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments; this includes being aware that pupils can at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families (extra-familial harms.)

- All staff will be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, including online abuse, cyberbullying, radicalisation and the sharing of indecent images.

- ALL staff understand that children who perpetrate abuse or display harmful behaviour should be treated as victims first and foremost and supported in the same way a victim of abuse would be supported - Risk Assessments will be undertaken where a child's behaviour poses a risk to others, themselves or the environment.

- ALL staff and volunteers understand that there are specific and emerging ways in which children can be abused and are aware of these specific issues, reporting any concerns, in the appropriate manner to the DSL.

  Specific issues include (but are not limited to) the following:

9. Domestic abuse

In line with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, **domestic abuse** is defined as abusive behaviour of a person towards another person where both are aged 16 or over and are personally connected. **Abusive behaviour** includes physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, or another form of abuse.

The school will recognise the serious, long lasting emotional impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse. All staff will be aware of the signs of domestic abuse and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise.

Ripley St Thomas CE Academy has a commitment to Operation Encompass, the information sharing agreement between police and school settings following police involvement in an incident of domestic abuse, or other potential crimes, and informing all stakeholders of the initiative.

The lead person for Operation Encompass www.operationencompass.org is
Mr Jamie Quarry, DSL.

10. Homelessness

The DSL and deputy DSL(s) are aware of the contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so that concerns and support over homelessness can be raised as early as possible. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include:

- Household debt
- Rent arrears
- Domestic abuse
- Anti-social behaviour

- Any mention of a family moving home because "they have to" or frequent moves.

Referrals to the Local Housing Authority do not replace referrals to CSC where a child is being harmed or at risk of harm. For 16- and 17-year-olds, homelessness may not be family-based and referrals to CSC will be made as necessary where concerns are raised.

11. Children absent from school

Staff will be aware that a child's absence from school can be a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Pupils who are persistently absent are at greater risk of becoming victims of harm, including sexual or criminal exploitation, forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), or radicalisation.

Staff will carefully monitor pupil attendance, particularly in cases of repeated absence, and will report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in line with the school's safeguarding procedures and the School Attendance Policy.

In accordance with Local Authority protocol, the school will inform the LA of:

- Any pupil who fails to attend school regularly.
- Any pupil who has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

Where reasonably possible, the school **will also hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil to support effective communication and safeguarding**.

Safeguarding considerations also include pupils who are repeatedly removed from lessons, on part-time timetables, experiencing multiple suspensions or at risk of permanent exclusion. These circumstances may also indicate unmet needs or an increased safeguarding risk.

Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy will follow local guidance when children go missing from home https://www.safeguardingpartnership.org.uk/missing-from-home-protocol-trigger-plan/

12. Children attending an approved educational activity

An **approved educational activity** is defined as when a pupil is attending another school at which they are registered, or when they are participating in an off-site activity such as a field trip, educational visit, work experience, or unregistered alternative provision.

Pupils may only be recorded as attending an off-site activity if it:

- Is approved by the school.
- Is educational in nature.
- Is supervised by a person authorised by the school.

The school retains ultimate responsibility for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils engaged in any off-site educational activity. It is therefore expected that only individuals who are

accountable to the school will be authorised to supervise such activities. Approved activities may include:

- Attending a place other than the school.
- Participating in a supervised sporting activity.
- Taking part in an educational visit or trip.
- Completing work experience.

All relevant school policies continue to apply throughout any approved educational activity. Where relevant, a risk assessment will be completed, and the school will ensure that attendance is monitored and that robust communication arrangements are in place with the provider or accompanying adults.

Remote education is *not* considered an approved educational activity. In line with the Department for Education's guidance on *Providing Remote Education*, pupils who are absent from school but receiving remote education will be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. While the school will monitor and record a pupil's engagement with remote education, this will not be formally tracked in the attendance register.

13. Child Criminal exploitation (CCE)

Child criminal exploitation is defined as a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal activity, for any of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants
- For the financial advantage or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator
- Through violence or the threat of violence (this could be online or through technology)

Specific forms of CCE can include:

- Being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines.
- Working in cannabis factories.
- Shoplifting or pickpocketing.
- Committing vehicle crime.
- Committing, or threatening to commit, serious violence to others.

The school will recognise that pupils involved in CCE are victims themselves, regardless of whether they have committed crimes, and even if the criminal activity appears consensual. The school will also recognise that pupils of any gender are at risk of CCE.

School staff will be aware of the indicators that a pupil is the victim of CCE, including:

- Associating with other children involved in exploitation
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs or alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education
- Appearing with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions.

Criminal exploitation of children can include **County Lines**. This is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or criminal networks / gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money into one or more areas. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked or the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered in addition to normal safeguarding procedures. School would liaise with a 'First responder Organisation' as details in part 4 of the guidance, to support and request a referral to the NRM.

As well as the general indicators for CCE, school staff will be aware of the specific indicators that a pupil may be involved in county lines, including:

- Going missing and subsequently being found in areas away from their home
- Having been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence, e.g. knife crime
- Receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, collecting money
- Being found in accommodation they have no connection
- Owing a 'debt bond' to their exploiters
- Having their bank account used to facilitate drug dealing

14. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation is defined as a form of sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity, for any of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants
- For the financial advantage, increased status or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator
- Through violence or the threat of violence, this could be online or through technology.

The school recognises that Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) may occur as a one-off incident or over a period of time. It may also take place without the pupil's immediate knowledge, for example when images or videos are shared online by others. The school acknowledges that CSE can affect any pupil who has been coerced into sexual activity, even where this appears to be consensual. This includes pupils aged 16 and above who are legally able to consent to sexual activity. The school also recognises that some pupils may not realise they are being exploited, as they may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

School staff will be aware of the key indicators that a pupil is the victim of CSE, including:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions.
- Associating with other children involved in exploitation.
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing.
- Misusing drugs or alcohol.
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late.
- Regularly missing school or education or not taking part.
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends.
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections.
- Displaying sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development.
- Becoming pregnant.

All staff will use appropriate and sensitive language when raising concerns or supporting pupils who have experienced abuse through exploitation, ensuring that victims are never blamed or perceived as having participated willingly in their own abuse.

Where CSE, or a risk of CSE, is suspected, staff must refer the case to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Following discussion with the DSL, if concerns remain, the school will follow local safeguarding procedures without delay.

15. Concealed and Denied pregnancy

A concealed pregnancy is when a woman knows she is pregnant but does not tell anyone; tells a professional but hides the fact that she is not accessing antenatal care; or discloses to another person who, together with her, conceals the pregnancy from all agencies.

A denied pregnancy is when an expectant mother is unaware of, or unable to accept, the existence of her pregnancy. In such cases, physical changes may not be visible, may be misinterpreted, or the mother may be intellectually aware of the pregnancy but continue to think, feel, and behave as though she is not pregnant.

There are a range of reasons why a pregnancy may be concealed or denied. These may include fear of stigma or shame; rape, sexual or domestic abuse; forced or sham marriage; fear of a child being removed; or concerns linked to immigration status, such as asylum seekers or undocumented migrants avoiding professional involvement. In some cases, the mother may be genuinely unaware of her pregnancy.

Where there is any suspicion of a concealed or denied pregnancy, the school will follow the procedures set out by the local Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements.

Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Lancashire Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (proceduresonline.com)

Further training is available for staff regarding concealed or denied pregnancy

Concealed-and-Denied-Pregnancy-2020-7MB.pdf (lancashiresafeguarding.org.uk)

16. Modern slavery

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour. This can include CCE, CSE, and other forms of exploitation.

All staff will be aware of and alert to the signs that a pupil may be the victim of modern slavery. Staff will also be aware of the support available to victims of modern slavery and how to refer them to the National Referral Mechanism. (From The Modern Slavery Act 2015, Section 52) The public authority bears this obligation where it has 'reasonable grounds to believe that a person may be a victim of slavery or human trafficking': School would liaise with a 'First responder Organisation' as details in part 4 of the guidance, to support and request a referral to the NRM.

17. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is defined as all procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

All staff will be alert to the possibility of a pupil being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. If staff are worried about someone who is at risk of FGM or who has been a victim of FGM, they are required to share this information with CSC and/or the police. The school's procedures relating to managing cases of FGM and protecting pupils will reflect multi-agency working arrangements.

As outlined in Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015), teachers are **legally required** to report to the police any discovery, whether through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence, of FGM on a pupil under the age of 18. Teachers failing to report such cases may face disciplinary action. Teachers will not examine pupils, and so it is rare that they will see any visual evidence, but they must personally report to the police where an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve CSC as appropriate. **NB:** This does not apply to any suspected or at-risk cases, nor if the individual is over the age of 18. In such cases, local safeguarding procedures will be followed.

All staff will be aware of the indicators that pupils may be at risk of FGM. While some individual indicators they may not indicate risk, the presence of two or more indicators could signal a risk to the pupil. It is important to note that the pupil may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so staff will be sensitive when broaching the subject.

Indicators that a pupil may be at heightened risk of undergoing FGM include:

- The socio-economic position of the family and their level of integration into UK society
- The pupil coming from a community known to adopt FGM
- Any girl with a mother or sister who has been subjected to FGM
- Any girl withdrawn from PSHE
- Travel abroad or a long holiday with relatives to a country known to practise FGM.

FGM is included in the definition of **honour-based' abuse (HBA)** which involves crimes that have been committed to defend the honour of the family and/or community. All forms of HBA are forms of abuse and will be treated and escalated as such. Staff will be alert to the signs of HBA, including concerns that a child is at risk of HBA, or has already suffered from HBA, and will consult with the DSL who will activate local safeguarding procedures if concerns arise.

18. Forced marriage

Forced marriage is defined as a marriage that is entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties, and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into the marriage. Threats can be physical, emotional, or psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent, e.g. due to some forms of SEND. Forced marriage is a crime in the UK and a form of HBA.

Staff who have any concerns regarding a pupil who may have undergone, is currently undergoing, or is at risk of forced marriage will speak to the DSL and local safeguarding procedures will be followed – this could include referral to CSC, the police or the Forced Marriage Unit. It will be made clear to staff members that they should not approach the pupil's family or those with influence in the community, without the express consent of the pupil, as this will alert them to the concerns and may place the pupil in further danger.

19. Extremism & Radicalisation

For the purposes of this policy, "extremism" is defined by the government as the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to:

1. negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or

2. undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or

3. intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (1) or (2)

For the purposes of this policy, **radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism or extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

For the purposes of this policy, **terrorism** refers to actions that endanger life, cause serious violence to individuals, result in serious damage to property, or disrupt electronic systems. Such actions, or threats of them, must be intended to influence the government or intimidate the public, and carried out for political, religious, or ideological purposes.

Protecting pupils from the risk of radicalisation is part of the school's wider safeguarding responsibilities. The school will actively assess the risk of pupils being drawn into extremism and/or terrorism. Staff will remain alert to behavioural changes that may indicate a pupil requires support or protection. Using their professional judgement, staff will identify pupils who may be at risk and respond appropriately, which may include contacting the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or making a Prevent referral.

The school will work in line with local safeguarding arrangements to ensure awareness of both local and national incidents that may increase the activity of extremist groups or heighten pupils' curiosity about such ideologies.

Engagement with parents and families will be a key part of the school's approach, recognising their role in identifying early signs of radicalisation. The school will support and advise family members who raise concerns, and provide information on available support mechanisms. Any concerns will normally be discussed with parents; however, if doing so is considered to place the pupil at risk, the school may withhold this information in line with safeguarding procedures.

The DSL and the Prevent Lead will undertake the Lancashire Prevent partnership in depth training, available via the Lancashire Prevent partnership website. www.lancashirepreventpartnership.org.uk. All other staff should complete the online Home Office Prevent training as a minimum.

The DSL and the Prevent Lead are able to provide advice and support to other staff on how to protect pupils against the risk of radicalisation and will ensure that all staff and governors have received appropriate and up-to date training that is refreshed at least every two years.

- The Online Safety Policy will support the safeguarding of children online by ensuring they cannot access terrorist and extremist material when using the internet and that suitable filtering and monitoring software and supervision is in place. Systems are regularly tested using technology such as the testfiltering.com filter checking utility.

- DSLs understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel Panel and are aware of how to do so. 'Notice. Check. Share.'

The Prevent duty

Under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, all schools are subject to a duty to have *"due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism"*. This is known as the **Prevent Duty** and forms part of the school's wider safeguarding responsibilities.

Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy will ensure that all staff, governors, and volunteers are informed of their responsibilities under the Prevent Duty and act in accordance with statutory guidance. Training will be provided so that staff are equipped to identify pupils who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and know how to respond appropriately.

The school will follow the statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and work in partnership with the Local Authority Prevent team, safeguarding partners, and the police where necessary to protect pupils from the risk of radicalisation and extremism and follow the guidance from www.lancashirepreventpartnership.org.uk

Prevent Lead	Mr Jamie Quarry
Prevent Governor Lead	Mrs Julie Hodgson
Prevent Curriculum Lead	Mr Paddy Wilson

20. Private fostering

Private fostering occurs when a child under 16 years old (or under 18 if they have a disability or special educational needs) lives with someone who is not a close relative for 28 days or more. If a UK homestay lasts 28 days or longer, it may also be considered private fostering under the Children Act 1989.

When a school becomes aware that a pupil is being privately fostered, they must inform Children's Social Care (CSC) promptly so that the local authority can carry out the necessary checks and ensure the child's welfare.

https://lancashiresafeguardingpartnership.org.uk/p/toolkits/private-fostering

21. Pupils with family members in prison

Pupils with a family member in prison will be offered pastoral support as necessary. They will receive a copy of 'Are you a young person with a family member in prison?' from Action for Prisoners' Families where appropriate and allowed the opportunity to discuss questions and concerns.

22. Child-on-Child abuse including sexualised abuse

Child-on-Child abuse is defined as abuse between children under 18 years of age.

Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy has a **zero-tolerance approach to abuse**, including child-on-child abuse.

Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy will refer to the specific guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 Part five: Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment and Lancashire Procedures. 5.31 Peer Abuse (proceduresonline.com)

All staff will be aware that child-on-child abuse can occur between pupils of any age and gender, both inside and outside of school, as well as online. All staff will be aware of the indicators of child-on-child abuse, how to identify it, and how to respond to reports. All staff will also recognise that even if no cases have been reported, this is not an indicator that child-on-child abuse is not occurring. All staff will speak to the DSL if they have any concerns about child-on-child abuse.

All staff will understand the importance of challenge inappropriate behaviour between peers and will not tolerate abuse as "banter" or "part of growing up".

Child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many different ways, including:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying.
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers.
- Physical abuse – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse.
- Sexual violence – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence.
- Sexual harassment, including online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
- The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
- Upskirting.
- Initiation and hazing-type violence and rituals, which can include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group, and may also include an online element.
- Misogynistic and misandrist language, harassment and behaviour.
- Threats involving weapons and serious physical harm.

All staff will be clear as to the school's policy and procedures regarding child-on-child abuse and the role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

All staff will be made aware of misogynistic and misandrist behaviour, harmful sexual behaviour, threats involving weapons and the need to assess and respond to every report

rather than relying on whether the incident is perceived as serious or whether the child describes themselves as a victim.

All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of pupils with SEND, who evidence suggests, are more likely to be abused than their peers. Staff will not assume that possible indicators of abuse relate to the pupil's SEND and will always explore indicators further.

All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of LGBTQ+ pupils, who evidence suggests, are also more likely to be targeted by their peers. In some cases, pupils who are perceived to be LGBTQ+, regardless of whether they are LGBTQ+, can be just as vulnerable to abuse as LGBTQ+ pupils. The school's response to sexual violence and sexual harassment between pupils of the same sex will be equally as robust as it is for incidents between children of the opposite sex.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled. This includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. Pupils will also be reassured that they will be taken seriously, be supported, and kept safe. This process will be continually reviewed by the DSL.

The school's procedures for managing allegations of child-on-child abuse are outlined in the Anti – Bullying Policy

Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy will consider:

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed
- the nature of the alleged incident
- the ages of the children involved
- the development stages of the children involved
- any power imbalance between the children
- if the incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse
- are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, school or college staff
- contextual safeguarding issues.

Following a report of sexual violence, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will make an immediate risk and needs assessment, considering:

- the victim
- the alleged perpetrator
- all other children (and if appropriate adult students and staff)
- Risk assessments (if required) will be recorded and kept under review as a minimum termly
- Refer to Guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2026, Part 5.

Where relevant, risk assessments will be written, informed by the voice of the children involved, consulted on with parents and shared on a need-to-know basis with relevant staff. and kept under review as a minimum, termly.

23. Serious violence

Through training, all staff will be made aware of the indicators which may signal a pupil is at risk from, or is involved with, serious violent crime. These indicators include, but are not limited to:

- Increased absence from school.
- A change in friendships.
- Relationships with older individuals or groups.
- A significant decline in academic performance.
- Signs of self-harm.
- A significant change in wellbeing.
- Signs of assault.
- Unexplained injuries.
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions.

Staff will be made aware of some of the most significant risk factors that could increase a pupil's vulnerability to becoming involved in serious violence. These risk factors include, but are not limited to:

- Being male.
- Having been frequently absent from school.
- Having been permanently excluded from school.
- Having experienced child maltreatment or trauma.
- Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Staff members who suspect a pupil may be vulnerable to, or involved in, serious violent crime will immediately report their concerns to the DSL.

24. Online Safety

Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy will adhere to the Online Safety Policy at all times and is committed to keeping children safe online. The school recognises that addressing online safety issues should form an integral part of the school's safeguarding arrangements.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) and emerging online risks

The school recognises that generative AI creates new and evolving safeguarding risks. These include the creation, manipulation and sharing of AI-generated sexual images, including deepfakes and other synthetic or altered images of pupils. Such images may be created or shared without the knowledge or consent of the person depicted and may be used to humiliate, threaten, coerce or exploit children. Any concerns involving AI-generated or manipulated images will be treated as a safeguarding concern and responded to in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy.

The school is alert to online risks associated with misogyny, misandry, extremist or discriminatory content, cybercrime and the sharing of abusive, harmful or unwanted sexual content. Staff should be aware that children may encounter or be influenced by harmful online communities, attitudes and behaviours, and should report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Mobile phones and personal devices

The school's expectations regarding the use of mobile phones and personal devices are set out in the school's Mobile Phone Policy. Staff must be alert to the potential safeguarding implications of inappropriate use, including the recording or sharing of images or videos, cyberbullying, harassment, the circulation of harmful or sexual content, and contact with unknown individuals. Breaches of the Mobile Phone Policy may give rise to safeguarding concerns and will be considered in line with the school's behaviour and safeguarding procedures.

Filtering and monitoring

The school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place to identify and restrict access to harmful or inappropriate online content. The effectiveness of these arrangements will be reviewed at least once in every academic year. This review will be led by the senior leader with responsibility for filtering and monitoring, with support from the DSL and relevant IT staff.

The review will consider whether the systems are effective in identifying and responding to online risks and whether they provide appropriate protection across the school's internet-connected devices and relevant locations. This will include consideration of the school network, devices used by pupils and staff, and areas where children may access the internet. The findings of the review, including any identified weaknesses and actions required, will be recorded and monitored to ensure that appropriate improvements are implemented.

All staff must report concerns about inappropriate or harmful online content, unsafe use of technology or possible failures in filtering and monitoring to the DSL and/or the member of staff responsible for IT and online safety.

Further information regarding the school's approach to online safety can be found in the Online Safety Policy.

- When school become aware of an online safety issue that has occurred outside of school, it is managed in accordance with the Online Safety Policy and School Behaviour Policy.

Staff will be aware that ongoing in-person monitoring is required in addition to the software in place as it is vital staff don't rely solely on IT systems as this may leave some children vulnerable.

Staff will be aware of the filtering and monitoring systems in place and will know how to escalate concerns where they are identified. Staff will be made aware of their expectations and responsibilities relating to filtering and monitoring systems during their induction.

- **Personal electronic devices**

The use of personal electronic devices, including mobile phones, smartwatches, and cameras, by staff and pupils will be closely monitored by the school, in line with the Mobile Devices Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, and Behaviour Policy**.**

Where photographs or videos involve pupils who are Children Looked After (CLA)**,** adopted pupils, or those with known security concerns, the headteacher will liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to determine appropriate safeguarding measures. In cases involving CLA or adopted pupils, the DSL will work with the child's social worker, carers, or adoptive parents to assess individual risks and needs.

Staff must report any concerns regarding the use of personal electronic devices—whether relating to pupils or staff—to the DSL, following the school's safeguarding procedures.

Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy is committed to safeguarding pupils by ensuring that electronic devices, including cameras, phones, and tablets, are used responsibly and appropriately at all times.

School will therefore ensure that:

- informed parental consent is obtained to take and use photographs and/or videos of children, for use in school, to market the school or to share on social media / internet
- staff, visitors, volunteers and students do not use their own mobile phones or devices to take or record any images of children.

- **Upskirting**

Under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, it is an offence to operate equipment for the purpose of upskirting. "Operating equipment" includes enabling, or securing, activation by another person without that person's knowledge, e.g. a motion-activated camera.

Upskirting will not be tolerated by the school. Any incidents of upskirting will be reported to the DSL, who will then decide on the next steps to take, which may include police involvement.

25. Sharing nude and semi-nude images (including Sextortion)

Formerly referred to as 'Sexting', sharing nudes and semi-nudes is defined as *the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams online by young people under the age of 18. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums.* (UKCIS, 2020)

UKCIS – Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings (UKCIS, 2024) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people

The school will ensure that all staff are aware to treat the sharing of indecent images as a safeguarding concern.

Staff will receive appropriate training regarding child sexual development and will understand the difference between sexual behaviour that is considered normal and expected for the age of the pupil, and sexual behaviour that is inappropriate and harmful. Staff will receive appropriate training around how to deal with such instances in the school community, including understanding motivations, assessing risks posed to pupils depicted in the images and how and when to report.

Staff will be aware that creating, possessing, and distributing indecent imagery of children is a criminal offence, regardless of whether the imagery is created, possessed, and distributed by the individual depicted; however, staff will ensure that pupils are not unnecessarily criminalised.

Where a member of staff becomes aware of an incidence of sharing nudes/semi-nudes that involves indecent images of a pupil, they will refer this to the DSL as soon as possible. Where a pupil confides in a staff member about the circulation of indecent imagery, depicting them or someone else, the staff member will:

- Refrain from viewing, copy, printing, sharing, storing or saving the imagery.
- Tell the DSL immediately if they accidentally view an indecent image and seek support.
- Explain to the pupil that the incident will need to be reported.
- Respond positively to the pupil without blaming or shaming anyone involved, and reassuring them that they can receive support from the DSL.
- Report the incident to the DSL.

The DSL will attempt to understand what the image contains **without viewing it** and the context surrounding its creation and distribution – they will categorise the incident into one of two categories:

- **Aggravated:** incidents involving additional or abusive elements beyond the creation, sending or possession of nudes and semi-nudes;- including where there is an adult involved, where there is an intent to harm the pupil or where the images are used recklessly.
- **Experimental:** incidents involving the creation and sending of nudes and semi-nudes with no adult involvement, no apparent intent to harm or reckless misuse.

Where it is necessary to view the imagery, e.g. if this is the only way to make a decision about whether to inform other agencies, the DSL should:

- never copy, print, share, store or save them; this is illegal
- discuss the decision with the headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team
- make sure viewing is undertaken by the DSL (or equivalent) or another member of the safeguarding team with delegated authority from the headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team
- make sure viewing takes place with another member of staff present in the room, ideally the headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team
- wherever possible, make sure viewing takes place on the premises of the education setting, ideally in the headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team's office
- make sure wherever possible that they are viewed by a staff member of the same sex as the child or young person in the images
- record how and why the decision was made to view the imagery in the safeguarding or child protection records, including who was present, why the nudes or semi-nudes were viewed and any subsequent actions
- ensure every report receives a safeguarding response, including where the sharing appears consensual

- consider whether there is coercion, threats, extortion, wider exploitation and the risk of further distribution.
- if any devices need to be taken and passed onto the police, the device(s) should be confiscated and the police should be called

The above summarised points are explained in further detail with important supporting guidance in the UKCIS guidance - Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings.

- **Sextortion**

  There has been a significant increase in cases where children and young people are forced to pay money or meet other financial demands after being threatened with the release of nude or semi-nude images. This is known as **financially motivated sexual extortion**, or **'sextortion'**—a form of online blackmail and a recognised form of child sexual abuse**.**

  The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Mr Jamie Quarry, will ensure that all staff are aware of the risks of sextortion and are vigilant to its signs. The school will follow guidance issued by the National Crime Agency. in responding to concerns and safeguarding pupils.

26. Context of safeguarding incidents

Safeguarding incidents can take place outside of school and may be influenced by factors beyond the school environment. All staff—particularly the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputy DSL(s)—will consider the wider context when assessing safeguarding concerns.

When evaluating pupils' behaviour, staff will take into account any environmental factors that may present a risk to their safety or welfare. The school will provide as much **contextual information** as possible when making referrals to Children's Social Care (CSC), Child and Family Wellbeing (CFW), or other external agencies, to ensure that assessments and interventions reflect the full picture of the child's circumstances.

27. Pupils potentially at greater risk of harm

Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy recognises that some groups of pupils may face additional safeguarding challenges. The school understands that there may be further barriers to recognising abuse and neglect within these groups, and that staff must be alert to these additional risks.

Specific considerations and safeguarding measures for managing concerns and incidents relating to these groups of pupils are outlined below.

Pupils who need social workers	Pupils may need social workers due to safeguarding or welfare needs. These needs can leave pupils vulnerable to further harm and educational disadvantage. As a matter of routine, the DSL within each school will hold and use information from their LA about whether a pupil has a social worker in order to make decisions in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes. Where a pupil needs a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding, e.g. responding to unauthorised absence, and promoting welfare and educational outcomes, e.g. considering the provision pastoral or academic support and support with behaviour.
Home-educated children	Parents may choose elective home education (EHE) for their children. In some cases, EHE can mean that children are less visible to the services needed to safeguard and support them. In line with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, Lancaster High School will ensure it informs their LA of all deletions from the admissions register when a pupil is taken off roll. Where a parent has expressed their intention to remove a pupil from a school within the trust for EHE, the school and other key professionals, will coordinate a meeting with the parent, where possible, before the final decision has been made, particularly if the pupil has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker. Where children are removed from roll for Elective Home Education and there are safeguarding concerns, school will ensure that concerns are shared with the LA.
CLA	Children most commonly become looked after because of abuse and/or neglect. Because of this, they can be at potentially greater risk in relation to safeguarding. Previously CLA, also known as care leavers, can also remain vulnerable after leaving care. The school will ensure that the appropriate staff have the information they need, such as: • Looked after legal status, i.e. whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order. • Contact arrangements with parents or those with parental responsibility. • Care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the pupil.
Pupils with SEND	When managing safeguarding in relation to pupils with SEND, staff within the trust and its schools will be aware of the following: • Certain indicators of abuse, such as behaviour, mood and injury, may relate to the pupil's disability without further

	exploration; however, it should never be assumed that a pupil's indicators relate only to their disability • Pupils with SEND can be disproportionally impacted by issues such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs • Communication barriers may exist, as well as difficulties in overcoming these barriers When reporting concerns or making referrals for pupils with SEND, the above factors will always be taken into consideration. When managing a safeguarding issue relating to a pupil with SEND, the DSL will liaise with the school's SENCO, as well as the pupil's parents where appropriate, to ensure that the pupil's needs are met effectively.
LGBTQ+ pupils	The fact that a pupil may be LGBTQ+ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm; however, staff will be aware that LGBTQ+ pupils can be targeted by other individuals. Staff will also be aware that, in some cases, a pupil who is perceived by others to be LGBTQ+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as pupils who identify as LGBTQ+. Staff will also be aware that the risks to these pupils can be compounded when they do not have a trusted adult with whom they can speak openly with. All staff will endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced by these pupils and provide a safe space for them to speak out and share any concerns they have.
Adverse Childhood Experiences and trauma	We acknowledge that children who have experienced adverse childhood experiences and trauma may be at increased risk of developing health and social difficulties. All staff will be made aware of the long lasting impact of experiencing adversity and the lasting effect trauma can have on a child's development. Where a pupil is known to have experienced trauma, appropriate arrangements will be made to provide support based on the needs of the pupil and in line with all relevant guidance and policies. This may include close multi-agency working with external services.
Young carers	Pupils who provide care for a family member may experience additional pressures and responsibilities which can affect their physical and emotional wellbeing, attendance and educational outcomes. Staff should be alert to signs that a pupil may be undertaking caring responsibilities and ensure that appropriate support is identified and provided.
Pupils with medical conditions	Pupils with medical conditions may have additional safeguarding and welfare needs. Staff should be alert to any concerns about a pupil's health, care or access to appropriate medical support. Where necessary, the DSL will liaise with parents/carers, the school's medical team and relevant professionals to ensure that appropriate support and safeguarding arrangements are in place.

Pupils who are questioning their gender	A pupil questioning their gender may have additional vulnerabilities, including mental health or emotional wellbeing needs, difficulties within family or peer relationships, or the risk of bullying and discrimination. Staff should respond sensitively and avoid making assumptions about a pupil's needs. Any concerns or requests for support must be considered on an individual basis, with the pupil's safety, welfare and best interests at the centre of decision-making. The DSL will be involved in considering any safeguarding implications and appropriate support.
Pupils experiencing repeated removal from lessons, suspensions or reduced timetables	Pupils who are repeatedly removed from the classroom, experience multiple suspensions, are placed on a part-time timetable or are at risk of permanent exclusion may have additional safeguarding needs. These circumstances may indicate underlying issues, including unmet needs, abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff must ensure that patterns of behaviour, attendance and exclusion are considered alongside the pupil's wider circumstances. Concerns must be shared with the DSL so that appropriate safeguarding assessment, early help and support can be considered.

28. Extra-Curricular activities and clubs and use of school premises by external organisations

Extra-curricular activities and clubs hosted by external bodies, e.g. charities or companies, will work in collaboration with the school to effectively safeguard pupils and adhere to local safeguarding arrangements.

Staff and volunteers running extracurricular activities and clubs are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and promote the welfare of pupils. Paid and volunteer staff understand how they should respond to child protection concerns and how to make a referral to CSC or the police, if necessary.

Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy will always consider safeguarding arrangements when an extracurricular activity or club is arranged in view of DSL availability or ensuring that a transfer of control document has been completed for external agencies and the school is satisfied that the agency has appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place.

Where the governing board/body hires or rents out school facilities or the school premises to organisations or individuals, e.g. for providers to run community or extracurricular activities, it will ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place to keep pupils safe. The school will refer to the DfE's guidance on keeping children safe in out-of-school settings in these circumstances.

Where the governing board provides activities under the direct supervision or management of school staff, the school's child protection arrangements will fully apply.

Where activities are provided independently by another organisation, the governing board will seek assurance that the provider has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place. This may include inspecting policies and procedures as required. The governing board will also ensure that there are clear arrangements for liaising with the school on safeguarding matters where appropriate.

Safeguarding requirements will be included in any transfer of control agreement, such as a lease or hire agreement, as a condition of use and occupation of school premises. The agreement will specify that failure to comply with these safeguarding requirements may result in the termination of the agreement.

29. Alternative provision

Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy recognises that it retains responsibility for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending alternative provision, whether registered or unregistered.

Safeguarding suitability of providers

Before placing a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school will undertake appropriate checks to satisfy itself that the provider is suitable and has effective safeguarding arrangements in place. This will include consideration of the provider's safeguarding and child protection policies, staff suitability and safer recruitment arrangements, health and safety procedures, and arrangements for reporting safeguarding concerns.

Attendance and information sharing

Clear arrangements will be agreed with each provider to ensure that:

- The pupil's attendance is monitored and regularly shared with the school.
- Any unexplained absence, failure to attend or change in attendance pattern is reported to the school promptly.
- Relevant safeguarding information is shared between the school and provider in a timely and appropriate manner.
- The provider knows how to report safeguarding concerns to the school and who to contact in an emergency.
- The school retains oversight of the pupil's welfare, progress and safeguarding needs throughout the placement.

Review and monitoring of placements

All alternative provision placements will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain appropriate and meet the pupil's educational, pastoral and safeguarding needs. The school will maintain regular contact with the provider and, where appropriate, the pupil and their parents/carers.

Any unexplained absence, concern about a pupil's welfare or failure by the provider to meet agreed safeguarding arrangements will be followed up promptly. The DSL will be informed of any safeguarding concerns and will ensure that appropriate action, including referral to relevant agencies where necessary, is taken. Placements will be reconsidered where there are concerns about the suitability or safety of the provision.

30. Managing referrals

Recording, decision-making and escalation

All safeguarding concerns, referrals, decisions and outcomes must be recorded accurately, promptly and securely on CPOMS. Records must include the actions taken, the outcome and the rationale for any decision, including where a decision is made not to refer a concern to another agency.

Where a response from another agency is considered inadequate, or concerns remain that a child may be at risk of harm, the DSL will pursue the matter and escalate concerns through the appropriate channels until a satisfactory outcome is achieved.

All staff have a responsibility to act on safeguarding concerns. Where necessary, staff may make a referral directly to Children's Social Care or the Police. Referral to the DSL must not delay urgent action where a child is at immediate risk of harm. Staff must inform the DSL of any referral made as soon as possible.

All staff members, particularly the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), will be familiar with the Local Authority's arrangements for managing safeguarding referrals. The DSL will provide guidance and support to staff as needed.

When making a referral to Children's Social Care (CSC) or other external agencies, information will be shared in accordance with confidentiality requirements and only where necessary to safeguard the pupil.

The DSL will maintain regular liaison with external agencies, including multi-agency partners where appropriate, to ensure the ongoing welfare of pupils. The DSL will also work closely with the police to avoid jeopardising any criminal investigations and to seek assistance and guidance when required.

Where a pupil has been harmed, is in immediate danger, or is at risk of harm, the referrer will be informed of the actions taken within one working day of making a referral. If this information is not received, the referrer should contact the pupil's assigned social worker for an update.

The school will take immediate steps to protect the victim and other pupils and will not wait for the start or outcome of an investigation, whether conducted by the police or Children's Social Care (CSC).

Where CSC decides that a statutory investigation is not necessary, the school may consider making a further referral if there are ongoing concerns that a pupil is at risk of harm. If the school agrees with CSC's decision that a statutory investigation is not required, alternative support mechanisms-such as family help or pastoral support-will be considered to safeguard and support the pupil.

At all stages of the reporting and referral process, pupils will be informed of decisions made, actions taken, and the reasons for these actions. Discussions with parents will only occur where it is safe to do so and will not place the pupil or others at risk. The school will work closely with parents to ensure that the pupil and their family understand the arrangements in place, including any in-school interventions, and know where to access additional support.

If the school are dissatisfied, local escalation procedures will be followed. 8.1 Resolving Professional Disagreements (Escalation and Conflict Resolution) (proceduresonline.com)

31. Concerns about staff and safeguarding practices

If a staff member has concerns about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers and persons who use/hire the school premises), it will be raised with the Co-Headteachers or Executive Headteacher. If the concern is with regards to the Executive Headteacher, it must be referred to the chair of governors, Mrs Julie Hodgson.

Any concerns regarding the safeguarding practices at the school will be raised with the SLT, and the necessary whistleblowing procedures will be followed, as outlined in the Whistleblowing Policy. If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the SLT, they should access other whistleblowing channels such as the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline (0800 028 0285).

32. Allegations of abuse against staff and low-level concerns

There are clear policies in line with those from the CSAP (Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership) for dealing with allegations against people who work with children.

All allegations against staff, supply staff, volunteers, contractors and any person who may use or hire the school premises, will be managed in line with the school's Whistleblowing Policy – a copy of which will be provided to, and understood by, all staff at induction. The school will ensure all allegations against staff, including those who are not employees of the school, are dealt with appropriately and that the school liaises with the relevant parties.

When managing allegations against staff, the school will recognise the distinction between allegations that meet the harms threshold and allegations that do not, also known as "low-level concerns". Allegations that meet the harms threshold include instances where staff have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
- Committed or possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- Behaved, or may have behaved, in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

All staff at Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy are aware of these procedures and aware of the following expectations and protocol:

- ALL staff and volunteers are aware that they must refer allegations or concerns around staff (including supply staff and volunteers) conduct to the Co-Headteachers.
- ALL staff and volunteers are aware of the requirement to, and process of referring allegations or concerns around the Headteacher to the nominated Governor and how to contact them
- The Co-Headteachers and/or Chair of Governors will discuss the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

- CSAP procedures for dealing with allegations against staff will be followed http://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_allegations.html
- ALL staff and volunteers remember that the welfare of the child is paramount and that they have a duty to inform the Co-Headteachers
- if any adult's conduct gives cause for concern
- All staff recognise the importance of sharing and reporting low-level concerns (see below guidance on low-level concerns) surrounding staff or any adult in a position of trust to the Co-Headteachers
- ALL staff are aware of the school's Whistle Blowing Policy which enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place
- Staff are fully aware of Guidance for Safer Working Practice 2022 and Staff Code of conduct and are aware of professional expectations of their own behaviour and conduct.
- Further information, LADO referral information and flowchart of how allegations are managed: Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) - Lancashire County Council includes the threshold matrix.
- Referrals will be made using the required format below when necessary. https://my.apps.lancashire.gov.uk/w/webpage/request?form=management_of_allegations_notification

Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy recognises that children may make disclosures concerning adults in positions of trust who are not employed by the school, such as those in places of worship, sports coaches, or club leaders.

The school will first ensure that the child is safe. Following this, any concerns or allegations will be referred to the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**, and relevant information will be shared in line with safeguarding procedures.

- **Low Level Concerns**

Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy ensure that all staff are aware of how to recognise and report **low level concerns** around staff behaviour or conduct.

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college 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 harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

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

• being over friendly with children

• having favourites

• taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy

• engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or

• humiliating pupils.

Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy will promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers, contractors or those that have hired/let the premises) are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy will strive to embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the school's values and expected behaviour set out in the staff code of conduct are lived, monitored and reinforced constantly by all staff.

Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy will ensure that staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

All staff are clear on how to report low level concerns and will be empowered to do so. Staff must report their concerns to the Co-Headteachers. If concerns are surrounding a Co-Headteacher, this must be referred to the Chair of Governors. Guidance from Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2026, will be followed in view of recording and storage of such concerns.

If in doubt whether the concern is a low-level concern, the DSL or Co-Headteacher will consult with LADO for guidance.

The governing body will ensure low level concern procedures and staff behaviour expectations are clearly addressed within the staff code of conduct, and procedures are implemented effectively, ensuring that appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and facilitate a whole school or college approach to dealing with any concerns.

33. Safer recruitment

The school will determine whether volunteers and other adults working with pupils are undertaking regulated activity in accordance with the current statutory definition. This will include consideration of the changes introduced by the Crime and Policing Act 2026, including the removal of the former supervision exemption.

We therefore ensure that:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2026, Part 3 guidance is adhered to, to ensure that there is a strong reference and commitment to safeguarding during advertisement, selection and recruitment of new staff.

An enhanced DBS check with barred list information will be completed for all staff members engaged in regulated activity in line with the revised criteria before individuals commence relevant activities. A person will be considered to be in 'regulated activity' if, as a result of their work, they:

- Are responsible on a daily basis for teaching, training, instructing or the care or supervision of children.

- Regularly work in the school at times when children are on the premises.
- Regularly come into contact with children under 18 years of age *(Regular is defined as; at least 3 times in a 30-day period.)*

The governing board will conduct the appropriate pre-employment checks for all prospective employees.

School will ensure that:

- The appropriate DBS and suitability checks will be carried out for all governors, volunteers, and contractors. The DfE's DBS Workforce Guides will be consulted when determining whether a position fits the child workforce criteria
- The original DBS certificate is seen for all appointees to the school, even where the on-line DBS system indicates that the check is clear
- There are sufficient staff/Governors who have undertaken appropriate Safer Recruitment training in the last 5 years and reached the required standard as verified by the course facilitators, to enable at least one person on every recruitment panel to be appropriately trained and there are at least 2 people on each selection panel
- Written assurances will be obtained from agencies and other employers that provide staff to work in school, to confirm that appropriate pre- employment checks have been undertaken in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2026
- Individual identity checks will be undertaken on those staff detailed above to ensure they are employees of the named agency/employer
- Conduct an online search as part of our due diligence on shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online and will inform shortlisted candidates of this procedure
- A transfer of control agreement will be used where other agencies/organisations use school premises and are not operating under school's safeguarding policies and procedures
- When an issue is declared, advice will be sought from Ofsted about the need to apply for a waiver. If a waiver is necessary, a risk assessment will be carried out and proportionate measures put in place until a waiver has been issued or matters resolved. If it is not resolved, this must be reported:- disqualification@ofsted.gov.uk
- Advice will be sought from Human Resources, LADO and/or Schools Safeguarding Officers if any staff are unclear about any aspects of Safer Recruitment.

These requirements will be considered when arranging work experience, engaging contractors and managing visitors, where relevant. All recruitment procedures, guidance and internal checklists will be kept up to date and must not rely on the former supervision exemption when determining whether an individual is undertaking regulated activity.

Referral to the DBS

There is a legal requirement for schools and colleges to make a referral to the DBS where they remove an individual from regulated activity (or would have removed an individual had they not left), and they believe the individual has:

- engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children and/or adults, and/or

- satisfied the harm test in relation to children and/or vulnerable adults, and/or
- been cautioned or convicted of a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence.

Single central record (SCR)

The school keeps an SCR which records all staff, including agency, third-party supply staff and teacher trainees on salaried routes, who work at the school, even if they work for one day.

All members of the governing body are also recorded on the SCR.

The following information is recorded on the SCR:

- An identity check
- A barred list check
- An enhanced DBS check
- A prohibition from teaching check
- A check of professional qualifications, where required
- A check to determine the individual's right to work in the UK
- Additional checks for those who have lived or worked outside of the UK
- A section 128 check for those in management positions
- Any other information deemed relevant.

If any checks have been conducted for volunteers or Governors, these may also be recorded on the SCR. If risk assessments are conducted to assess whether a volunteer should be subject to an enhanced DBS check, (with/without a barred list check, depending on whether they are in regulated activity), the risk assessment will be recorded.

The details of an individual will be removed from the SCR once they no longer work or volunteer at the school.

34. Review

This Policy is subject to ongoing review; however, will be reviewed no later than September 2026. All staff have received a copy of this policy.

35. Key Contacts, Roles and Training

Co-Headteachers	Ms Alexia Barnes and Mrs Helen Best
Designated Safeguarding Lead, Prevent Lead	Mr Jamie Quarry
Non-Teaching Safeguarding Lead	Miss Laura Johnson
Deputy DSL (s)	Mrs Lesley Slinger Mrs Sarah Taylor

	Mrs Jeanette Webster Mr Patrick Wilson
Chair of Governors	Mrs Julie Hodgson
Safeguarding Governor	Mrs Julie Hodgson
LCC School Safeguarding Officers Victoria Wallace, Mechelle Lewis, Sarah Holyhead, Natalie Barton	Safeguarding in Education Advice Line - 01772 531196 school.safeguarding@lancashire.gov.uk
LCC MASH Education Officers Matt Chipchase & Martine Blokland	Martine Blokland 01254 220914 martine.blokland@lancashire.gov.uk Matt Chipchase 01254 220989 matt.chipchase@lancashire.gov.uk
LADO – Local Authority Designated Officers	01772 536694 LADO.admin@lancashire.gov.uk
MASH – Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub	0300 123 6720 0300 123 6722 between 5.00pm - 8.00am
Lancashire Prevent Team	01254 585260

SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION	
Websites and Links	
LSCB Procedures	http://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/index.htm
LSCB Website (currently still available although CSAP will replace)	Education reps, Lancashire Serious Case Reviews, multi-agency safeguarding training, LSCB 7 min briefings https://lancashiresafeguardingpartnership.org.uk/safeguarding-children
Family Help Lancashire	http://www.lancashirechildrenstrust.org.uk/resources/?siteid=6274&pageid=44350
Safeguarding Adults (18+)	http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/adult-social-care/safeguarding-adults.aspx
School (DSL)	J Quarry ext 1040
Deputy DSLs in School	L Johnson ext 1069, L Slinger ext 1064, S Taylor ext 1071, J Webster, ext 1083, P Wilson ext 1006
Chair of Governors	Mrs J Hodgson
Safeguarding Governor	Mrs J Hodgson
HR & Legal	
Schools' Safeguarding	**Victoria Wallace** 01772 531196 / 532723
Children's Social Care	**0300 123 6720** (Referrals) cypreferrals@lancashire.gov.uk
Out of Hours referral	**0300 123 6722**
Education Early Support Co-ordinators	Martine Blokland 01254 220914 Martine.blokland@lancashire.gov.uk Matt Chipchase 01254 220989 / 01254 837975 matt.chipchase@lancashire.gov.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer	**Tim Booth /Shane Penn / Donna Green** 01772 536694 LADO.admin@lancashire.gov.uk
Children Missing Education Contact	01257 517333 cme@lancashire.gov.uk
Child Sexual Exploitation Team	**Operation Awaken** Blackpool, Fylde, Lancaster, Morecambe and Wyre **01253 477 261**
Prevent / Channel Contact / referrals	**101 (non-urgent) Anti-Terrorism Hotline 0800 789 321** **Preston, Lancaster, Skelmersdale, Blackpool etc** Telephone: 01772 209733 / 830, Central Safeguarding Team, Hutton HQ: 01772 413029 concern@lancashire.pnn.police.uk
Virtual School Head	**01772531853** Elac.team@lancashire.gov.uk
School Lead for LAC	Deputy Headteacher
Other Useful Contacts	
LCC Employee Welfare & Counselling	**08000 214 154** www.youreap.co.uk
Whistle Blowing	**01772 532500** **WhistleblowingComplaints@lancashire.gov.uk**
NSPCC Whistle-blowing helpline	**0800 028 0285 Lancashire** 01772 532500 WhistleblowingComplaints@lancashire.gov.uk
Public Concern at Work	**0207 404 6609** or www.pcaw.org.uk
Online Safety Helpline	For professionals **0844 381 4772**
National Domestic Abuse Helpline	**0808 2000 247**
Child Line	**0800 11 11**

NSPCC Helpline Adults inc. parents	**0808 800 5000** or text: **88858** help@nspcc.org.uk