



Marches Academy Trust

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# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures

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# 1. Introduction

Marches Academy Trust's Trustees, Governors and staff fully recognise the contribution the Trust makes to safeguarding children. We recognise that the safety and protection of all children is of paramount importance, and that all staff and volunteers have a full and active part to play in keeping them safe from harm.

We believe that Marches Academy Trust (the Trust) should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment, which promotes all children's social, physical, emotional and moral development.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of
- safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

Ultimately, effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by putting children at the centre of the system, and by every individual and agency playing their full part, working together to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children in line with, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018', and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)', 2020 (as amended, January 2021) <sup>1</sup>. All references to KCSIE 2020 throughout this policy will be in reference to the amended version, January 2021.

The aim of this policy is to:

- ensure that the child's development is supported in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence;
- ensure that teachers, associate staff and volunteers are aware of the need to safeguard children, and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse;
- confirm the structured procedures to be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected harm or abuse;
- emphasise the need for effective, appropriate and timely communication between all members of staff, and those with designated responsibility for child protection, health and safety, and other safeguarding responsibilities;
- emphasise the appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies, procedures and arrangements of those service providers who use the school's premises to provide any other before and after school activities.

This policy will have consideration for, and be in compliance with, the following legislation, statutory guidance and key information:

- Statutory guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children>;

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<sup>1</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/954314/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_2020\\_-\\_Update\\_-\\_January\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/954314/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2020_-_Update_-_January_2021.pdf)

- Departmental advice <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused>; and
- Departmental advice COVID-19: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>

## 2. Roles & Responsibilities

The Trust's Board of Trustees and Local Governing Bodies will ensure that:

- trained Link Governors are appointed for safeguarding and child protection, and Children in Care (CIC); these Governors will attend training/updates every three years;
- it is the role of the Governor with responsibility for safeguarding, in each of the Local Governing Bodies, to take an interest in this area and keep the Local Governing Body up to date with changes or issues that might arise, supported by the Headteacher;
- a member of the Trust's Board of Trustees will have a responsibility for ensuring Safeguarding arrangements are compliant and effective;
- each Local Governing Body will ensure that a senior member of each school's Leadership Team is designated to take the lead responsibility for Safeguarding. This will include providing advice and guidance to staff, liaising with relevant Local Authority teams, and fully engaging with multi-agency teams;
- the Chair of Governors for each Local Governing Body will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer, in the event of allegations of abuse made against the Headteacher. In the case of allegations of abuse made against the Chief Executive Officer of the Marches Academy Trust, it will be the responsibility of the Chair of Trustees to liaise with Local Authority Designated Officer.

The Trust creates a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, adopts recruitment procedures that help deter, reject, or identify people who may pose a risk to children (Part Three: Safer Recruitment: Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2020).

At least one member of an appointed interview panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

A member of staff of the school's leadership team in each school in the Trust is appointed to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead, alongside deputies, will have a safeguarding overview. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads for each school are listed at Appendix A.

Schools within the Trust keep a single central record that, as a minimum, evidences the following:

- All staff have been employed in compliance with safer recruitment requirements (Part Three: Safer Recruitment: KCSIE, 2020).
- Date of employment.
- Identity and address confirmed, with date.
- Qualifications checked, with date.
- References checked, with date.
- Prohibition from teaching check, with date (for teaching staff).
- Section 128 prohibition check, with date.
- Barred list check, with date.
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, with date.
- Right to work in the UK, with date.
- Checks confirmed by, and date.

Schools within the Trust will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE, 2020.

The adequacy of resources committed to child protection, and the staff and governor training profile is regularly monitored. All staff will be made aware of school systems within each setting to support safeguarding; this will include awareness of the Behaviour for Learning Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, children missing education responses, alongside awareness of the role, and identification, of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

All staff, Governors and volunteers will be provided with copies of Part One of the Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2020, document. Also, to ensure that procedures for dealing with allegations against staff, supply staff and volunteers in accordance Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership guidance are followed.

The Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partners are Shropshire Council, Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group and West Mercia Police. The Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership gives strategic direction to, oversees and drives forwards the business of both adult and children safeguarding activity.

The policy is available to parents/carers on request, and this policy and practice complements other policies concerned with childrens' wellbeing in the Trust.

The Trust fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children. Our policy applies to all staff, Trustees, Governors and volunteers working in the school. There are five main elements to our policy:

1. Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
2. Raising awareness of child protection issues, and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
3. Implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse.
4. Supporting children who have been abused in accordance with their agreed Child Protection Plan.
5. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

The staff member in the role of Headteacher will ensure that:

- the policies and procedures adopted by the Trustees are followed by all staff;
- the policy is updated annually, and is available publicly via school websites, or by other means;
- the Designated Safeguarding Leads review the six-monthly updates of the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership procedures;
- sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Designated Safeguarding Leads, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads and other staff, to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and other multi-agency meetings, to contribute to the assessment and support of children and young people, and be appropriately trained;
- a list of all staff and volunteers, and their safeguarding training dates, is maintained;
- all staff and volunteers feel able to raise their concerns about poor and unsafe practice with regard to children, and that such concerns are addressed in a timely manner, in accordance with agreed policies.

Headteachers across the Trust will access child protection training, which is updated regularly, in line with advice from Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership.

New safeguarding partners and child death review partner arrangements are now in place within Shropshire, which consist of the three safeguarding partners (Shropshire Council, Clinical Commissioning group for Shropshire and Chief Officer of West Mercia Police) will make arrangements to work together with appropriate relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs.

### **The role of the Link Governors, for safeguarding child protection, shall include:**

Monitoring of procedures relating to liaison with the Local Authority Designated Officer, Children's Social Care and the Police, in relation to any allegations of child abuse made against the Headteacher, including attendance at relevant meetings.

### **Allegations against the Headteacher/Chief Executive Officer of The Trust**

Where an allegation is made against the Headteacher this should be referred to the Chair of the Local Governing Body, as well as the Local Authority Designated Officer.

Where an allegation is made against the Chief Executive Officer of the Marches Academy Trust, this should be referred to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, who will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer.

### **The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead**

All Designated Safeguarding Leads across the Trust will:

- be a senior member of staff from the leadership team;
- have their roles explicitly defined in their job descriptions;
- be given sufficient time, funding, supervision, and support, to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively;
- ensure that all staff recognise their roles in sharing of information;
- ensure Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies undergo updated child protection training every two years;
- liaise, in accordance with the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership procedures, when referring a child where there are concerns about possible abuse or harm;
- liaise with the three safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children. NPCC: When to Call the Police, should help designated safeguarding leads understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do;
- be able to access the contents of the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership procedures and Personnel procedures (on Shropshire Learning Gateway) and make these accessible to all staff;
- ensure all staff, including supply teachers, visiting professionals working with children in each school, and volunteers, are informed of the names and contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies, and the school's procedures for safeguarding children;
- support staff who attend strategy meetings and/or case conferences;
- support staff and volunteers who may find safeguarding issues upsetting or stressful by enabling them to talk through their anxieties, and to seek further support from the school leadership group, or others as appropriate;
- ensure involvement of other lead professionals e.g. where there are concerns about any child including those who are Children in Care (CIC);
- ensure all staff attend safeguarding and child protection training, and receive updates via email or staff meetings, to keep their skills and knowledge up to date.

### **The Designated Safeguarding Lead will also ensure that:**

- written records of concerns are kept, even if there is no immediate need for referral, and monitored using the Multi-Agency Referral Form and the Family Webstar, where appropriate;
- all Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead staff understand, and are able to follow, the options for referrals which include: internal support, Early Help, and statutory referral processes. This will also require follow up action with relevant agencies;
- all child protection records are marked as such, and kept securely locked, and separate from other files;
- children's records are kept separately, and marked as appropriate to indicate other confidential records are being held elsewhere;
- if there are concerns about attendance, and a child's wellbeing and safety, the Education Welfare Officer is contacted;
- if a child has a Child Protection Plan, and is absent without explanation for two days, their key worker in Safeguarding is contacted;
- phone calls in relation to absences are similarly logged;
- records are monitored for patterns of absence, and appropriate action is taken;
- where there are existing concerns about a child, and they transfer to another school in this authority, the information held e.g. Family Webstar Assessment and Whole Family Action Plan, is forwarded under confidential cover, and separate from the child's main file, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for child protection in the receiving school;
- where a child has a child protection file and transfers to another school or college, or to the Social/Children's Services within a new authority, or if the child is transferring to a school in another authority which has not yet been identified, the Designated Safeguarding Lead of the new school/college is informed immediately. If there is no school placement identified, the file will remain with the school until a new school has been identified and contact is made with the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- their child protection file is transferred as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main child file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. This file must be sent separately to the child's main file;
- for all children that have a child protection chronology file and are leaving school either at the end of the academic year or through a mid-term transfer, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should consider making contact with the child's new school in advance of the child starting.

### **3. Procedures**

We will follow the procedures set out by the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education.

The Trust will:

- ensure it has a Designated Safeguarding Lead at each school, who will undertake regular, appropriate training for this role. Each school's Designated Safeguarding Lead will be a member of the Leadership Team;
- ensure it has a member of staff who will act in the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead;

- ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and the Board of Trustees, and Governors of the Local Governing Bodies, know the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their role;
- ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse, and responsibility for referring any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- ensure that all staff are aware of the early help process, and understand their responsibility to take timely action to help a child if they have a safeguarding concern;
- ensure that all staff are aware of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage and recognise their legal duty in reporting FGM to the Police with the support of the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- ensure that all staff will have undertaken the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership Raising Awareness Training;
- ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection;
- develop effective links with relevant agencies, and co-operate as required, with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters, including attendance at strategy meetings, initial case conferences, review conferences, core group, child in need review meetings, and allowing access from host local authorities, where appropriate, to support the completion of Section 17 or 47 assessments;
- ensure that all staff are aware of the signs of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), as well as other forms of abuse, and recognise their responsibilities in reporting any concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- ensure that the duty of care towards its children and staff is promoted by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe, and unwise behaviour and assist staff to monitor their own standards and practice;
- be aware of, and follow, procedures set out by Children's Services and the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer;
- ensure that schools across the Trust undertake regular audits of child protection procedures;
- ensure safer recruitment practices are always followed;
- ensure that all Governors across the Trust have an enhanced DBS Check.

Our procedures will be reviewed annually, and updated in accordance with current legislation.

#### **4. Trust staff, supply staff, volunteers and visitors**

When staff join the Trust, they will be informed of the safeguarding children arrangements in place and the information and photographs of the Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputies.

The induction programme will include basic safeguarding information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, and how to record a concern about the welfare of a child. All staff will be required to complete mandatory Child Protection training regularly, in line with Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership advice, currently every three years. This Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership training will provide information regarding Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership Early Help processes, referral processes and actions possible following a referral. This will include S17 and S47 detail.



All volunteers and regular visitors to the Trust will be told where our policy is kept and given the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies, and the summary booklet. A copy of this policy will be available at the main school reception at each site. All staff will wear appropriate name badges within school and all visitors will sign into school for each visit. Staff with completed DBS checks will wear grey lanyards, staff without a completed DBS check will wear red lanyards and will be accompanied onsite at all times.

All volunteers will be required to undertake Level 1 Raising Awareness in Child Protection training.

## **5. Procedures for off-site learning and work-based learning**

Our 'Employers Guide to Work Experience' booklet outlines in full the protocols for safeguarding children on work-based learning placements.

The Education Business Partnership (EBP) ensures that all placements for our children are appropriate in terms of health and safety, and types of business and insurance.

DBS checks are requested by the Education Business Partnership if a placement is extended (more than 15 days) or if the employer is going to be in a 'one to one' situation with a child.

The EBP provides the workplace with guidance regarding health and safety and child protection protocols.

Similar checks are in place for Young Apprenticeships and all pre-16 Provision.

## **6. Managing a disclosure**

Teachers and other staff in schools are in a unique position to observe children's behaviour over time, and often develop close and trusting relationships with them. If a child discloses directly to a member of staff, they must act immediately and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy; the following procedures will be followed. There are keywords that, when used, should be triggers for action, regardless of intent. In the case of violent, sexual, racist or prejudiced language, the least that should happen is a record of the incident, a discussion with the child, and parents/carers informed, ie rape, rapist, sexual assault or forced sexual activity.

### **Listen carefully to what is said**

Ask no leading questions (i.e. questions which may be considered to suggest what might have happened, or who has perpetrated the abuse, e.g. "Did your Dad hit you?"). The questions will relate to clarification of what has been expressed by the child.

### **Do not force the child to repeat what he/she said in front of another person**

Following a disclosure, the member of staff should talk immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and complete a written record, and parents/carers of both parties informed, unless it will place a child at further risk of significant harm.

### **Recording**

Ensure that the disclosure is recorded using the words said by the person making the disclosure.

## 7. Information sharing and confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to Child Protection are confidential. The Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose any information about a child to other members of staff, on a need to know basis only.

- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets, or promise confidentiality, and must always act in the interests of the child.
- School will work in close contact with the police and First Point of Contact (FPOC), and follow advice and guidance with all referrals made.
- Where the judgement is made that neither the alleged victim or the alleged perpetrator are put at further risk by engaging with the parents/carers, they will be called and involved in the referral process and future decision making. In the case where a decision is made not to engage with the parents/carers of the alleged victim or alleged perpetrator due to the child being of ability to make informed decisions, or the contact would place the child at risk of significant harm, a note explaining why that decision was made will be placed on the child's safeguarding file.
- Information relating to any safeguarding situation should be treated as evidence and should only be passed on in a secure environment or through secure systems. To prevent harmful gossip, and to protect all parties, no further conversations should be held by staff, unless directly involved in the case. Any breach will be dealt with appropriately by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Senior Leadership Team.
- Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure relevant staff have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share (and withhold) personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR. This includes:
  - being confident of the processing conditions which allow them to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal, and should be treated as 'special category personal data';
  - understanding that 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent where there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner, but it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.
- Where children leave the school or college, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. For schools, this should be transferred separately from the main pupil file. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as Designated Safeguarding Leads and SENDCOs, or the named person with oversight for SEND in a college, are aware as required. In addition to the child protection file, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would

allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

- The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. Further details on information sharing can be found in Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children, which includes a myth-busting guide to information sharing:
  - Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers. The seven golden rules for sharing information will be especially useful.
  - The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), which includes ICO GDPR FAQs and guidance from the department.
  - Data protection: toolkit for schools - Guidance to support schools with data protection activity, including compliance with the GDPR.
  - KCSIE, 2020.

## **8. Record keeping**

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse from a child, or noticing signs or symptoms of possible abuse, will make notes as soon as possible (within the hour, if possible) writing down exactly what was said, using the child's own words as far as possible. All notes should be timed, dated and signed, with the name printed alongside the signature.

The notes then need to be passed immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will place them into an allocated child file stored within the locked safeguarding cabinet or through the use of CPOMS Trust schools will use allocated yellow plastic files to indicate Child Protection files that are written. A chronology of safeguarding events and referrals will also be logged. All schools in the Trust are now using CPOMS to record all child protection electronically. This is a safe and secure system.

For non-safeguarding matters, notes may be recorded on Arbor or CPOMS, dependent upon each local setting and, if further evidence such as statements are taken, they should be placed on the child's main file.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed of all safeguarding concerns, no matter how small, even if no further action is to be taken.

## **9. Supporting children**

We recognise that children who are abused, or witness abuse, may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant, or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the child through the content of the curriculum, alongside the following:

- The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment, and gives children a sense of being valued.
- The school will ensure that the child knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued, and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.

- Liaison with other agencies that support the child such as the 0-25 Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service (formerly CAMHS), Education Welfare Service and Educational Psychology Service, and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- Contacting First Point of Contact (FPOC) immediately there is a significant concern.
- Providing a range of support structures within the school, such as the buddying and mentoring programmes, and referrals to mentors.
- Providing continuing support to a child about whom there have been concerns, who leaves the school, by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded, under confidential cover to the child's new school.
- Provide opportunity for the child's wishes or feelings to be taken into account when determining the action taken, though always acting in the best interests of the child. Systems are in place to allow for this through discussion with the child.
- Offer opportunities for all children to access a curriculum that includes safeguarding, including online safety awareness.

### **Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)**

- Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health. Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This should be considered as a matter of routine. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both local authorities and schools and colleges, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).
- Findings from the Children in Need Review, 'Improving the educational outcomes of Children in Need of help and protection' contains further information; the conclusion of the review, 'Help, protection, education' sets out action Government is taking to support.

## **10. Working with parents/carers**

- Parents and carers play an important role in protecting their children from harm.
- In most cases, the school will discuss concerns about a child with the family and, where appropriate, seek their agreement to making referrals to FPOC.
- The use of an external agent must be engaged when any safeguarding concern relates to a staff member or family member.
- Where there are any doubts, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should clarify with the Initial Contact Team, whether, and if so when and by whom, the parents should be told about the referral.
- The child's views will be considered in deciding whether to inform the family, particularly where the child is sufficiently mature to make informed judgements about the issues, and about consenting to that.
- The use of Compass – Early Help Line may also be used for advice and guidance in child protection matters.

- The school aims to help parents understand that the school, like all others, has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. The school may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies, when there are concerns about a child's welfare.
- If there is a situation involving a member of staff or family member of a member of staff, to ensure that the person investigating, or taking charge of the enquiry, has sufficient authority to enable them to carry out their duties without fear of consequence. In these cases, a senior or external neutral agent might need to be engaged to ensure procedure is not impacted on, in a way that might prejudice procedure. Where the person is a Headteacher, or a person holding a higher position in the Trust, it would be advisable to engage the support of a senior safeguarding lead, Chair of Governors, or Chair of Trustees.

## **11. Children in care/previously in care**

All schools within the Trust will have a designated teacher for children in care. Under this role, for each child they:

- know the child's looked after legal status (looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or an interim, or full care order);
- hold contact arrangements for birth parents, or those with parental responsibility;
- hold information about the child's care arrangements, and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after them;
- hold details of the child's social worker, and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child;
- know that a previously looked after child may remain vulnerable, and may require ongoing additional support. All staff will monitor these children carefully and refer to the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children.

## **12. Children missing education**

The Trust has in place appropriate safeguarding responses, to ensure effective recording of children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or Child Exploitation, Criminal Exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future. Detailed risk assessments are to be completed as appropriate, i.e. Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership Child Exploitation Guidance for Practitioners. Each individual setting will, where possible, ensure that two emergency contact numbers are available for all children.

## **13. Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

All staff across the Trust will be aware that this group of children may face additional safeguarding challenges.

Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputies will take into consideration the additional needs of the child when acting on a safeguarding concern. These include:

- being prone to peer group isolation;
- potential for negative behaviours of others to impact on the child but no signs being demonstrated;
- inability to communicate concerns, therefore other methods must be investigated.

Schools across the Trust will ensure that additional pastoral/SEND support is available when needed.

## **14. Supporting staff**

We recognise that staff working in the school, who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and to seek further support as appropriate.

## **15. Safer recruitment and selection of staff**

With regard to the recruitment of staff, the Trust follows the relevant policies and procedures in this policy and those in DfE guidance.

*This Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be subject to an enhanced disclosure from the DBS.*

The recruitment process is robust in seeking to establish the commitment of candidates to support the Trust measures to safeguard children and to deter, reject or identify people who might pose a risk to children or are otherwise unsuited to work with them. Schools within the Trust will access the new Teacher Services system as part of safer recruitment. This is a database that can be used prior to appointing a teacher to check for prohibitions, sanctions and restrictions that might prevent the individual from taking part in certain activities, or working in specific positions.

## **16. Allegations against staff**

There are clear policies in line with those from the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership for dealing with allegations against people who work with children including supply staff and volunteers. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:

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

In addition, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is to be involved in the management and oversight of individual cases. The LADO should provide advice and guidance to schools, liaising with the police and other agencies, and monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process.

Any allegation should be reported immediately to the Headteacher within the school. The LADO should also be informed, within one working day, of all allegations that come to an employer's attention or that are made directly to the police. Also, if the Trust removes an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) from work such as looking after children (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children, the organisation must make a referral to the DBS.

We understand that a child may make an allegation against a member of staff.

If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will inform the Headteacher.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer. If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, a designated teacher will immediately inform the Chair of Governors, who will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer.

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Chief Executive Officer of the Trust, a designated teacher will immediately inform the Chair of the Trustees, who will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer.

If an allegation concerns staff working for Shared Services within the Trust, the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the school attended by the child making the allegation must be informed immediately, or the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Trust.

The school will follow the Trust's procedure for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which will be readily available in each school.

Where a member of staff or volunteer is involved in an incident outside of school/college which did not involve children but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children. For example, a member of staff is involved in domestic violence at home. No children were involved, but schools/colleges need to consider what triggered these actions and could a child in the school trigger the same reaction, therefore being put at risk. Any concerns of this nature will be managed by the Headteacher alongside Trust CEO staff.

### **Supply staff**

In some circumstances schools will have to consider an allegation against an individual not directly employed by them, where its disciplinary procedures do not fully apply, for example, supply teachers provided by an employment agency or business. Whilst schools and colleges are not the employer of supply teachers, they should ensure allegations are dealt with properly.

In no circumstances will any of the Trust schools decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the local authority designated officer (LADO) to determine a suitable outcome.

Local Governing Bodies or Headteachers of the relevant schools should discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out their investigation.

Agencies should be fully involved and cooperate in any enquiries from the LADO, police and/or children's services. The school will usually take the lead because agencies do not have direct access to children or other school staff, so they will not be able to collect the facts when an allegation is made, nor do they have all the relevant information required by the LADO as part of the referral process.

Supply teachers, whilst not employed by the school or college, are under the supervision, direction and control of the Local Governing Body when working in the school or college. They should be advised to contact their trade union representative if they have one, or a colleague for support.

The allegations management meeting which is often arranged by the LADO should address issues such as information sharing, to ensure that any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account by the school during the investigation.

When using an agency, schools within Trust will, where relevant, inform the agency of its process for managing allegations.

## **17. Prevention**

We recognise that our schools play a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing them with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

The school will therefore:

- establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are always listened to;
- ensure children know that there are adults in each school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty, such as the form tutor, child support teams within the Key Stage areas, buddying and mentoring systems;
- include in the curriculum, opportunities that equip children with the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from harm and/or from abuse.

## **18. Abuse of trust**

We recognise that as adults working in the schools, we are in a relationship of trust with the children in our care, and acknowledge that it is a criminal offence to abuse that trust.

We acknowledge that the principle of equality embedded in the legislation of the Sexual Offenders Act 2003 applies, irrespective of sexual orientation: neither homosexual nor heterosexual relationships are acceptable within a position of trust.

We recognise that the legislation is intended to protect young people in education who are under 18 years of age.

## **19. Equality**

Our Equality Policy ensures the equality of education and opportunity for all children, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background, or other protected characteristic. Repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under safeguarding children procedures. A separate log of these incidents will be kept and shared on a regular basis with Governors and Local Authority.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities: staff will be aware that children with disabilities will be vulnerable to forms of abuse including online abuse. Staff will respond appropriately to any concerns, and alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead.



## 20. Online safety including digital technology use

The use of mobile phones and other electronic devices, such as computers, tablets, and game devices is commonplace. However, as a society, we are beginning to recognise that although these devices have brought great benefit, we also need to ensure that we help children to understand there are dangers, and how to keep themselves safe. This includes:

- keeping personal details secure;
- understanding that not all content is appropriate, truthful or legal;
- what to do if they do accidentally access inappropriate or illegal content;
- what to do if they are upset by something they receive;
- what to do if they are going to physically meet someone they have met online.

Children's mobile phones will be expected to be turned off and placed into the bottom of their bag. If seen or used, the phone will be confiscated, and the Behaviour for Learning Policy will be applied. Other approved digital devices may be accessed under the control and instruction of a class teacher, with the permission of the school, these include, but are not limited to: notebooks and laptops, and any other similar electronic equipment, including their data storage media. All devices must not be used outside lessons at any time.

Our ICT policy recognises that internet safety is a whole school responsibility (staff, children and parents).

*Children and young people may expose themselves to danger, whether knowingly or unknowingly, when using the internet and other technologies. Additionally, some young people may find themselves involved in activities which are inappropriate or possibly illegal.*

We therefore recognise our responsibility to educate our children, teaching them the appropriate behaviours and critical thinking skills, to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the internet and related technologies. These issues are addressed within the curriculum, in the tutor programme and in assemblies.

Children will access specific training through the curriculum alongside external visits and assemblies related to online safety.

- Peer on Peer Abuse: staff will recognise the signs of peer on peer abuse and will report any concerns using the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy.
- Sexting: staff will recognise that sexting is a form of peer on peer abuse, which needs reporting to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

The Trust network filters for key words related to safeguarding concerns, including Prevent and extremist material. These are monitored monthly and amended where needed.

All children will be supported and taught about relevant issues through the curriculum and RSE, this will be compulsory from summer 2021<sup>2</sup>. Each school within Marches Academy Trust will have flexibility to decide how they discharge their duties effectively within the first year of compulsory teaching and are encouraged to take a phased approach when introducing these subjects. The statutory guidance can be found here: Statutory guidance: relationships education relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education/implementation-of-relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-and-health-education-2020-to-2021>

Additional information to support keeping children safe online (including when they are online at home) is provided in Appendix C.

## **Photographs and video**

All staff must ensure that consent is gained from parents/carers if videos or photos of pupils are going to be used in publications, social media, websites or any shared digital format. If photos/video are going to be used online then names of pupils should not be directly linked to the image.

Staff must be fully aware of the consent form responses from parents/carers when considering use of images; where possible a further request for permission should be acquired, particularly in public facing publications and digital presentations.

Where possible staff should only use school cameras and devices to capture images and should avoid using personal devices.

Parents/carers are permitted to take images of their own children in Trust events. They should not share photos/videos from Trust events on social networking sites if other pupils appear in the image.

Pupils should not take pictures or video of other pupils or staff other than in a controlled supervised educational context where permission has been obtained in advance.

## **21. Health and safety**

Our Health and Safety Policy reflects the consideration we give to the safeguarding of our children both within the school environment and when away from the schools when undertaking school trips and visits.

## **22. Protecting children from radicalisation/Prevent**

The government set out its definition of British values in the 2015 Prevent Strategy; this promotes the values of: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to British Values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance to different faiths and beliefs.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person is encouraged to support terrorism and extremist ideologies linked to terrorist groups.

If a member of staff has a concern about a child, they will follow the safeguarding procedures and ensure that an immediate discussion is carried out with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should contact:

West Mercia Prevent Team: Detective Sergeant Stuart Clark- 01386 591835 or  
PC Manjit Sidhu- 01386 591815

The Prevent Team email is: [prevent@warwickshireandwestmercia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:prevent@warwickshireandwestmercia.pnn.police.uk)

## Prevention in the Curriculum

The Trust recognises the importance of developing childrens' awareness of behaviour that is unacceptable towards them and others, and how they can help keep themselves and others safe.

The RSE/PSHE programme in each key stage provides personal development opportunities for children to learn about keeping safe and who to ask for help if their safety is threatened. As part of developing a healthy, safer lifestyle, children are taught to, for example:

- Safely explore their own and others' attitudes.
- Recognise and manage risks in different situations, and how to behave responsibly.
- Judge what kind of physical contact is acceptable and unacceptable.
- Recognise when pressure from others (including people they know) threatens their personal safety and well-being, and develop effective ways of resisting pressure.

The Trust promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions; we teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral and cultural development of children, and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. The Trust promotes community cohesion and safeguards against biased, or unbalanced teaching and the promotion of partisan political views, and ensures that when political or controversial issues are brought to children's attention, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead in each school will take on the lead role for Child Sexual Exploitation, and prevention of radicalisation. Staff are encouraged to inform the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Lead if any issues arise related to the above areas.

## 23. Honour-based violence

Honour-based' violence includes Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage.

*"Abuse committed in the context of preserving 'honour' often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take." (DfE, 2019)*

### a. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

If staff have any concerns with regards to people carrying out female genital mutilation, this must be reported following the same procedures as with any other Child Protection issue, with the amended action of the teacher having a legal responsibility for reporting this to the Police. Staff will be aware of procedures and know how to report a concern related to FGM.

Reporting of female genital mutilation is mandatory and a legal duty. Reporting should be to the police if:

Informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her.

or

Staff have observed physical signs which appear to show FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18.

Complying with the duty does not breach any confidentiality requirement or other restriction on disclosure which might otherwise apply. The duty is a personal duty, which requires the individual professional who becomes aware of the case to make a report; the responsibility

cannot be transferred. The only exception to this is if the member of staff knows that another individual from the Trust has already made a report; there is no requirement to make a second. We may not seek parental consent, if this may put the girl at increased risk of significant harm.

For further information, please refer to: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-leaflet>

### **b. Forced marriage**

Forced marriage is the act of forcing a person into marriage. A forced marriage is one entered into without full consent from one or even both parties. There may be violence, threats or coercion involved. These threats can have a long term impact on the emotional wellbeing of the person(s). This is a crime in England and Wales.

Children living in households where there is honour-based violence, including forced marriage could be at significant risk of harm. Trust staff will seek support for victims and their children through the referral processes using Compass as the initial contact.

Depending on the level of risk, Designated Safeguarding Lead staff may/may not consult parents/carers before contacting Compass.

Further details can be accessed by calling the Forced Marriage Unit on 0207 008 0151.

## **24. Domestic violence**

Children living in households where there is domestic abuse, such as coercion or violence, including honour-based violence, could be at significant risk of harm. Marches Academy Trust staff will seek support for victims and their children through the referral processes using Compass as the initial contact.

Depending on the level of risk, Designated Safeguarding Lead staff may/may not consult parents/carers before contacting Compass.

## **25. Peer-on-peer abuse**

Staff will be aware that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse is abuse, and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. Victims of peer abuse will be supported as they would be if they were the victim of any other form of abuse, in accordance with this Policy. Peer-on-Peer abuse can be carried out regardless of gender, however there is a greater risk that females will be victims and males perpetrators. In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2020, sexual violence and harassment are now recognised as a form of peer-on-peer abuse.

All staff will act immediately to alert relevant staff if they are aware of any risk of peer-on-peer abuse. All incidents will be recorded, statements taken, and evidence provided where possible. Bullying, including cyberbullying, is categorised under this category and is taken seriously by all schools across the Trust. Actions will then be carried out by staff to support the victim. This may include counselling, mentoring, or participation in the Empower Course. There may be, in specific cases, risk assessments completed to ensure the safety of other children.

Peer-on-peer abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied, including cyberbullying, and/or harmed by their peers, who are the same age or similar age. Peer-on-

peer abuse can relate to various forms of abuse (not just sexual abuse and exploitation). Some forms of peer-on-peer abuse are:

**a. Sexting: youth produced sexual imagery**

Sexting is when someone sends, or receives, sexually explicit texts, images or videos. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture can happen in any relationship, and to any child, regardless of age, gender or sexuality.

However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession, or distributing to someone else, indecent images of a person under 18, including themselves, young people are not even aware that they could be breaking the law, as these are offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. All school staff are aware of procedures and will act upon any reports as a priority. Designated Safeguarding Lead staff will follow appropriate procedures to ensure the child is safeguarded. This may include contacting parents/carers, contacting Police, referring to Compass, ICT etc.

**b. Initiation/hazing**

Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation, such as a school, sports team etc. There are a number of different forms, from relatively mild rituals, to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies.

The idea behind this practice is that it welcomes newcomers by subjecting them to a series of trials, which promote a bond between them. After the hazing is over, the newcomers also have something in common with older members of the organisation, because they all experienced it as part of a rite of passage. Many rituals involve humiliation, embarrassment, abuse, and harassment. School staff will inform Designated Safeguarding Lead staff, if they are aware of any such ceremonies involving children.

**c. Prejudiced behaviour**

The term prejudice related bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society; in particular, prejudices to do with disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life (for example, in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual identity (homosexual, bisexual, transsexual). Any concerns will be reported to Designated Safeguarding Lead staff, and appropriate action taken.

**d. Teenage relationship abuse**

Teenage relationship abuse is defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and/or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abusive teen uses this pattern of violent and coercive behaviour, in a heterosexual or same gender relationship, in order to gain power and maintain control over the partner. Any disclosures or concerns will be referred to Designated Safeguarding Lead staff and appropriate action taken.

Staff across The Trust understand that any child who is perpetrating the abuse may themselves also be at risk of harm. Staff make every effort to ensure that the alleged perpetrator is also treated as a victim and undertake relevant assessments. Sensitive work must be undertaken with the child who is perpetrating; helping them to understand the nature of their behaviour, and the effect it has on others, may prevent abuse as a whole.

Staff are encouraged to use their professional judgement in identifying when what may be perceived as 'normal developmental childhood behaviour' becomes abusive, dangerous, and harmful to others. Designated Safeguarding Leads will consult the Shropshire Safeguarding Partnership Threshold document to help with their decision making, where necessary.

#### **e. Physical abuse**

Physical abuse includes any of the following: hitting, shaking, kicking, biting, hair pulling or any other action, which leads to physical harm.

#### **f. Sexual violence and sexual harassment**

All schools across The Trust will respond appropriately to all incidents of sexual violence and sexual harassment, which can occur between two children of any age and sex. This can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. All schools across the Trust will not tolerate such behaviours, or accept that it forms a part of growing up.

Sexual violence is the unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur online or offline and includes actions such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault.

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, which can be seen in the form of sexual comments, remarks and jokes, both off and online. This may be a stand-alone incident, or form part of a pattern of abuse. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a child's dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated. Sexual harassment may include physical behaviours that include touching a child's clothes or brushing past a child to intentionally touch them; this may also be seen as sexual violence.

Online sexual harassment may include: non-consensual sharing of images and videos, sexualised bullying, unwanted sexual messages and comments, and exploitation, coercion and threats.

#### **g. Upskirting**

Upskirting involves taking a picture under a person's clothing, without their knowledge, to view their genitals or buttocks. This is a criminal offence and will be taken seriously by all school staff. Actions will be carried out to support victims and to sanction those guilty of upskirting.

All staff will access training as part of induction, update training and briefings. This will include sexual violence and sexual harassment awareness training. Staff are also made aware that there are particular cohorts of children who are potentially more at risk, including girls, children with SEND, and the LGBT community. All reports are taken seriously and will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy, immediately, to safeguard the alleged victim and other children.

Staff will challenge behaviours that are potentially criminal in nature such as grabbing bottoms, breasts or genitals, or lifting skirts. Staff will act on such behaviours and put sanctions in place following reports of these behaviours.

Risk assessments in schools will be carried out on children, following reports of incidents of sexual violence or sexual harassment. This will involve the alleged perpetrator, parents/carers and safeguarding staff, unless this will place the student at risk of significant harm.

Action will be carried out to support victims and alleged perpetrators of sexual violence or harassment.

## 26. Child sexual exploitation

*'All staff will be aware that both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online'. KCSIE, 2020*

*"Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the alleged perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.*

*Like all forms of child sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation:*

- *can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex;*
- *can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;*
- *can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity;*
- *can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both;*
- *can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;*
- *may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (through others copying videos or images they have created and posting on social media, for example);*
- *can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and*
- *is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources."*

**DfE Child Sexual Exploitation, February 2017**

Staff across the Trust will all be aware of Child Sexual Exploitation, through Raising Awareness Level 1 Child Protection training and as such will be aware of procedures for reporting concerns related to Child Sexual Exploitation.

Designated Safeguarding Lead staff will have accessed SSCB training on Child Sexual Exploitation and how to refer. All referrals made will be with the consent of parents/ carers where possible, through SSCB CSE referral systems, alongside any agencies involved

where appropriate. Designated Safeguarding Lead staff or a level 2 qualified Deputy will attend SSCB CSE panel meetings to discuss individual cases where appropriate.

## 27. Contextual safeguarding

*'All staff will be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the DSL/ Deputies will consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence'.*

KCSIE, 2020

All staff must consider the wider environmental factors in a child's life and the impact that these may have. All referrals made will include wider details related to the environmental factors of each child involved. Schools and educational settings need to consider the location and culture of their school or college, and assess the risks that young people may be exposed to, both inside and outside of the school or college community.

The contextual safeguarding approach that all settings across Marches Academy Trust take, would recognise that children and young people's risk of experiencing significant harm in extra-familial contexts is increased at times. All settings seek to include these contexts within prevention, identification, assessment and intervention safeguarding activities for children.

The current risks across Shropshire are linked to County Lines and Criminal Exploitation, Organised Crime and Cuckooing.

### **a. Criminal exploitation**

Criminal Exploitation occurs where an individual or group attempts to coerce or control a young person and engage them with, or in, criminal activity. This is usually in exchange for something, or for financial advantage of the alleged perpetrator. This can at times involve physical violence and threats towards the victim.

The child may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through technology/social media.

### **b. Organised crime and County Lines**

Organised Crime is serious crime that is planned, coordinated and conducted by people working together.

County Lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines. Children are exploited into storing, carrying and dealing drugs across counties. Children may be coerced into this activity through threats of violence.

### **c. Cuckooing**

This term describes the situation where a County Lines dealer takes over accommodation of a vulnerable person/family, to carry out criminal activities from the home as a base. This is carried out through abuse of power and control.

In many cases the family become socially isolated and risk eviction.



#### **d. Serious crime**

The Trust considers dealing with serious crime as a priority and acts to protect children and to prevent them being drawn into such crime. Staff are informed and updated on indicators which may show that children are at risk.

Indicators can include:

*“absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in well-being, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs” (DfE, 2019a)*

## **28. Mental health**

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. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children’s experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken and contact made with DSL/ Deputy staff.

## **29. Whistleblowing**

Whistleblowing is when someone raises a concern about a dangerous or illegal activity, or any wrong doing within their organisation. This is a vital process for identifying risks to people’s safety, this also includes supply staff and volunteers.

If staff have any concerns about a child within the Trust this should be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, in the first instance.

Staff should call the Whistleblowing Advice Line if:

- Marches Academy Trust does not have clear safeguarding procedures to follow.
- Staff feel that any concern will not be dealt with properly or may be covered-up.
- A concern has been raised but no actions taken.

Contact the Whistleblowing Advice Line  
Call 0800 028 0285  
Email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

## **30. Conclusion**

The legal responsibility of the Trustees and the Local Governing Body of each school for safeguarding the welfare of children goes beyond basic child protection procedures.

The duty is to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activity and functions, surrounding and supporting their education and general welfare.

### 31. Appendix A - Designated Safeguarding Lead & Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads for each school

	Designated Safeguarding Lead	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads
Marches Academy Trust	Amy Chevin-Dooley	
Grange Primary School	Bev Williams	Charlie Summers (Headteacher)
Grove School	Amy Roberts	Katie Arbon Rachel Lee Sonia Taylor (Headteacher)
Longlands Primary School	Zillah Cope (Headteacher)	Sarah Morris Sue Winfield Jessica Mitchell
Lower Heath CE Primary School	Deb Sadler (Headteacher)	Charlotte Williams Jonathan Holt-Williams
Marches School	Jo Phillips	Sali James Alison Pearson (Headteacher)
Oakmeadow CE Primary School	Carla Whelan (Headteacher)	Samantha Hill (Head of School) May Severn
Shrewsbury Academy	Julie Johnson (Head of School)	Rachel Powell Lucy Howells
Sir John Talbot's School	Laura Richmond	Sue Pearce Susanne King Michelle Welch Sarah Newey
Tilstock CE Primary School	Rowena Kaminski (Head of School)	Deb Sadler (Executive Headteacher) Karen Blakemore

DOCUMENT CONTROL	
Policy owner	Trust Safeguarding Lead
Scope	All staff, Trustees and Governors
Last updated	May 2021
Effective from	March 2021
Next planned review	September 2021
Status	Approved
Summary of last revision	March 2021 - Update in accordance with KCSIE, 2020 May 2021 – staff changes
Related Policies	Behaviour for Learning Policy Equality Policy Health & Safety Policy ICT Policy