



Victory Heights Primary School

City of Arabia

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Version Date: August 2025

Last review date: N/A

Next review date: August 2026

Responsible SLT: Principal

Key Contacts

Within School

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Ms Ben Rothwell - Principal

Tel: 058 581 9964 Email: principal@vhprimarycoa.ae

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (PS)

Ms Rob McCall - Deputy Headteacher

Tel: 050 634 8442 Email: rmcall@vhprimarycoa.ae

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (FS)

Ms Natalie Doidge - Head of Foundation Stage

Tel: 052 918 0688 Email: ndoidge@vhprimarycoa.ae

Lead Teacher Child Protection Team

Belinda Stewart - Inclusion Teacher

Tel: 050 451 7464 Email: bsahin@vhprimary.com

Nominated Governor for Child Protection and Safeguarding

Ms Sasha Crabb

Email: principal@vhprimary.com

Chairman of Board of Governors

Mr Dinesh Kothari

Email: dinesh.kothari@interstar.ae

External Contacts

Ministry Of Education Child Protection Unit

Email: CPU@moe.gov.ae – Tel: 04 217 666

Community Development Authority Child Protection Section

Tel: 800988 Website: www.cda.gov.ae

Ministry Of Interior Child Protection Centre

Tel: 116111 Website: www.moi-cpc.ae

Al Ameen Service

Tel: 800-4-888

Dubai Foundation For Women And Children

Tel: +97146060300 Email: help@dfwa.ae, Website: www.dfwac.ae

Dubai Police

Tel: +971 460 9999 Email: mail@dubaipolice.gov.ae

Table of Contents

Equal Opportunities Statement	6
Safeguarding Policy Statement	6
Links to Other Policies	7
Introduction	8
Purpose	8
Context	8
Aims	8
Safeguarding Law and Guidance	12
Key Terminology	13
Types of abuse	14
Physical abuse	14
Emotional abuse	14
Sexual abuse	14
Neglect	14
Bullying	15
Additional Types of Abuse	15
Child-on-Child Abuse	15
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)	15
Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)	15
Domestic Abuse	16
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)	16
Radicalisation and Extremism	16
Online Abuse	16
Trafficking	16
Forced Marriage	16
Honour-Based Abuse (HBA)	16
Signs of abuse	18
Children Volunteering Information	18
Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedures	19
Attendance and Punctuality	21
Children Missing Education (CME)	21
Continuity of Education in Extenuating Circumstances	23
Mental Health and Well-Being Monitoring	23
Student Education and Involvement in Safeguarding	25
Safeguarding Through the Curriculum	25
Student Voice and Peer Involvement	25
Internet Filtering and Monitoring	27

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy	
Enhanced Keyword Alerts	27
Monitoring Reports	27
Parental Controls and Engagement	27
Regular Staff Training	27
Use of National Guidance and Tools	28
Commitment to Continuous Improvement	28
Preventing Extremism and Terrorism:	29
Prevent Risk Assessment	29
Transport/Bus Policy	30
Urgent Medical Care and Safeguarding Protocols	31
When dealing with allegations against staff, directors or volunteers	31
Reporting concerns about staff or volunteers	31
Reporting concerns about the Principal (DSL)	31
Mandatory external reporting	31
Safe Working Practice	32
Use of Photography and Recording Devices	32
Safeguarding SEND and Children of Determination	33
After School Activities	34
Reporting	34
Child Protection Vetting	34
Site Safety	36
Safeguarding Record Transfer	37
Allegations against the Principal/DSL	38
Appendix 1	42
Identifying Signs of Child Abuse	42
Appendix 2	46
What to do when a child confides in you	46
Appendix 3	48
Guidance on Toileting Needs	48
Appendix 4	49
Briefing Sheet for Temporary Staff and Volunteers	49
Appendix 5	50
Transporting Children for School Activities	50
HR Responsibility	50
Driver Requirements	50
Bus Escorts	50
Appendix 6	51
Victory Heights Reporting Tool - MyConcern	51
Appendix 7	52

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy	
MOI Child Protection Centre REFERRAL FORM	52
Appendix 8	56
Child Protection Flow Chart	56
Appendix 9	57
Bullying Flowchart	57
Appendix 10	58
Lanyard Colours	58
Appendix 11	59
Guidelines for Writing a Factual Report on a Safeguarding Issue	59
Purpose	59
Key Principles for Writing Safeguarding Reports	59
Words to Avoid in Safeguarding Reports	59
Example of a Poorly Written Report	60
Rewritten as a Factual Report	60
Checklist Before Submitting the Report	60
Additional Safeguarding Resources	61
Monitoring and Compliance	62
Policy Development and Review Approach	62
Version Control Table	62

Equal Opportunities Statement

The aims of the School and the principles of excellent pastoral care will be applied to all, irrespective of their race, sex, disability, religion or belief; equally these characteristics will be recognised and respected, and the School will aim to provide a positive culture of tolerance, equality and mutual respect.

Safeguarding Policy Statement

At Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia , we are unwavering in our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people under our care.

Our safeguarding policy is guided by the principles outlined in the UK Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), most recently updated in July 2025, with amendments taking effect from September 2025.

Operating within the United Arab Emirates, our policy also adheres to local legislation, including Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 (Wadeema's Law), which underscores the rights of children to protection from all forms of neglect, exploitation, and abuse. Furthermore, we align with international legal frameworks and conventions, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to ensure a comprehensive and globally informed approach to safeguarding.

This policy is designed to foster a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment where every child is empowered to thrive. We are dedicated to continuous improvement, regularly reviewing and updating our safeguarding practices to reflect evolving standards and best practices.

Links to Other Policies

This policy forms part of a suite of policies and procedures that together promote the safeguarding and wellbeing of children at Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia. It should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy (including Cyberbullying)
- Personal Digital Devices Policy
- Responsible Use Policy
- Educational Visits and Trips Policy
- Behaviour and Sanctions Policy
- HR Manual
- Intimate Care Policy
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Data Protection and Privacy Policy
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy
- Medication Management Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy

These policies collectively reflect our commitment to creating a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment for all children.

Introduction

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia fully recognizes its responsibility to safeguard, promote and protect the safety of all children. The guiding principle is the belief that it is always unacceptable for a child to experience abuse of any kind. This policy has been formulated to ensure that Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia takes every possible measure to prevent abuse. It aims to ensure that none of its staff or volunteers engage in behaviour that could allow abuse to occur or actions that could be misinterpreted by children, their families or other adults as constituting or leading to abuse.

Child abuse or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and or emotional ill treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment resulting in the actual or potential harm to a child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility of trust or power according to the World Health Organization (WHO). A child protection policy is a statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard children from harm and makes clear to all what is required in relation to the protection of children. It helps to create a safe and positive environment for children and to show that all staff of Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia take our responsibility of care seriously.

Purpose

An effective whole school child protection policy provides clear direction to staff and others in regard to expected behaviour when dealing with child protection issues. An effective policy also makes explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. This ensures that child protection concerns, referrals and monitoring may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child.

Context

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia recognizes that children have a right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively and succeed in school if they are suffering emotionally or physically. School staff are uniquely placed to recognize signs of abuse and build strong bonds with children in their care.

Aims

The aim of Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia child protection policy is to safeguard children from all forms of violence, negligence, abuse, exploitation in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the UAE Child Protection Law 2016 ('Wadeema's Law' – Federal Law No.3 2016). The Convention refers to all children up to the age of 18 years.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as protecting children from maltreatment, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care (UNICEF). The best interests of the child should be the primary consideration, children are to be protected from all forms of discrimination and every child has the right to life, survival and development.

It is our aim to

- Raise awareness of child protection, safeguarding roles and responsibilities with school staff and volunteers.
- Develop, implement and review procedures in our school that enable all staff and volunteers to identify and report cases, or suspected cases of abuse.
- Support children with additional needs.
- Ensure the practise of safe recruitment in checking and recording of the suitability of staff and volunteers who work with children.
- Establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- Ensure that allegations or concerns against staff are dealt with in accordance with the Dubai Ministry of the Interior and Department of Education policies and procedures.

The whole school will aim to:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are heard.
- Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or to have concerns.
- Include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- Follow the procedures set out by the Department of Education and the Ministry of the Interior.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and its staff, by setting out its obligations on child protection, on the school website and the parents handbook, and that parents are offered a copy of the policy on request.
- Ensure that children have an understanding of the Child Protection Policy by making a child-friendly copy available, as well as delivering lessons on child-protection and safeguarding issues through the course of MSC lessons and other appropriate means, where applicable.
- Notify the Ministry of Interior Child Protection Centre of any suspected cases of child abuse.
- Inform parents of any concerns, and provide them with opportunities to change the situation, where this does not place the child at greater risk.

- Develop effective links with the Ministry of the Interior (MOI) Child Protection Centre and local police.
- Liaise with other agencies that support children.
- Ensure there is a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) appointed.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead in Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia is Ben Rothwell(Principal).

In the event of this person being unavailable please report to Rob McCall or Natalie Doidge Deputy DSLs.

The DSL responsibilities are to:

- Ensure that the school directors and staff are fully aware of and understand their responsibilities and obligations under this policy.
- Ensure that staff have appropriate training and attend training every 2 years.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers know the name of the designated DSL, their role and contact details.
- Keep written records of child protection concerns, ensuring that they are stored securely and separately from the main pupil files.
- Ensure that copies of child protection records and/or records of concerns are transferred accordingly (separate from pupil files) when a child leaves the school.
- Ensure that when a pupil leaves the school their information is transferred to the new school immediately.

Responsibilities of adults within the School Community:

All adults working at Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia have a shared responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This includes maintaining an exemplary understanding of safeguarding best practice and the legal frameworks that underpin it.

- All staff are required to remain vigilant and alert to the signs and indicators of abuse, neglect, or harm.
- All adults must ensure that their safeguarding knowledge remains current and in line with local and international expectations. This includes the **mandatory reading of the annual update of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)***, and participation in school-led safeguarding training.
- If a member of staff identifies that a child may be at risk, they must record their concern factually and report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) **as soon as practically possible**, and always within the same day.

- If a child makes a disclosure of abuse, the adult must respond in line with the disclosure procedures outlined in this policy.
- If the disclosure involves an allegation against a member of staff, the adult must follow the school's **Allegations Against Staff** procedures immediately and directly inform the Principal or DSL.

All members of the school community must understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that failure to report concerns or follow procedures could place a child at further risk and result in disciplinary action.

Duty of Care

School staff have a crucial role in shaping the lives of young people. They have a unique opportunity to interact with children in ways that are both affirming and inspiring. This policy has been produced to help staff develop the safest possible learning and working environments which safeguard children and reduce the risk of staff being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

One of the key additions to legislation contained in the UAE Child Protection Policy, prepared by the Community Development Authority (CDA), is the mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse by child care providers, making school staff legally compelled to report concerns.

This means that adults should:

- Understand what child protection and safeguarding means and understand different types of abuse.
- Always act and be seen to be acting in the child's best interests.
- Pay particular attention to incidents of bullying and take immediate action.
- Have thorough knowledge of Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia Bullying Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Avoid any conduct that would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intent.

Safeguarding Law and Guidance

The Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia Child Protection Policy is influenced and derived from the following pieces of legislation and documentation.

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/686b94eefe1a249e937cbd2d/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2025.pdf
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5fd0a8e78fa8f54d5d6555f9/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused (2015)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a80597640f0b62302692fa1/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf
- UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 on children's rights (Wadeema's Law)
https://www.khda.gov.ae/CMS/WebParts/TextEditor/Documents/Children_Law_English.pdf
- Standards for clinics in Educational and Academic Settings (2020)
<https://www.dha.gov.ae/uploads/112021/804e26be-e894-4a5f-9174-f1913eec6467.pdf>
- UAE School Inspection Framework Section 5 The protection, care, guidance and support of students (2016)
https://www.moe.gov.ae/Ar/ImportantLinks/Inspection/PublishingImages/frame_workbooken.pdf
- How to complete a risk assessment to assess the risk of people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism (2023)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-risk-assessment-templates/how-to-complete-a-risk-assessment-to-assess-the-risk-of-people-becoming-terrorists-or-supporting-terrorism>
- Combating Terrorism and Extremism (2024)
<https://www.mofa.gov.ae/en/The-Ministry/The-Foreign-Policy/Combating-Terrorism-and-Extremism>

Key Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or unpaid capacity. This also includes adults who are undertaking a PGCE or other such qualification.

Child refers to anyone under the age of 18.

Parent refers to both birth parents and adults in a parenting role, such as foster parents, adoptive parents or step-parents.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the senior member of staff appointed to oversee safeguarding and child protection policies, ensuring proper procedures are followed within the school.

Abuse refers to physical, emotional, sexual abuse, or neglect that results in harm to the child.

Vulnerable children are children who may be at risk due to factors such as disabilities, mental health issues, or adverse family circumstances.

Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Types of abuse

Abuse can take a variety of forms. The ill treatment or neglect of a child which causes injury, suffering or distress is abuse. A child may suffer or be at risk of suffering from one or more types of abuse. Abuse may take place on a single occasion or it may occur repeatedly over time. Abuse of children has been internationally defined in the following categories:

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is the deliberate physical injury to a child or the willful, neglectful failure to cause physical injury or suffering. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing or treatment that can cause actual bodily harm. Fictitious illness by proxy may also be considered as abuse.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on the child. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Domestic abuse, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose children to emotional abuse.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or in the production of pornographic material, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet the child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failing to protect the child from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, lack of stimulation or lack of supervision. It may also include a failure to respond to a child's basic emotional needs.

Neglect is the failure to act in response to need.

Bullying

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. It may take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist remarks, threats, name calling), and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group).

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children to the extent that it affects their health and development or at the extreme end, cause them significant harm (including self-harm). All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have in place rigorously enforced anti bullying strategies.

Additional Types of Abuse

While the primary categories of abuse include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect, there are additional types of abuse that must be recognized and addressed as part of safeguarding procedures. These types of abuse reflect evolving societal challenges and risks identified in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2024)*.

Child-on-Child Abuse

- Abuse that occurs between children, which can include physical violence, bullying (including cyberbullying), sexual violence and harassment, upskirting, and harmful initiation or hazing rituals. Schools must have clear policies for addressing and supporting children involved in these situations.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

- A form of sexual abuse where an individual or group manipulates, coerces, or deceives a child into sexual activity in exchange for gifts, money, affection, or other benefits. CSE often involves an imbalance of power and can occur online or in person.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

- This involves children being coerced or manipulated into criminal activity, such as drug trafficking (e.g., county lines operations), theft, or violence. Children often do not recognize that they are being exploited.

Domestic Abuse

- Domestic abuse can directly or indirectly affect children who witness or experience it in the home. This includes emotional, physical, sexual, or financial abuse between family members and is considered a safeguarding concern.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

- A harmful cultural practice that involves the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is illegal in the UK, and professionals are required to report any known cases to the authorities.

Radicalisation and Extremism

- The process by which individuals are influenced to adopt extreme views, potentially leading to terrorism or extremist violence. Schools must remain vigilant to signs of radicalisation and implement *Prevent Duty* requirements.

Online Abuse

- Abuse that takes place using technology, including social media, messaging platforms, and online gaming. It can involve cyberbullying, grooming, exposure to harmful content, or online exploitation.

Trafficking

- The recruitment, movement, or transfer of children for the purpose of exploitation, including sexual exploitation, forced labor, or criminal activity. Children involved in trafficking may show signs of physical neglect or emotional distress.

Forced Marriage

- A marriage entered into without the free and full consent of one or both individuals. This practice is illegal in the UK, and concerns about forced marriage should be referred to the safeguarding team.

Honour-Based Abuse (HBA)

- Abuse committed to protect or defend the perceived "honour" of a family or community. This can include forced marriage, FGM, or violence related to perceived family dishonor.

These additional types of abuse require vigilance, clear reporting, and adherence to safeguarding policies to ensure that children are protected from harm. Staff members are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the indicators of these types of abuse and take appropriate action if concerns arise.

Signs of abuse

Recognising child abuse is not easy. It is not the responsibility of school staff to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child is at significant risk. It is the responsibility and duty of those working with and caring for children to act in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take any necessary action to protect a child.

- Many forms of abuse do not leave physical signs.
- Many signs of sexual abuse do not leave physical evidence
- Forensic evidence can disappear within a short period of time.
- Sexually abused children can suffer physical injury.
- Children of all ages, able bodied, disabled, children with or without a learning disability, boys and girls from all races, cultures and classes are abused.
- Young people's unhappiness and distress can often be witnessed in their behaviour.

Refer to: Appendix 1 - Identifying signs of child abuse.

Children Volunteering Information

If a child volunteers information to a member of staff it may be done obliquely, rather than directly e.g. through play, drawings etc. Children will talk about their concerns and problems to people they can trust.

The role of the member of staff or volunteer hearing this is to listen but not undertake any investigation of the existing or potential abuse. This is the role of the child protection agencies.

Refer to: Appendix 2 - What to do if a child confides in you.

Refer to: Appendix 11 - Guidelines for Writing a Factual Report on a Safeguarding Issue

Legal action against a perpetrator can be seriously damaged by any suggestion that the child's words have been influenced in any way by the person they told.

Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedures

The prime concern at all stages must be the safety and interests of the child. Legal and regulatory requirements are necessary for guidance on best practice in safeguarding children. UNICEF explains safeguarding as “taking all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children’s welfare is minimised; and where there are concerns about children and young people’s welfare, taking appropriate action to address those concerns”.

The following procedures should be read in conjunction with the flow chart (Appendix 8). If a member of staff suspects abuse e.g. through physical injury etc. they must:

1. Make a full and accurate record of their concerns using MyConcern
Refer to: Appendix 11 - Guidelines for Writing a Factual Report on a Safeguarding Issue
2. Include body maps if necessary.
3. Consider if there is a requirement for immediate medical intervention and if so assistance must be called for.

Following a report of concerns from a member of staff, the DSL must:

1. Decide whether or not there are sufficient grounds for suspecting child abuse, in which case a referral must be made to the Ministry of the Interior Child Protection Centre in Dubai. It is operated by the United Arab Emirates Ministry of the Interior and its mandate is to protect children across the UAE.
2. If there is no risk of harm the DSL will either actively monitor the situation or seek advice from the MOI Child Protection Centre.
3. The DSL must confirm any referrals in writing to the MOI Child Protection Centre, within 24 hours, including the actions that have been taken. The written referral should be made using the Referral Form attached to this document.
4. If a child is in immediate danger and urgent protective action is required, the police should be called using the 999 service. The DSL should also notify the MOI Child Protection Centre of the occurrence and what action has been taken. The DSL should seek advice from the police/MOI Child Protection Centre about informing the parents.
5. Normally the school should try to discuss any concerns about a child’s welfare with the family and where possible seek their agreement before making a referral to the MOI

Child Protection Centre. However, this should only be done when it will not place the child at increased risk. The child's views should also be taken into account.

6. Where there is doubt or reservations about involving the child's family, the DSL should clarify with the MOI Child Protection Centre whether the parents should be told about the referral and, if so, when and by whom. This is important in cases where police may need to conduct a criminal investigation.

The Child Protection Centre, located in Al Barsha is open between 8 am and 3 pm for drop in services. A member of staff can be contacted 24 hours a day:

Hotline phone number 800988

Mobile phone number **056 682011**

Email child@CDA.gov.ae

When making a statement it is important to relay the clear facts, any suspicions or allegations and whether or not there has been any contact with the child's family.

If the DSL feels unsure about whether a referral is necessary they can phone MOI Child Protection Centre to discuss concerns and obtain advice. To do so will not constitute a child abuse referral and may well help to clarify a situation.

Attendance and Punctuality

At Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia, we recognise the critical role that regular attendance and punctuality play in safeguarding our students. Consistent attendance is not only essential for academic success but also for ensuring that students are safe and well-cared for.

Our approach is aligned with Working Together to Improve School Attendance, which became statutory guidance in 2024 and is reinforced in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025. We follow this guidance to ensure our procedures for monitoring, responding to, and improving attendance are robust, consistent, and in the best interests of children's welfare.

Please see the **Attendance and Punctuality Policy** for further details

Children Missing Education (CME)

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia recognises that children missing education can be at significant risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or radicalisation. We are committed to taking swift and proportionate action when a child's whereabouts becomes unknown or their attendance raises concern.

Children may be considered at risk of CME if:

- They are absent from school for a prolonged period without explanation
- They fail to return after an approved leave of absence
- They are withdrawn mid-term with no confirmed enrolment at another school
- There is a pattern of irregular attendance and communication from parents is limited or non-existent

The school takes the following actions in relation to CME:

- The Attendance Team and Pastoral Leads closely monitor absence patterns through iSams.
- When a child is absent without authorisation for five or more days, attempts will be made to contact the family and establish a reason.
- If no contact is made, and the child is considered to be at potential risk, the matter is escalated to the DSL and may be referred to the Dubai Child Protection Centre or KHDA as appropriate.

- If a family is relocating, the school will request confirmation of the new school and transfer safeguarding records accordingly.
- For international families, the school encourages early communication of moves to avoid a safeguarding risk due to administrative oversight.

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia follows all relevant KHDA guidance and international best practices in preventing children from falling out of education. Our CME procedures are also consistent with Working Together to Improve School Attendance statutory guidance.

See also: Children Missing Education Policy

Use of Data for Safeguarding

All absences and lateness are logged within our student information system, allowing staff to generate regular reports for the DSL and safeguarding team. These reports help identify any patterns that may indicate a safeguarding concern, such as frequent absences following weekends or holidays, which could be a signal of neglect or other welfare issues.

The DSL reviews attendance records weekly, collaborating with teaching staff to ensure that any potential concerns are swiftly addressed. Where needed, support strategies are developed in partnership with parents to improve attendance.

Collaboration with External Agencies

For persistent attendance issues, the school works closely with external agencies, such as the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) and local child protection services. These partnerships ensure that we address any barriers to regular attendance and provide appropriate interventions to safeguard the child.

Continuity of Education in Extenuating Circumstances

At Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia , we are committed to ensuring the continuity of education for all pupils, including during extenuating circumstances such as extended absences due to health issues or other personal challenges. In line with our safeguarding and attendance principles, we provide access to online learning resources to ensure that children can continue their education remotely when necessary.

Teaching staff will support the delivery of this online work, ensuring it aligns with the curriculum and is accessible to all pupils. Our inclusion team will work closely with families to provide additional support for pupils with specific learning needs, ensuring that no child is left behind during times of disruption. The safeguarding of pupils remains a priority in these situations, and regular contact will be maintained with both students and families to monitor progress and wellbeing.

When necessary, we work collaboratively with the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) and other relevant external agencies to ensure that attendance is maintained and that any barriers to regular attendance are addressed.

Mental Health and Well-Being Monitoring

For students experiencing prolonged absences, we recognize that the disruption can lead to emotional or social regression. To mitigate these risks, we have established the following procedures:

- **Initial Assessment:** As part of the process for students with extended absences, we assess the potential impact on their mental health. This includes:
 1. Identifying any changes in behaviour, mood, or engagement with learning
 2. Regular communication with parents to check on the child's emotional state.
 3. Offering students access to virtual well-being support, including one-on-one check-ins with the pastoral team.
- **Ongoing Monitoring and Support:** During the period of absence, the pastoral team and class teacher will maintain weekly well-being check-ins with the student. These check-ins allow staff to monitor the child's emotional state, discuss any concerns, and offer strategies to support their well-being.

If emotional or social regression is identified, the school will provide additional resources, such as virtual social interaction sessions or access to counselling services through our support network.

- **Reintegration Support:** Upon the child's return to school, a reintegration plan is developed to assess and address any emotional or social challenges they may face. This plan includes:

1. A gradual reintegration into the school environment, with adjustments to help the student feel secure.
2. Regular follow-up meetings with both the student and their parents to discuss progress and ensure they are receiving appropriate emotional and academic support.
3. Collaboration with External Agencies: If necessary, the school will collaborate with external agencies, such as child psychologists or local mental health services, to ensure that any deeper emotional issues are addressed professionally.

By embedding mental health assessments and emotional support into our continuity plans, we ensure that all students are not only academically supported during absences but also cared for emotionally and socially.

This provision underscores our commitment to both the educational and emotional welfare of our students, regardless of the circumstances.

For more information see: Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Student Education and Involvement in Safeguarding

At Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia , we believe that safeguarding is most effective when children are empowered to understand their rights, recognise unsafe situations, and take an active role in keeping themselves and others safe. In line with UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 (Wadeema's Law) and the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), our curriculum and wider school culture are designed to build pupils' knowledge, confidence, and voice around safeguarding themes.

Safeguarding Through the Curriculum

Safeguarding education is embedded across our curriculum in age-appropriate and meaningful ways:

- **Computing Curriculum:** Pupils learn about online safety, respectful digital communication, privacy, and how to report concerns. They are taught to critically evaluate online content and understand the potential risks of inappropriate digital behaviour.
- **Moral, Social and Cultural Studies (MSCS):** This UAE-mandated subject provides a structured platform for exploring topics such as children's rights, empathy, healthy relationships, emotional wellbeing, peer pressure, and safety in the wider community.
- **Whole School Enriching Curriculum:** Through weekly ELLI (Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory) themes, assemblies, *Mindful Mondays*, *Wellbeing Wednesdays*, and enrichment days such as Safer Internet Day and Anti-Bullying Week, children engage with real-life scenarios and explore values such as resilience, kindness, and mutual respect. See also: Whole School Enriching Curriculum
- **Rights Respecting Schools Approach:** Our work is underpinned by the articles of the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**, many of which are mirrored in Wadeema's Law. Children are taught that they have the right to feel safe, be listened to, and be protected from harm — and that these rights come with responsibilities to protect others as well.

Student Voice and Peer Involvement

- **Pupil Voice and Feedback:** Through circle time, class charters, pastoral surveys, and School Council meetings, students regularly contribute to how safeguarding is discussed and delivered across the school.

By embedding safeguarding into both the academic curriculum and the fabric of school life, we ensure that every child at VHPS-COA is not only protected — but also informed, empowered, and confident in their right to be safe.

Internet Filtering and Monitoring

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia is committed to ensuring a safe online environment for all pupils and staff. Our approach to online safety includes both proactive measures and ongoing monitoring to safeguard against harmful or inappropriate content. The school employs a comprehensive internet filtering system to prevent access to such content while using school devices and networks.

Enhanced Keyword Alerts

Our filtering system is configured to flag specific keywords or phrases that may indicate safeguarding concerns, such as references to bullying, radicalization, self-harm, or accessing inappropriate material. These flagged terms generate immediate alerts, which are automatically sent to both the IT department and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for prompt investigation and action.

The system is continuously updated to reflect the latest online threats, ensuring we remain proactive in identifying potential risks to our students' safety.

Monitoring Reports

In addition to real-time alerts, the system generates daily and weekly reports detailing any flagged content. These reports are reviewed by the DSL and IT staff, enabling the school to identify any patterns or trends that may indicate ongoing issues or vulnerabilities among students. This regular review process allows for early intervention and tailored support for individuals who may be at risk.

Parental Controls and Engagement

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia recognises the importance of extending online safety beyond the school environment. To support this, we offer regular workshops

and resources for parents, providing guidance on how to manage their children's internet use at home. These sessions cover the dangers of unsupervised internet access and offer practical advice on setting up parental controls and monitoring.

A detailed guide on internet safety at home is also available to parents, outlining the school's expectations and how we can collaborate to ensure safe online practices are upheld outside school hours.

Regular Staff Training

To ensure staff are fully equipped to handle the evolving nature of online risks, all staff members are required to complete the National Online Safety course **annually**. This course focuses on the latest developments in digital safety, including new online threats and harmful apps, and provides practical strategies for identifying and addressing these risks in a school environment.

Additionally, staff are trained to recognise early signs of online abuse, misuse, or inappropriate behaviour among students, ensuring swift intervention where necessary.

Use of National Guidance and Tools

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025, we regularly review our filtering and monitoring systems using the Department for Education's Plan Technology for Your School self-assessment tool. We also ensure compliance with the DfE's Cyber Security Standards to maintain a robust digital safeguarding infrastructure. Staff are provided with guidance on emerging online risks, including the safe and responsible use of generative AI, supported by the DfE's published advice on this topic.

Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The DSL and IT department work collaboratively to regularly review and enhance the filtering and monitoring systems in place, ensuring they remain aligned with both local and international safeguarding guidelines. This commitment to continuous improvement reflects our ongoing dedication to providing a safe and secure digital environment for all members of our school community.

For more information, see our **Internet Safety Policy**.

Preventing Extremism and Terrorism:

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia is committed to assessing and managing the risk of individuals being drawn into terrorism or supporting extremist ideologies. In accordance with international frameworks such as the UK's Prevent strategy and the UAE's commitment to combating terrorism, we take proactive steps to ensure that all members of our school community are safeguarded against radicalisation.

As part of our safeguarding approach, we regularly assess the risk of pupils, staff, or other individuals being exposed to radicalising influences. This includes monitoring for signs of vulnerability or exposure to extremist ideologies, as well as harmful online content such as misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories that could influence beliefs, wellbeing, or safety. Where concerns arise, we follow established referral pathways, working with local authorities and, where necessary, with national agencies to ensure that individuals at risk receive appropriate support.

Our approach includes providing regular training for staff to identify signs of radicalisation and harmful online narratives, and working in partnership with local authorities and the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) to safeguard our community from these risks.

Prevent Risk Assessment

As part of our commitment to safeguarding, Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia undertakes a Prevent Risk Assessment to identify, assess, and address risks related to radicalisation and extremism. This assessment is reviewed regularly to ensure it reflects current risks and vulnerabilities both within our school and the wider community. The Prevent Risk Assessment enables us to implement appropriate mitigation strategies, ensuring that safeguarding measures are in place to protect pupils and staff. This process includes collaboration with external partners such as local authorities, the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA), and law enforcement agencies to ensure a robust approach to preventing individuals from being drawn into terrorism.

For more information on Prevent Risk Assessments see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-risk-assessment-templates/how-to-complete-a-risk-assessment-to-assess-the-risk-of-people-becoming-terrorists-or-supporting-terrorism>

Transport/Bus Policy

Start of Bus Service

On the child's first scheduled day of using the school bus, they will be transported home after school. From the following day onward, the child will be collected from home in the morning and returned after school each day.

Safety Measures

All buses are equipped with seat belts, and children are instructed to wear them at all times while the vehicle is in motion. For younger children, parents must provide an appropriate car seat, which will remain on the bus for daily use.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency or road traffic incident involving a school bus, the bus nanny will immediately contact the School Manager. If the School Manager is unavailable, the emergency school mobile number, located in the Admin Office, will be contacted. The incident is then reported directly to the Principal, who will take appropriate action.

Bus Schedules and Route Management

The school operates four buses for morning collection and three for afternoon drop-off. Each bus has a dedicated list that includes the route schedule and space for parental signatures. Bus nannies record the exact time of each child's pick-up and drop-off daily. The Facilities Team works closely with the transport provider to periodically review and improve route efficiency. Any adjustments to the schedule are shared with parents in advance, along with a confirmed implementation date.

Daily and Weekly Coordination

Updated bus sign-off lists are prepared weekly by the Facilities Team. These are either distributed via Reception or handed directly to the bus nannies. Any amendments to the list due to changes in transport arrangements are jointly managed by Facilities and Reception. Bus nannies must return their completed and signed sheets to Reception each morning upon arrival, covering the previous afternoon and current morning journey.

Use of Buses for Off-Site Activities

School buses are also used for transporting children to and from off-site activities. Each trip is supervised by a school staff member alongside the assigned bus nanny. Parents must complete and return a *School Transport Permission Letter* for their child to participate. Only those with signed permission will be permitted to travel. Copies of the permission letters are held by the department organising the trip. Transport

Urgent Medical Care and Safeguarding Protocols

When a pupil is in need of urgent medical attention and there is suspicion that abuse may have taken place, the DSL or Principal should take the child to the Accident and Emergency Unit at Rashid Hospital, having first notified the MOI Child Protection Centre.

The DSL should seek advice about what action the MOI Child Protection Centre will take and on informing the parents, remembering that parents should normally be informed that a child requires urgent hospital attention. If the suspected abuse is sexual then the medical examination should be delayed until the MOI Child Protection Centre and/or the police can liaise with the hospital, unless the needs of the child are such that medical attention is the priority. If a decision is made not to inform the parents there must be a responsible adult with the child at all times, whether from the school, MOI Child Protection Centre or police.

When dealing with allegations against staff, directors or volunteers

Reporting concerns about staff or volunteers

- Any safeguarding concerns regarding the conduct of a member of staff or volunteer must be reported directly to the **Principal (DSL)** as soon as possible and within **24 hours**.

Reporting concerns about the Principal (DSL)

- If an allegation or safeguarding concern is made against the **Principal (DSL)**, this must be reported immediately to the **Chair of Governors** as soon as possible and within **24 hours**.
- In such cases, the Principal (DSL) must not be involved in handling the concern.

Mandatory external reporting

- In either case, the **MOI Child Protection Centre must be contacted on 800988**.

Safe Working Practice

All staff and volunteers at Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia are expected to model the highest standards of professional conduct and integrity. By behaving in a respectful, fair, mature, and safe manner, adults protect both their pupils and themselves.

To maintain safe and professional boundaries, all adults must:

- **Work in an open and transparent way**, avoiding actions that could cause a reasonable person to question their intentions or motivation.
- **Dress appropriately** for their role, reflecting professionalism and suitability for the activities being undertaken.
- **Respect personal space** and ensure that any physical contact with pupils is appropriate, non-intrusive, and always in the child's best interests.
- **Understand and not misuse** their position of power or trust over students, including—but not limited to—avoiding:
 - Accepting regular or significant personal gifts from children or their families
 - Giving personal gifts to students outside of agreed school systems (e.g. prize-giving or class rewards)
- **Avoid behaviours or activities outside school** that could compromise their professional role or bring the school into disrepute.
- **Refrain from initiating or engaging in social contact with pupils outside of school**, including through email, messaging platforms, or social media.
- **Ensure classrooms and working spaces remain observable**, e.g. by keeping glass panels on doors uncovered. Visibility is key to maintaining safe and accountable practices.
- **Seek guidance from the Principal** if concerns arise regarding a particular child or class dynamic that may place a staff member in a vulnerable or difficult position.

Use of Photography and Recording Devices

- Staff must ensure that explicit parental consent has been granted before taking or using photographs or video of children. Consent is obtained during the school registration process; however, staff must check that the child is not listed on the school's "Do Not Share on Social Media" register before capturing or publishing any media.
- All photography or videography must serve a clear educational or celebratory purpose and comply with the school's safeguarding and data protection policies.
- The use of **personal camera phones is strongly discouraged**. However, we recognise there may be occasional need to capture special moments (e.g. during events or trips). In such cases, staff must:

- Upload images **promptly and securely** to the school's approved platforms (e.g. Seesaw or Google Drive)
- **Delete all images** from personal devices immediately after transfer
- Never share images of pupils on personal social media or with third parties outside the school community

By adhering to these practices, all adults contribute to a safe, respectful, and professional culture in which students can thrive.

Safeguarding SEND and Children of Determination

There is a wealth of research based evidence to support the view that children with SEND or people of determination are more vulnerable to maltreatment or abuse and neglect. Therefore knowing and understanding the link between disability and child abuse and neglect is an important step towards planning targeted and appropriate prevention intervention strategies. Safeguarding children with disabilities is the same as safeguarding their non-disabled peers however it requires high standards of practice, increased awareness and support for children and their families.

No concern should be overlooked or passed off as a symptom of SEN or disability; including (not an exhaustive list)

- I. Communication;
- II. Toileting *;
- III. Understanding right and wrong;
- IV. Physical Build;
- V. Unusual or over-physical attachments to staff members or peers;

Remember: Children with SEND or Children of Determination may be more isolated from their peers and may find it difficult to express concern.

References to neurodevelopmental conditions, including autism, will use language consistent with the SEND Code of Practice and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025. Terms such as "spectrum" or "disorder" are avoided to promote inclusive and respectful language.

* Refer to Appendix 3 Guidance on toileting needs

After School Activities

All external providers have a duty of care towards students and they are responsible for understanding the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy at VHPS-COA. All providers are

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
required to submit background checks, Good Conduct certificates and to attend a training course on Safeguarding and Child Protection facilitated by VHPS-COA.

Reporting

All providers are required to report any safeguarding concerns immediately to the Head of After School Activities. The Head of After School Activities must escalate all concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) within 24 hours, accompanied by full written documentation. Prompt and accurate reporting is essential to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students.

Child Protection Vetting

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia strongly recognises the need for vigilant awareness of child protection issues. It is important that all staff have appropriate induction and training to fully understand their roles and responsibilities and are confident about carrying them out. Staff, pupils, and parents should feel secure that they can raise any issues or concerns about the safety or welfare of children and know that they will be listened to and taken seriously.

This will be achieved by maintaining an ethos of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and protecting staff. This is supported by having clear child protection policies, appropriate induction and training, briefing and discussion of relevant issues, and relevant learning.

As part of our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia follows a robust safer recruitment process. This includes:

- Conducting online searches on all shortlisted applicants as part of due diligence.
- Checking all required documents and qualifications.
- Verifying teaching status using the GOV.UK teacher record check service (replacing the former Teaching Regulation Agency Employer Access service).
- Carrying out Section 128 checks for school leaders and governors using the updated GOV.UK link.

- Obtaining and verifying police clearance or equivalent from all countries in which the individual has lived or worked.

Refer to Appendix 4 Briefing sheet for Temporary Staff and Volunteers Refer to Appendix 5 Transporting Children for School Activities

For more information see: [Safer Recruitment Policy](#)

Site Safety

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia is committed to maintaining a secure and well-monitored environment that ensures the safety and wellbeing of all pupils and staff. To support this, a **lanyard and visitor identification system** is in place for all adults on site.

- All staff, regular visitors, and contractors must wear the correct **lanyard** at all times. The colour-coded lanyard system (outlined in **Appendix 10**) clearly indicates the level of safeguarding clearance and access granted.
- Visitors who have not undergone full safeguarding checks may instead be issued a **Visitor sticker**. These individuals **must be escorted at all times** by a member of staff with appropriate safeguarding training and site access.
- **Contractors and service providers** working on school premises are required to provide police clearance or equivalent background checks prior to being granted unescorted access.
- All visitors must sign in and out at Reception and comply with the school's safeguarding and conduct expectations.
- Staff must challenge and report any adult not wearing an appropriate lanyard or visitor sticker, or anyone not following site access procedures.

These systems ensure that all adults on campus are easily identifiable and appropriately supervised, reinforcing our commitment to a safe and secure school environment.

Safeguarding Record Transfer

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia is committed to ensuring that safeguarding records are shared appropriately when a child transfers to a new school. Effective record-sharing helps to ensure that any safeguarding concerns continue to be monitored and addressed.

- **Requests from New Schools:** Safeguarding record requests from a child's new school will be handled by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Information will be shared securely and in accordance with data protection and safeguarding best practices.
- **Proactive Information Sharing:** If no safeguarding record request is received from the new school and there are known safeguarding concerns about the child, Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia will take proactive steps to ensure that the new school is informed. This is to safeguard the welfare of the child and ensure continuity of support.
- **Secure Transfer of Information:** All safeguarding records will be transferred securely, separately from the child's academic records, and only to an identified safeguarding lead at the receiving school. Confirmation of receipt will be requested.
- **Retention of Records:** Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia will retain a copy of safeguarding records in line with school policy and statutory guidance before securely archiving them.

By implementing this approach, we ensure that safeguarding concerns remain a priority, even when a child moves to a new educational setting.

Allegations against the Principal/DSL

In circumstances where a safeguarding concern involves the Principal or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), it is essential that the matter is handled with the highest level of integrity, impartiality, and urgency.

Any child, parent, staff member, or concerned individual should report such concerns directly to the **Chairman of the Board of Governors**. The Chairman will ensure that a thorough and impartial investigation is carried out in line with relevant safeguarding protocols.

All allegations will be treated with discretion and care, and every effort will be made to protect the confidentiality and welfare of all parties involved.



**Victory Heights Primary School City
of Arabia**

**Safeguarding and Child
Protection Policy**

Appendices

	29
Appendix 1	32
Identifying Signs of Child Abuse	32
Appendix 2	36
What to do when a child confides in you	36
Appendix 3	38
Guidance on Toileting Needs	38
Appendix 4	39
Briefing Sheet for Temporary Staff and Volunteers	39
Appendix 5	40
Persons involved in Transporting Children for School Activities	40
Appendix 6	41
Victory Heights Reporting Tool - MyConcern	41
Appendix 7	42
MOI Child Protection Centre REFERRAL FORM	42
Appendix 8	45
Child Protection Flow Chart	45
Appendix 9	46
Bullying Flowchart	46
Appendix 10	47
Lanyard Colours	47
Appendix 11	48
Guidelines for Writing a Factual Report on a Safeguarding Issue	48
Purpose	48
Key Principles for Writing Safeguarding Reports	48
Words to Avoid in Safeguarding Reports	48
Example of a Poorly Written Report	49
Rewritten as a Factual Report	49
Checklist Before Submitting the Report	49

Appendix 1

Identifying Signs of Child Abuse

It is always preferable for intervention to take place at the earliest possible stage. All school staff are well placed to observe a child's outward symptoms which may be indicative of child abuse.

It is important to recognise that indicators of abuse may suggest that a child is being abused or is at risk of harm, however indicators alone cannot confirm that a child is being abused. Each child should be seen in the context of their family and wider community and a proper assessment carried out by appropriate persons. It is also important to keep in mind that if you feel unsure or concerned, discuss your concerns. Don't keep it to yourself.

Physical abuse

Most children will collect cuts and bruises as part of the rough-and-tumble of daily life. Injuries should always be assessed holistically taking into account the explanation given. Most accidental bruises are seen over bony parts of the body e.g. elbows, knees, shins and are often on the front of the body. Some children however will have bruising that is more likely inflicted rather than accidental.

Important indicators of physical abuse are bruises or injuries that are either unexplained or

inconsistent with the explanation given, or those that are visible on the "soft" parts of the body, where accidental injuries are unlikely e.g. cheeks, abdomen, back and buttocks. A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern, although this can be more complicated with burns as these are often delayed in presentation due to blistering taking place sometime later.

The physical signs of abuse may include:

- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the bodyMultiple bruises - in clusters, often on the upper arm, outside of the thigh.
- Burns.
- Human bite marks.
- Broken bones.
- Scalds, with upward splash marks.
- Multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge.

Changes in behaviour that can also indicate physical abuse:

- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation.
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts.
- Flinching when approached or touched.
- Reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather.
- Poor attendance - repeated infections etc.
- Withdrawn behaviour.
- Running away from home.

No list of symptoms can be exhaustive. They may give rise to concern but are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, as there are often no outward physical signs. Most harm is a result of low warmth, high criticism homes, not from single incidents. Children who appear to be well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers.

It is sometimes possible to spot emotionally abusive behaviour from parents and carers, by the way that the adults speak to, or behave towards their children. An appropriate challenge or intervention could affect positive change.

Changes in behaviour which can indicate emotional abuse include:

- Neurotic behaviour e.g. continuous hair twisting, rocking.
- Fear of making mistakes.
- Sudden speech disorders.
- Self harm.
- Fear of a parent being approached regarding their behaviour.
- Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress.
- Inability to play.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is often perpetrated by people who are known to and trusted by the child e.g. relatives, family friends, neighbours, babysitters, people working with the child at school, organisers of clubs or activities that the child participates in.

It is important to remember that it is not just adult men who sexually abuse children, there are increasing allegations of sexual abuse of children by women and sexual abuse can also be perpetrated by other children or young people.

Characteristics of child sexual abuse:

- It is often planned and systematic - people do not sexually abuse children by accident, though sexual abuse can be opportunistic.
- Grooming the child - people who abuse children take care to choose a vulnerable child and often spend time making them dependent.
- Grooming the child's environment - abusers try to ensure that potential adult protectors (parents and other carers especially) are not suspicious of their motives.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- Pain or itching in the genital area.
- Bruising or bleeding near the genital area.
- Sexually transmitted disease.
- Vaginal discharge or infection.
- Stomach pains.
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down.
- Pregnancy.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn.
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people.
- Having nightmares.
- Running away from home.
- Sexual knowledge which is way beyond their age or developmental level.
- Sexual drawings or language.
- Bedwetting.
- Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia.
- Self harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts.
- Saying that they have secrets that they cannot tell anyone about.
- Substance or drug abuse.
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money.
- Not allowed to have friends (especially in adolescence).
- Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults.

Neglect

Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise, yet have some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children.

Neglect is often noticed at a stage when it does not pose a risk to the child. Research would

suggest that an appropriate intervention or conversation at this early stage can address the issue and prevent a child continuing to suffer until it reaches a point when they are at risk of harm.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children.
- Constantly dirty or “smelly”.
- Inappropriate clothing for the conditions.

Changes in behaviour which may also indicate neglect may include:

- Complaining of feeling tired all the time.
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments.
- Having few friends.
- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

Bullying

Bullying is not always easy to recognise as it can take a number of forms. Signs that a child may be being bullied can be:

- Returning from school with cuts and bruises.
Torn clothes.
- Asking for stolen possessions to be replaced.
Falling out with previously good friends.
Becoming moody and bad tempered.
- Avoiding leaving their home.
- Aggression with younger siblings.
- Struggling at school unlike before.
- Sleep problems.
- Anxiety.
- Becoming withdrawn and isolated.

Appendix 2

What to do when a child confides in you

- 1. Give the child your full attention.**
Offer a safe, calm space where they feel listened to.
- 2. Show empathy, support, and warmth** — but avoid displaying distress or negative emotion.
Reassure the child with phrases like “*That must have been very hard for you*,” or “*You’ve done the right thing by telling someone*.”
- 3. Listen without asking leading questions.**
Avoid interrogating — allow the child to share at their own pace.
- 4. Clarify only if necessary.**
It may be appropriate to gently check whether the child is describing abuse or neglect, and whether anyone else is aware.
- 5. Check for immediate safety or medical needs.**
If the child is hurt, seek first aid and inform the School Nurse immediately.
- 6. Avoid repeated disclosures.**
Wherever possible, ensure the child only shares their account once. This helps reduce trauma and protects the integrity of any future investigation.
- 7. Make a factual written record** as soon as possible.
Refer to **Appendix 11** for guidance on writing a clear and objective safeguarding report.
- 8. Report the disclosure to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.**
This must happen the same day, and ideally within minutes. Do not delay.
- 9. Take care of yourself.**
Disclosures can be emotionally difficult — seek support from the DSL or a senior leader if needed.

What not to do

- Do not promise complete confidentiality — explain that you may need to pass information to keep them safe.
- Do not question the child in detail or ask leading questions.
- Do not make assumptions, accusations, or speculate.
Do not malign the alleged perpetrator or offer false reassurances.
- Do not delay reporting the concern to the DSL.

Questioning skills

To avoid leading questions when clarifying what a child has said, you should use open questions with a child rather than closed questions.

The following table gives some examples of closed and open questions:

Closed questions	Open questions
------------------	----------------

Do	Tell me
----	---------

Did	Explain to me
-----	---------------

Can	Describe to me
-----	----------------

Avoid using "Why?". This can confuse a child and lead to feelings of guilt.

Initial responses to a child

When a child has made a disclosure it can be a relief for them, however they are likely to feel vulnerable and confused. Here are some helpful suggestions:

Do say:

"Thank you for telling me."

"I am sorry it has happened to you."

"I am going to help you, and you are going to tell me what to do." "It should not have happened."

"You are not to blame."

Do not say:

"It will be alright soon."

"I promise everything will be ok." "It is their fault."

Appendix 3

Guidance on Toileting Needs

The majority of children are appropriately toilet trained and able to manage their own needs competently before they start school. Special protection should be provided for children who have a physical, sensory or intellectual impairment, or medical condition that has an adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities. Anyone with a diagnosis that affects aspects of their personal development must not be discriminated against. It is also unacceptable to refuse admission to children who are delayed in achieving continence.

Each child and situation is unique. The following guidance may be helpful to support pupils and agree on a plan which will work towards maximum independence and support for the child in the school setting.

- Gather as much information as possible from the parents/carers and child. How have they tried to introduce toilet training at home? What happens at home? Has the child any regular routines or patterns which could inform the routine set up by the school? Have the parents/carers noticed any particular difficulties or phobias which the school should be aware of? Can the parents /carers suggest a strategy for dealing with the problem?
- An appropriate toileting programme will need to be discussed and agreed so that the child, parents/carers and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- Clothes should be easy for a child to pull up and down.
- Parents should be requested to provide the school with appropriate changes of pants/trousers etc. in case of an accident.

See also: Intimate Care Policy

Appendix 4

Briefing Sheet for Temporary Staff and Volunteers

Information for staff on short term contracts in Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia .

While working in Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia , you have a duty of care towards pupils. This means that at all times you should act in a way that is consistent with their safety and welfare.

A supervised volunteer who regularly teaches or looks after children must ensure they also are accompanied by another employee, while the Principal will make a reasonable decision about which checks should be undertaken on temporary staff and volunteers.

If at any time you have a concern about a child, particularly if you suspect or think they may be at risk of abuse or neglect, it is your responsibility to share that concern with the school DSL, who is Ben Rothwell, or any member of the Safeguarding Team.

This is not an exhaustive list but you may become concerned as a result of:

- Observing a physical injury, which you think may have been non-accidental.
- Observing something in the appearance of a child which suggests they are not being sufficiently well cared for.
- Observing behaviour that leads you to be concerned about a child.
- A child telling you that they may have been subjected to some form of abuse.

In any of the circumstances listed, you must write down what you saw or heard, date and sign your account, and give it to the DSL. This may be the beginning of a legal process - it is important to understand that legal action against a perpetrator can be seriously damaged by any suggestion that the child has been led in any way.

If a child talks to you about abuse, you should follow these guidelines:

- Rather than directly questioning the child, just listen and be supportive.
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events, but don't push the child to tell you more than they wish.
- Make it clear that you may need to pass on information to staff in other agencies who may be able to help - do not promise confidentiality. You are obliged to share any information relating to abuse or neglect.
- Write an account of the conversation immediately, as close to verbatim as possible. Put the date and timings on it, and mention anyone else who was present. Then sign it and give your record to the designated DSL, Ben Rothwell.

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia has a policy on safeguarding children which you can find, together with local procedures, in the school clinic.

If you have a concern, discuss it with the DSL, Ben Rothwell in the first instance. If she is unavailable please see the Deputy DSLs - Rob McCall or Natalie Doidge.

Appendix 5

Transporting Children for School Activities

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children during transport to and from school activities, including field trips. All transport arrangements must minimise risk and adhere to safeguarding and health and safety standards.

HR Responsibility

The HR Department is responsible for ensuring that all bus drivers meet the statutory requirements for working with children. This includes:

- Verification of a valid UAE driving licence for the appropriate class of vehicle
- Medical fitness to drive
- Background checks, including a recent Good Conduct Certificate and any other police clearance as required under UAE law
- Completion of Safeguarding and Child Protection training provided by the school

Driver Requirements

All drivers must:

- Hold a valid and appropriate UAE driving licence
- Be medically fit to drive and free from any condition that may impair driving ability
- Never drive under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or medication that impairs judgement or reaction time
- Avoid using mobile phones or other distractions while driving
- Adhere strictly to road safety laws, including speed limits and traffic signals
- Ensure the vehicle is roadworthy (brakes, tyres, lights, wipers, mirrors, etc.) and clean
- Ensure that all seat belts are functioning and worn by all passengers at all times
- Use booster seats where applicable and childproof locks as required

Bus Escorts

Every school bus will be accompanied by a designated bus nanny. Their responsibilities include:

- Checking children on and off the bus safely using the official register

- Ensuring each child is seated properly and wearing a seatbelt
- Supporting children during transit and maintaining order

Appendix 6

Victory Heights Reporting Tool - MyConcern

Please use MyConcern to detail any cause for concern you may have with regards to the well-being of a child in Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia , which is in line with the Child Protection Policy.

MyConcern can be accessed at

<https://login.thesafeguardingcompany.com/Identity/Account/Login?ReturnUrl=%2F>

Appendix 7

MOI Child Protection Centre REFERRAL FORM

PUPIL DETAILS

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Address:

Parent/Carer name:

Contact Details:

Telephone No:

Home:

Mobile:

Work:

Child's 1st Language:

Nationality:

Does the child have a disability

If yes, please describe:

- Yes
- No

SCHOOL DETAILS

Current School:

Year Group

Last School attended:

REASON FOR REFERRAL (please circle)

Suspected / Disclosed physical abuse

Suspected / Disclosed sexual abuse

Suspected / Disclosed emotional abuse

Suspected / Disclosed neglect

Description/Additional Information

Please give the name of the member of staff responsible for liaison with MOI Child Protection Centre.

Name (please print):

Position

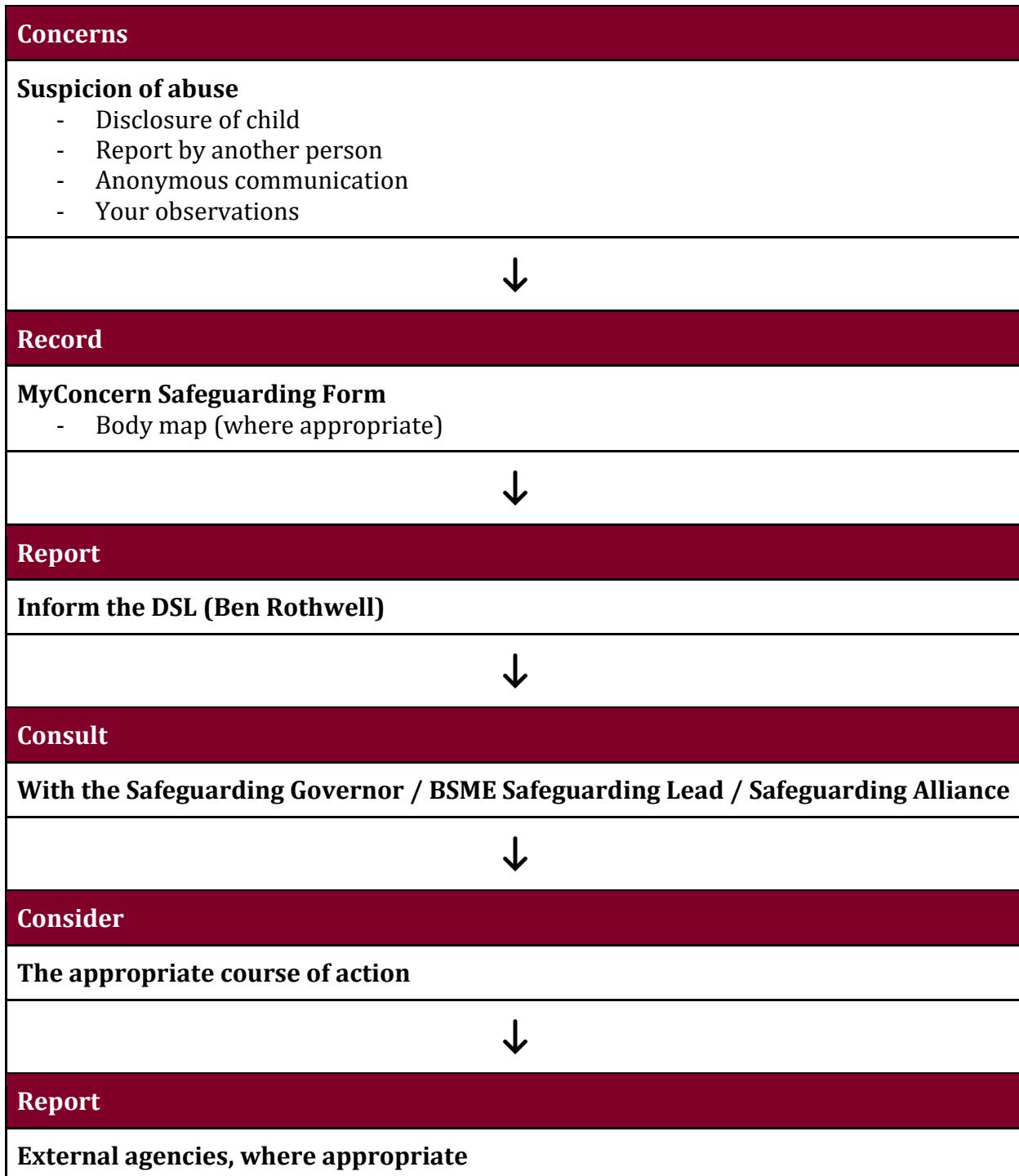
Telephone No:

Principal's Signature:

Date: _____

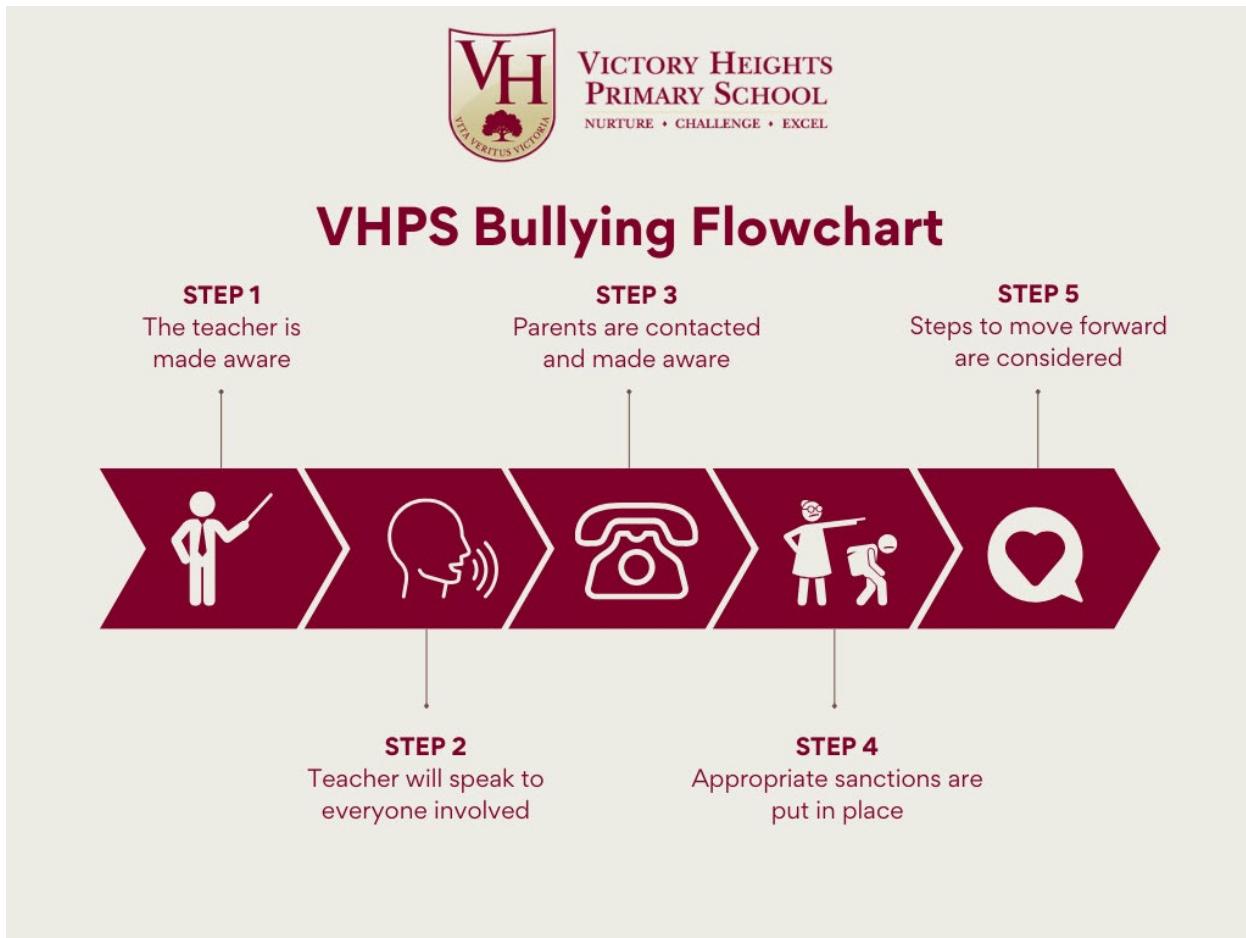
Appendix 8

Child Protection Flow Chart



Appendix 9

Bullying Flowchart



See also: [Anti-bullying \(including cyber-bullying\) Policy](#)

Appendix 10

Lanyard Colours



Appendix 11

Guidelines for Writing a Factual Report on a Safeguarding Issue

Purpose

To ensure that safeguarding issues are reported factually, clearly, and concisely on the school's electronic platform, minimizing opinions and extraneous details while focusing on evidence-based observations.

Key Principles for Writing Safeguarding Reports

1. Be Factual

- Record only what you have **seen, heard, or been informed of without inserting personal opinions.**
- Use **direct quotes when applicable**, especially when reporting something a child, parent, or colleague said.

2. Be Clear and Concise

- Use **simple, straightforward language.**
- Avoid **unnecessary details** or speculation.

3. Provide Chronological Detail

- Present events in the **order they occurred.**
- Include **dates, times, locations, and names** of involved individuals.

4. Be Accurate

- **Double-check for factual accuracy** before submitting.
- Ensure names, dates, and times are correct.

5. Maintain Confidentiality

- Avoid sharing unnecessary names unless directly involved.
- Ensure the report is submitted only on the school's secure electronic platform.

6. Be Professional

- Avoid **emotional or loaded language.**
- Stick to reporting **observable behaviors and specific actions.**

Words to Avoid in Safeguarding Reports

- **Emotional language:** Avoid words like "angry," "frustrated," "upset," unless directly quoted.
- **Speculation or Assumptions:** Avoid phrases like "I think," "it seems," "probably."
- **Judgmental words:** Avoid words like "naughty," "good," "bad," "lazy," or "attention-seeking."

- **Minimizing language:** Avoid phrases like "it wasn't that bad," "only," "just."
- **Exaggeration or vague terms:** Avoid words like "always," "never," "a lot," or "constantly."

Example of a Poorly Written Report

Date: 5th February 2025

Time: 11:30 AM

"During break time, Sam was being his usual difficult self and pushed another student, Jake, near the playground. Sam's been acting this way for a while, and honestly, I think he's just doing it for attention. Jake cried, but it wasn't that bad—he cries all the time anyway. I spoke to Sam about his behavior, and he had nothing useful to say. Sam's parents really need to step in at this point."

Rewritten as a Factual Report

Date: 5th February 2025

Time: 11:30 AM

Location: School playground

At 11:30 AM during morning break, I observed Sam (Year 3) push Jake (Year 3) near the swing area of the playground. I was approximately 10 meters away and witnessed the incident directly. Jake fell to the ground and began crying. When I approached Jake, he said, "Sam pushed me really hard." I checked for any visible injuries and found none. Jake continued to cry for about 2 minutes before calming down.

I spoke to Sam immediately after the incident. Sam stated, "I didn't mean to push him that hard." I informed him that pushing is not acceptable and that the incident would be reported. Jake was escorted to the school nurse as a precaution. The incident was reported to the class teacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at 11:45 AM.

Checklist Before Submitting the Report

By following these guidelines, reports will be professional, factual, and effective in supporting safeguarding protocols.

Additional Safeguarding Resources

In addition to the resources already listed in this policy, the following have been added in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE) 2025:

- Lucy Faithfull Foundation – Shore Space: An anonymous and confidential online support service for young people who are worried about sexual thoughts, feelings, or behaviours, providing advice and resources to help prevent harm.
Website: <https://www.shore.space>
- Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse (CSA Centre): Provides evidence-based resources, training, and guidance to support professionals in identifying and responding to child sexual abuse.
Website: <https://www.csacentre.org.uk>
- The Children's Society – Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation: Practical resources and guidance for recognising, preventing, and responding to child sexual exploitation.
Website: <https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk>

Monitoring and Compliance

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy will be monitored regularly in line with the Policy Review Policy. Updates and changes will be documented in the Version Control Table to ensure transparency and continuous improvement.

Policy Development and Review Approach

This policy is developed in alignment with current safeguarding best practice and statutory guidance, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE), Working Together to Safeguard Children, and relevant KHDA and BSO frameworks. It reflects local and international safeguarding expectations and is reviewed regularly to incorporate updates to legislation, inspection feedback, and internal evaluations. Contributions from safeguarding leads, the inclusion team, and other key stakeholders ensure the policy remains practical, robust, and fit for purpose within our school context.

Version Control Table

Policy Title:	Safeguarding and Owner:	Child Protection	Policy Principal
Last Approved By: Primary Leadership Team			

Version Number	Date Approved	Approved By	Changes Made	Next Review Date
1.0	tbc	Governors	Initial policy release	August 2026