Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Charter Academy School

September 2026

Reviewed by: Louise Stewart and Zoe Tite
Review Date: September 2026
Agreed by governors: September 2026
Shared with staff: September 2026
Frequency of review: Annually
Date of next review: September 2027

Head Teacher: Louise Stewart
Designated Safeguarding Lead: Zoe Tite (Assistant Headteacher)
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads: Louise Stewart (Headteacher), Laura Drew (Deputy Headteacher), Thomas Wayne (Assistant Headteacher), Laura Archer (Family Support Lead), Siobhan Cameron (Nursery Manager)
Named Governor for Safeguarding: Mary Roberts
Chair of Governors: Bridie Cooper **Contact:** bcooper@charter.coventry.gov.uk
Vice Chair of Governors: Mary Roberts **Contact:** mroberts@charter.coventry.gov.uk
Designated Lead for Children Looked After and Previously Looked-After Charter Academy: Laura Drew (Deputy Headteacher)
Early Help Assessment Co-ordinator: Fiona Smith, Mosaic Hub Tel: 024767801 **Contact:** Fiona.smith@coventry.gov.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer: Nina Farrimond, Beki Habberley and Natasha Williams Tel: 02476 978499 lado@coventry.gov.uk
Safeguarding in Education Adviser: Sarah Olowo (**Sarah.Olowo@coventry.gov.uk**) **and** Charlotte Hegarty **charlotte.hegarty@coventry.gov.uk**
MASH : MASH@coventry.gov.uk (due to change) or 024 7678 8555 **Children and Family Initial Response Service – Education Co-ordinator:** Claire McElroy **claire.mcelroy@coventry.gov.uk** **Prevent: Prevent@coventry.gov.uk** **Emergency Duty Team: 024 7683 2222**

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1 Definitions

1.1 'Safeguarding' is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) as;

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment; whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing 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.

1.2 'Child Protection' is the intervention that occurs when children have been significantly harmed or are at risk of significant harm.

1.3 'Child' refers to everyone under the age of 18.

1.4 'Parent' refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role for example adoptive parents, step parents and foster carers.

1.5 'Staff' or 'members of staff' refers to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff, governors, volunteers and trustees working in or on behalf of Charter Academy School.

1.6 Within this policy, we use the term 'victim', although it is recognised that not everyone subjected to abuse would consider themselves to be a victim or would want to be described in this way. We also recognise the importance of not using the terminology of 'perpetrator' in relation to children in cases where the behaviour can be harmful to both parties. The appropriate use of terminology will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

2 Introduction

2.1 We recognise that safeguarding, child protection, and promoting the welfare of children is an essential part of our duty of care to all students. As such all staff and governors have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. We understand that safeguarding, child protection and promoting the welfare of all children is a "shared" responsibility and everyone has a role to play in protecting children. We recognise that our school is part of a wider safeguarding system for children and work closely with other agencies to promote the welfare of children. We maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and will consider what is in the best interests of each child in line and upholding the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010.

2.2 The purpose of this policy is to;

- Promote safeguarding and child protection and to demonstrate Charter Academy School's commitment to keeping children safe;
- Provide all members of staff with the information required to meet their safeguarding duty and protect children from harm;
- Provide stakeholders with clear information relating to Charter Academy School's safeguarding and child protection procedures;
- Ensure that staff understand, can recognise and can respond to the indicators of abuse, exploitation or neglect;
- Ensure that all staff are aware of their mandatory reporting duty in relation to Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003; and
- Ensure that children are protected from maltreatment or harm.

2.3 Charter Academy School is committed to the following principles;

- All children have the right to be protected from harm.
- Children should feel safe and secure and cannot learn unless they do so.
- All staff are responsible for keeping children safe and have a responsibility to act if they think a child is at risk of harm.
- All staff take on a responsibility to promote children's welfare
- Providing support to families and/or children as soon as a problem emerges is essential to improving outcomes for children and families.

2.4 Safeguarding aims

2.4.1 The safeguarding aims of Charter Academy School, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026) are to;

- work to identify children who are suffering or likely to suffer abuse, exploitation or neglect and act to protect them;
- ensure staff understand emerging safeguarding risks including artificial intelligence (AI), deepfakes, nudification apps, misinformation, disinformation and technology-facilitated abuse."
- work with relevant services and agencies to ensure that children are protected from harm;
- provide a learning environment for children which is safe and secure;
- teach children how to keep themselves safe and provide structures for them to raise concerns if they are worried or at risk of harm;
- support children's mental health and wellbeing;
- ensure that we adhere to safer recruitment guidance and legislation, deal promptly with allegations of abuse against staff and take bullying and harassment seriously;
- train staff effectively in all safeguarding issues (including online safety) and in their responsibilities for identifying and protecting children that are or may be at risk of harm;
- have a designated safeguarding lead and designated deputies, who will provide support to staff, students and families;
- recognise that all children may be vulnerable to abuse, but be aware that some children have increased vulnerabilities due to special educational needs or disabilities or particular protected characteristics (LGBTQIA+, Gender questioning etc);
- maintain a robust recording system for any safeguarding or child protection information;
- ensure that everyone in Charter Academy School understands the safeguarding procedures; and to
- regularly review policies and procedures to ensure that children are protected to the best of our ability.
- ensure that all staff understand the importance of early identification and intervention and can recognise children and families who may benefit from Early Help/Family Help and additional support services.
- promote a child-centred approach in which the welfare and best interests of the child are paramount in all safeguarding decisions.

2.5 This policy adheres to the following documents;

- Keeping Children Safe In Education 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (February 2022)
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners (2015)
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026

2.6 We continue to work closely with the Local Authority and the Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership to safeguard children across the city.

2.7 Please note that there are a number of other documents (statutory and non-statutory) that inform our policy and practice. A list of these can be found in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026).

2.8 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies;

- Behaviour Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- E-safety Policy
- Medicine Policy
- Attendance Policy
- External Speaker's Policy
- Code of Conduct
- School Policies can be found on the Charter Academy School website.

2.9 Scope

2.9.1 This policy applies to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff, governors, volunteers and trustees working in or on behalf of Charter Academy School. All references in this document to 'staff' or 'members of staff' should be interpreted as relating to the aforementioned unless otherwise stated.

2.9.2 To avoid duplication, this policy reflects the principles and requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Charter Academy School will use this statutory guidance as the primary reference document for all safeguarding and child protection practice.

3 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Role of the Governing Body

3.1.1 Governing bodies have a strategic leadership responsibility for our safeguarding arrangements. We have a senior board level lead role carried out by Mary Roberts. Part 2 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026) sets out the responsibilities of governing bodies. As part of these overarching responsibilities the Governing Body will;

- Have a strategic leadership responsibility for Charter Academy School's safeguarding arrangements
- Aware of the obligations under the **Human Rights Act 1998** , the **Equality Act 2010** and the **Public Sector Equality Duty**
- Ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation;

- Ensure a whole school approach to safeguarding, including the use of mobile and smart technology in school;
- Ensure that policies, procedure and training in Charter Academy School are effective and comply with the law at all times and that they allow concerns to be responded to in a timely manner;
- Ensure Charter Academy considers local authority and Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership policies and supply information as requested by the three safeguarding partners (the Local Authority, Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) for an area within the local authority and the chief office of police for a police area within the local authority);
- Ensure we have an effective child protection policy, that it is published on Charter Academy School's website or available by contacting the school office and requesting a paper copy and review this annually;
- Ensure that we have a staff behaviour policy or Code of Conduct which refers to low level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing procedures alongside acceptable use of technologies;
- Ensure that all staff and governors receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction, receive regular updates, and are required to read and understand Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- Ensure that school leaders, staff and governors understand local Family Help arrangements, safeguarding thresholds and referral pathways, and that children and families receive the right help at the right time;
- Ensure that Charter Academy contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance;
- Ensure that there are clear systems for identifying, assessing and responding to children whose mental health may be affecting their behaviour, attendance, wellbeing or safeguarding needs;
- Ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety as a whole Charter Academy School approach and curriculum planning but recognising that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children. See section 12 of this policy for further information;
- Ensure safeguarding arrangements are child-centred and that the wishes, feelings, lived experiences and best interests of children are considered when decisions are made;
- Put in place and follow appropriate safeguarding responses for children who are absent from education;
- Appoint an appropriate member of staff from the senior leadership team to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead and appoint an appropriate deputy/ies;
- Understand the local criteria for action and local protocol for assessment;
- Recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies but take a risk-based approach to level of information that is provided to temporary staff, volunteers and contractors;
- Ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to keep children safe online and share information regarding online abuse and risks including where to access advice with parents and carers;
- Respond to allegations of abuse against the headteacher whilst ensuring there are procedures in place to manage safeguarding concerns, or allegations against staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors); and
- Ensure safer working practice is embedded and effective within policies.

3.2 The Role of the Headteacher

3.2.1 The headteacher will;

- Ensure that this policy is reviewed annually at minimum and ratified by the governing body;
- Ensure that this policy and associated procedures are adhered to by all staff;
- Ensure that all staff are made aware of the named governor for safeguarding and the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Ensure that the role of 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' is explicit in the role-holder's job description including leading on filters and monitoring processes;
- Decide whether to have one or more deputy safeguarding leads and ensure they are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Organise appropriate cover for the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead for any out of hour/out of term activities;
- Appoint a 'Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children' to promote the educational achievement of children looked after;
- Appoint a lead for online safety; Zoe Tite (The DSL will still retain ultimate responsibility for this)
- Promote a whole school approach to safeguarding;
- Promote resilience to social and emotional wellbeing, which is tailored to the needs of the children;
- Ensure that all recruitment follows the 'Safer Recruitment' guidance and a single, central record is maintained with details of all members of staff who are in contact with children;
- Respond to low level concerns and allegations of abuse against all other members of staff including supply staff, volunteers and contractors;
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required;
- Ensure that the school collaborates with Children's Services, the police, health services and other services to; promote the welfare of children; provide a co-ordinated offer of early help assessments when need is identified; contribute to inter-agency plans for children subject to children protection plans and to protect children from harm.
- Safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (Teaching Standards, 2012); and
- Ensure that children's services (from the host or the placing authority) have access to Charter Academy School to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct a section 47 or section 17 assessment, as per Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026).

3.3 The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

3.3.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Charter Academy is Zoe Tite. Our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL) in the DSL's absence are Louise Stewart (Headteacher), Laura Drew (Deputy Headteacher), Thomas Wayne (Assistant Headteacher) Laura Archer (Family Support Lead), and Siobhan Cameron (Nursery Manager).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will;

- Take overall lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and filters and monitoring and processes in place);
- Monitor and respond to emerging technological safeguarding risks including AI-generated content, deepfakes, misinformation and technology-facilitated abuse.
- Liaise with the safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026);
- Always be available during term time (during school hours) for staff in Charter Academy School to discuss safeguarding concerns. If they are not available, a deputy will be made available;
- Undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out this role updated a minimum of biannually;
- Act as a source of support and expertise on matters relating to safeguarding and child protection to ensure that other members of staff can carry out their safeguarding duty;
- Be best placed to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns;
- Identify if children may benefit from Early Help and Family Help;
- Act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners;
- Make referrals to Coventry's Children and Family Initial Response Service where children have been harmed or are at risk of significant harm.
- Make referrals to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern and/or support staff that make a referral to Channel;
- Support the school with regards to their responsibilities under the Prevent duty and provide advice and support on protecting children from radicalisation;
- Refer cases to the police where a crime may have been committed;
- Ensure all staff have read and understood Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026);
- Update their knowledge and skills regularly and keep up with any developments relevant to their role;
- Provide staff in school with the knowledge, skills and support required to safeguard children;
- Take responsibility for the accurate and timely recording of safeguarding and child protection concerns and take overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection files;
- Take responsibility for the transfer of safeguarding files when a child leaves Charter Academy School. They will also contact the previous/new school where necessary.
- Attend or ensure an appropriate representative attends multi-agency safeguarding or child protection meetings;
- Promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- Work closely with other relevant education professionals (e.g. SENCO, Virtual School Head) to ensure children with additional vulnerabilities are safeguarded;
- Help to promote educational outcomes of children who have experienced or are experiencing safeguarding or child protection issues by sharing relevant information with teachers and the school leadership team;
- Promote a 'culture of safeguarding', in which every member of Charter Academy School community acts in the best interests of the child;
- Ensuring Charter Academy School knows who in its cohort of children have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations;

- Regularly meet (every half term at a minimum) with the safeguarding link governor and/or Chair of Governors to review safeguarding in Charter Academy School; and
- Liaise with the headteacher regarding safeguarding cases and issues.
- Liaise with the senior mental health lead when safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health
- Be Aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult – PACE code C 2019

3.3.2 Further details on the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be found in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026).

3.4 The Role & Responsibilities of all Staff within School

3.4.1 School staff play a particularly important role because they are in a position to identify concerns early in order to provide help for children. All staff in Charter Academy School;

- Have a responsibility to provide a safe environment, where children can learn;
- Will be able to identify indicators of abuse, exploitation or neglect; with an awareness of safeguarding issues that put children at risk of harm and behaviours associated with these risks;
- Should know what to do if a child tells them that he/she is being abused, exploited or neglected but that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected and/or recognise their experience as harmful;
- Will be aware of indictors of child-on-child abuse and procedures to deal with this;
- Understand that online risks include AI-generated content, deepfakes, misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories and report concerns appropriately.
- All staff, but especially the DSL and deputies, will also consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families;
- Will be made aware of; the safeguarding and child protection policy; the school behaviour policy; the staff behaviour policy; information about the safeguarding response to children missing in education; the role of the designated safeguarding lead and systems in Charter Academy School that support safeguarding and child protection;
- Will be provided annually with Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026) and will receive annual updated training on their safeguarding roles and responsibilities;
- Will receive regularly updated safeguarding and child protection training including online safety;
- Will receive safeguarding updates throughout the year as part of continuous professional development;
- Should be able to contribute to the development of safeguarding policy and practice;
- Will be made aware of the early help assessment process and understand their role in it;
- Should be equipped to identify children who may benefit from targeted early help and understand the indicators of need that may suggest a child requires targeted support or statutory intervention. Staff will discuss concerns with the Designated

Safeguarding Lead or deputy DSL in the first instance and take appropriate action in accordance with this policy;
- May be required to support social workers and other agencies following a referral;
- Will be made aware of the process for making referrals to Children's Services (through the Children and Family Initial Response Service), understand statutory assessments and the role that they may be expected to play in such assessments;
- Should be prepared to make referrals to the Children and Families Initial Response Service if they have concerns about a child's welfare and understand the role that they may be expected to play in such assessments;
- Understands the referral process to the (LADO) and the role they play should they have concerns or allegations are made against any member of staff;
- Should always seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are unsure; and
- All teachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (Teaching Standards, 2012).

3.5 Multi-Agency Working

3.5.1 Charter Academy School is committed to multi-agency working and operates under Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and local safeguarding arrangements.

3.5.2 Charter Academy School will work with Children's Services, the police, health services, Family Help practitioners and other relevant agencies to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

3.5.3 We work closely with our local Family Hubs to ensure children receive appropriate, co-ordinated Family Help Assessments. We have a designated Early Help Assessment Co-ordinator (Fiona Smith) from the Mosaic Hub.

3.5.4 The Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) have designated that schools and colleges are a named 'relevant agency'. As such, Charter Academy School is under a statutory duty to co-operate with published CSCP arrangements.

4 Types of abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

4.1 As outlined above, all staff will be trained in indicators of abuse, exploitation and neglect and should be able to recognise signs of these. We recognise that abuse, exploitation and neglect along with other safeguarding issues are complex and often multidimensional and therefore don't fall solely under one category. Types of abuse or harm can take many forms including directly inflicting harm on a child or failing to protect a child from harm online as well as face to face both inside and outside of the school as well as online, including the multi-faceted occurrence of factors causing emotional harm. In many cases, abuse and other safeguarding risks occur concurrently both online and offline. We understand that children may experience multiple and overlapping forms of abuse at the same time. These harms can be interconnected, with abuse in one context increasing vulnerability to abuse in another.

The four main types of abuse that staff are trained to recognise are;

- Physical abuse;
- Sexual abuse;
- Emotional abuse;
- Neglect.

4.2 Types of abuse (Taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026)

Type of abuse	Information
Abuse	A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.
Physical abuse	A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
Emotional abuse	The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
Sexual abuse	Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to

Type of abuse	Information
	behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of this and of Charter Academy School's policy and procedures for dealing with this.
Neglect	The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

4.3 Indicators of abuse can be found in Appendix B.

4.4 If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's services (through the Children and Family Initial Response Service) and any member of staff can make this referral. A Designated or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead should always be available or appropriate cover arrangements in place, but in exceptional circumstances the member of staff should speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team or seek advice directly from Children's Services and then take appropriate action. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be made aware as soon as possible.

4.5 Staff, parents and the wider community should report any concerns that they have about the welfare of children, however minor or seemingly insignificant. Staff should not assume that someone else will report concerns.

4.6 Charter Academy School recognises that any child can be the victim of abuse and may benefit from early help. However, the school will be particularly vigilant to potential need for early help if a child;

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan);
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit;

- has a mental need;
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- is at risk of 'honour-based' abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day;
- is a privately fostered child.

4.7 Charter Academy School recognises that abuse can take many different forms. Prejudice-based incidents including racism, faith-based prejudice, antisemitism, misogyny and other discriminatory behaviours. Staff will also receive training on the following issues and action will be taken if Charter Academy School believes that a child is at risk of or is the victim of;

- bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice based and discriminatory;
- child criminal exploitation and sexual exploitation including involvement in county lines;
- domestic abuse;
- emotional abuse;
- fabricated or induced illness;
- faith-based abuse;
- female genital mutilation;
- forced marriage;
- gangs or youth violence;
- gender-based violence;
- hate;
- mental health;
- neglect;
- peer on peer abuse;
- physical abuse;
- radicalisation;
- relationship abuse;
- serious violence and harassment;
- sexual abuse;
- sexual violence or sexual harassment (including peer on peer abuse);
- sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude and semi-nude images/videos;

- So-called 'honour-based' abuse;
- trafficking and modern slavery.

4.8 Charter Academy School will also take action to protect;

- Children missing or absent from education;
- Children missing from home or care.

4.8.1 There are several circumstances that may have a detrimental impact on a child's welfare, safety and educational outcomes. We work with other agencies in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education to support children and families in the following circumstances:

- Children facing the court procedures and/or children in the court system;
- Children with family members in prison;
- Children who are homeless;
- Children who need or have a social worker.

4.9 Children potentially at greater risk of harm

4.9.1 Charter Academy School recognises that some children need a social worker due to abuse, neglect or complex family circumstances and that abuse and trauma can leave children vulnerable to further harm, as well as educational disadvantage.

4.9.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will hold information relating to social workers working with children in the school.

4.9.3 This information will inform decisions about safeguarding and promoting welfare including the provision of pastoral and/or academic support.

4.10 Children absent from education

4.10.1 Charter Academy School understands that children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and criminal exploitation – particularly county lines.

4.10.2 Charter Academy School will report information to the Local Authority when problems are first emerging and if there is a need for the removal of a child from roll.

4.11 Elective Home Education

4.11.1 Charter Academy School recognises that many home educated children have a positive learning experience and the decision is one with the child's best interests at heart however elective home education can mean that some children are not in receipt of suitable education.

4.11.2 Since 2016, Charter Academy School has a statutory duty to inform the Local Authority of all deletions from roll. When Elective Home Education is the reason for this removal, the Local authority and other key professionals will work alongside Charter

Academy School to coordinate a meeting with parents where possible ideally before a final decision is made.

4.12 Children requiring Mental Health support

4.12.1 Charter Academy School recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children includes preventing the impairment of children's mental health or development. We understand that positive mental health is an integral part of a child's overall wellbeing, development and safety whilst at school.

4.12.2 All staff will be aware that mental health problems may be an indicator that a child has suffered, is suffering, or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, exploitation or other adverse childhood experiences. Staff will also be aware that children may experience mental health difficulties, self-harm, suicidal thoughts (suicidal ideation) and increased suicide risk, which may require an immediate safeguarding response.

4.12.3 Staff will not attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health condition unless they are appropriately qualified or trained to do so. However, all staff have a responsibility to identify concerns, respond appropriately and follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

4.12.4 Charter Academy School recognises that staff are well-placed to observe changes in a child's behaviour, presentation, emotional state and relationships which may indicate that they are experiencing mental health difficulties or are at risk of developing them. Staff should be particularly alert to signs which may indicate self-harm, suicide ideation or suicide risk. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Talking about wanting to die, feeling hopeless or having no reason to live.
- Expressing feelings of being trapped, worthless, isolated or a burden to others.
- Self-harming behaviours or evidence of self-injury.
- Significant changes in mood, behaviour, attendance, engagement or academic performance.
- Withdrawal from friends, family or activities previously enjoyed.
- Increased risk-taking or reckless behaviour.
- Changes in sleeping or eating patterns.
- Giving away possessions, saying goodbye to others or other behaviours that may indicate preparation for death.
- Persistent low mood, anxiety, distress or emotional dysregulation.
- Any disclosure relating to suicidal thoughts, plans or self-harming behaviours.

There are clear systems and processes in place for identifying, monitoring and responding to mental health concerns. If staff have concerns about a child's mental health, wellbeing or safety, they should follow the school's procedures by recording concerns on CPOMs and contacting the DSL or a DDSL to discuss appropriate intervention, parental contact and potential referrals to Mental Health Services.

4.12.5 Any concerns regarding self-harm, suicide ideation, suicide risk or other mental health concerns that may place a child at risk of harm must be treated as a safeguarding concern. Staff must report such concerns to the Designated

Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or one of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) immediately. Where a child is at immediate risk of serious harm, staff must follow Charter Academy School's emergency safeguarding procedures without delay.

4.12.6 Charter Academy School recognises that early identification and intervention are important in supporting children experiencing mental health difficulties. The DSL (and any relevant pastoral, wellbeing or mental health lead) will consider appropriate support, referral pathways and multi-agency involvement, including health professionals and specialist mental health services where required.

4.12.7 Charter Academy School has two members of staff identified and trained as Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA): Laura Archer (Family Support Lead) and Laura Bartley (TA). The Mental Health First Aiders promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing across the school community, providing initial support to pupils, staff, and families experiencing mental health concerns. The MHFAs offer a listening ear, provide information and signposts appropriate internal and external support services, and works in partnership with safeguarding and pastoral staff to contribute to the school's Early Help and safeguarding processes. The MHFAs do not provide counselling or therapy but support the identification of needs, encourage access to appropriate support, and raise any safeguarding concerns in line with the school's safeguarding procedures.

4.12.8 Further information, guidance and advice regarding mental health, self-harm, suicidal ideation and suicide prevention can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and in local Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership resources.

4.13 Children who are Lesbian, Gay, Bi or Trans (LGBTQA+) or may be gender questioning children

4.13.1 The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.

4.13.2 In line with updated Keeping Children Safe In Education guidance, it is important to consider the Cass review, which highlighted the need for a careful and evidence-informed approach to supporting children questioning their gender and recognised that some may present with wider vulnerabilities, including having complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases additional diagnoses of autism spectrum disorder and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

4.13.3 It recommended that when families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning children, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. When parents are supporting pre-pubertal children, clinical services should ensure that they can be seen as early as possible by a clinical professional with relevant experience.

4.13.4 As such, when supporting a gender questioning child, schools should take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with the child's parents (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents

would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child), including any clinical advice that is available and how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying. Schools should refer to our Guidance for Schools and Colleges in relation to Gender Questioning Children, when deciding how to proceed.

4.13.5 Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

4.13.6 Requests relating to social transition should be considered carefully and, on a case-by-case basis, taking account of safeguarding, wellbeing, parental involvement, available clinical advice and the child's wider needs.

4.13.7 Any decision should be made with the child's best interests as the primary consideration whilst also considering the impact on other children where relevant. Schools should have regard to Keeping Children Safe In Education (2026) and any local authority guidance relating to gender-questioning children when deciding how to proceed. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be involved in any decision-making relating to support for a gender-questioning child.

4.13.8 Schools should clearly record decisions, the rationale for those decisions and any agreed support arrangements, and review these regularly.

4.13.9 LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum and there is a range of support available to help schools counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

4.14 Young Carers

4.14.1 Charter Academy School recognises that young carers may face additional safeguarding and welfare needs. Caring responsibilities can have a significant impact on a child's attendance, achievement, behaviour and emotional wellbeing. Young carers will be considered as a potentially vulnerable group within safeguarding monitoring and Family Help processes.

4.14.2 Staff should be aware that some children may have caring responsibilities which can impact on their attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing. Any concerns that a pupil may be undertaking a caring role, or that their caring responsibilities are affecting their welfare, should be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The school will seek to identify young carers at an early stage and ensure they receive appropriate support, including referrals to external services where required.

4.15 Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Medical Needs

4.15.1 Children with SEND and those with medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Staff should be aware that abuse, neglect or exploitation may be harder to recognise in these children and should not assume that changes in behaviour, presentation, mood or injuries are related to a child's disability, special educational need or health condition without further consideration.

Additional safeguarding barriers may include:

- Communication difficulties that affect a child's ability to report concerns or seek help;
- Increased vulnerability to bullying, peer isolation and exploitation;
- Greater dependence on adults for care and support;
- The need for intimate or personal care;
- Difficulties understanding relationships, consent, appropriate behaviour or online risks.

4.15.2 Any safeguarding concerns relating to a child with SEND or additional needs must be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead), with appropriate liaison with the SENDCo as required. Charter Academy School will consider whether additional pastoral, communication or safeguarding support is needed to help these children stay safe.

5 Responding to signs of abuse

5.1 If a member of staff, parent or member of the public is concerned about a child's welfare, they should report it to the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible. On occasions when the designated safeguarding lead is not available, it should be reported to the deputy safeguarding lead without delay. Although any member of staff can make a referral to Children's Services, where possible there should be a conversation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5.2 If anyone other than the Designated Safeguarding Lead makes a referral to Children's Services or to the police, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible.

5.3 All staff will be alert to indicators of abuse and will report any of the following to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately;

- Any concern or suspicion that a child has sustained an injury outside what is reasonably attributable to normal play;
- Any concerning behaviours exhibited by children that may indicated that they have been harmed or are at risk of harm, including unusual changes in mood or behaviour, concerning use of language and/or concerning drawings or stories.
- Any significant changes in attendance or punctuality;
- Any significant changes in a child's presentation;
- Any concerns relating to people who may pose a risk of harm to a child; and/or
- Any disclosures/allegations of abuse that children have shared.

5.4 There will be occasions where a child discloses/alleges abuse directly to a member of staff. If this happens, the member of staff will;

- listen carefully to the child and believe what they are saying;
- not promise confidentiality, as information may need to be passed on so the child and family can receive additional support;
- only ask for clarification if something is unclear and will not ask 'leading' questions;
- report disclosure to the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible, certainly by the end of the day;
- only discuss the issue with colleagues that need to know about it; and
- will write up the disclosure and pass it to the designated safeguarding lead. It is likely they will have had a discussion with the DSL prior to this but delay should be avoided.

5.5 The designated safeguarding lead will make a decision about the action that needs to be taken following a member of staff raising a concern about a child, or following a direct disclosure recording a clear rationale. The DSL may consider the following options;

- Manage support for the child internally within the school;
- Seek advice from the social worker advice line in the Children and Family Initial Response Service;
- Instigate single agency intervention and work directly with the family to improve the situation;
- Offer an Early Help Assessment to provide multi-agency help to a family;
- In cases where children are deemed to be at significant risk of harm, the DSL will refer cases to the Children and Family Initial Response Service for consideration for statutory intervention. Parental consent will be obtained wherever possible before referring cases to the Children and Family Initial Response Service. However, if Charter Academy School is worried that telling parents will mean the child is at greater risk of harm, we may do this without informing them.
- If parents do not consent to a referral but the school believes that a child is at significant risk of harm, a referral will still be made to Children's Services.

5.6 For further information about the Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership's 'Effective Support for children and families' guidance, which is used by Charter Academy School to make decisions about protecting children, please visit this link - https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/45712/effective-support-for-children-and-families-in-coventry

5.7 See page 27 for flowchart of actions that will be taken where there are concerns about a child (taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2026).

5.8 In cases where members of staff become aware that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) has been carried out on a female below the age of 18, they have a mandatory duty to report this to the police without delay and will do so. Staff should refer this to the DSL, but the legislation requires regulated health and Children's Service professionals and teachers in England and Wales to make a report to the police where, in the course of their professional duties, they either;

- are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth.

If you believe a child is at risk of FGM, a referral to the Children and Family Initial Response Service is also required.

5.9 Charter Academy School have a duty to refer any children who are living in a private fostering arrangement to the local authority. Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (or under 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a close relative. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and a carer, expected to last 28 days or more, or the school are aware the 28 days has been exceeded.

5.10 All schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 in the exercise of their functions to have "due regard" to the need to prevent

people from being drawn into terrorism. See Appendix B for further information on Charter Academy School's Prevent duty.

5.11 If any member of staff is unsure about signs of abuse or neglect, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5.12 Child on Child Abuse

5.12.1 Charter Academy School understands that both adults and other children can perpetrate abuse, and this can happen inside and outside of school, online or face to face. Child on Child abuse is taken very seriously and can include bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying), abuse in intimate personal relationships between children, physical abuse, sharing of consensual or non-consensual intimate images and/or videos, including AI-generated imagery such as deepfakes, sexual violence and/or harassment, upskirting, and initiation/hazing ceremonies. The school recognises that safeguarding issues can manifest as child-on-child abuse. This includes abuse involving AI-generated imagery, deepfakes, manipulated images or digitally altered content.

5.12.2 All members of staff will be made aware of Charter Academy School's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse. Staff will receive safeguarding training that includes recognising, responding to, recording and reporting child-on-child abuse. The school will ensure staff understand what is meant by child-on-child abuse and the school policy on child-on-child abuse by ensuring staff training includes this on an annual basis.

5.12.3 Charter Academy School will work to prevent child-on-child abuse by raising awareness of this through the curriculum and acting without delay upon any signs or indicators that this may be occurring. The school will work to prevent peer on peer abuse by having regular top up training sessions for staff and many references to child-on-child abuse for children for example, within the PSHE curriculum and by marking Anti Bullying Week.

5.12.4 Although it is recognised that if there are no reported cases, such abuse may still be taking place. If an allegation of child-on-child abuse is made, victims and alleged perpetrators will be supported by Charter Academy School which will fully investigate. The DSL (or Deputy) will hold individual meetings with all parties involved to gain an accurate record of the facts. Action will then be taken e.g. consequence in line with the behaviour policy; support for the children involved e.g. Pastoral support or support from outside agencies. Parents will also be invited into school so concerns can be shared and actions agreed. Referrals will be made to outside agencies as necessary. All incidents will be recorded in writing on the school's online monitoring and recording system; CPOMS.

5.12.5 Charter Academy school recognises that child-on-child abuse may indicate the alleged perpetrator requires support, intervention or safeguarding assessment. In the event that an allegation of child-on-child abuse is made, victims, alleged perpetrators and any other children affected will be supported by the Safeguarding Team and referral to the Children and Family initial response service will be considered.

5.12.6 Charter Academy School will never pass off child-on-child abuse as 'banter', 'having a laugh' or 'part of growing up' or other such termination that does not recognise the harm caused. This should be a zero-tolerance approach as this could lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours. It is recognised with this, that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

5.12.7 At Charter Academy School, when considering harmful sexual behaviours the ages and stage of development are taken into account. Any instances are recorded on a child concern form/CPOMS and are dealt with by the DSL or DDSL this includes language of a sexual nature and actions of a sexual nature. The Brook Traffic light tool is used to support the decision-making process as to whether a sexual behaviour is considered harmful or not. In all cases parents are informed and subsequent monitoring takes place. For the child, Early help is explored and with parental consent a programme of work delivered.

5.12.8 Charter Academy School will adhere to guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) when responding to incidents of child-on-child abuse. Children will be provided with clear, accessible and promoted routes to report concerns and abuse.

5.12.9 All staff will be made aware that 'upskirting' is a criminal offence.

5.12.10 Charter Academy School recognises that child-on-child abuse is preventable and will use early identification and evidence-based intervention to reduce the risk of abuse occurring. Inline with KCSIE guidance the school will take appropriate action to increase vigilance during times considered high risk.

5.13 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

5.13.1 Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur when an individual or group take advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator through violence or threat of violence. CCE and CSE can affect both males and females and can include children that have been moved for the purpose of exploitation (trafficking).

5.13.2 CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing, vehicle crime, threatening violence on others or even carrying weapons.

5.13.3 The school is responsible for recognising children involved in CCE are victims of exploitation and should be recognised as such due to the harm they have experienced, staff are required to be aware that it is not possible for a child to give informed consent to engage in criminal or other exploitative activity and that a child cannot consent to their own exploitation.

5.13.4 CSE is a form of child sexual abuse including physical contact and non-contact online activities including the internet or by phone. This can happen over time or as a one off and may happen without the child recognising this as abuse or harmful.

5.13.5 The school recognises that children of the age of 16 and 17 who can legally consent to a sexual relationship may also be the victims of CSE but may not recognise this.

5.13.6 The school understands children can be at risk of, or involved in, serious violent crime. This can result in an increase absence from school or college, a change in friendships, decline in educational attainment, significant change in wellbeing, or signs of unexplained injuries.

5.14 Sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude and semi-nude images or videos

5.14.1 Sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude and semi-nude images or videos, including self-generated intimate images and/or videos and AI-generated imagery, refers to the creation, possession and sharing of such images or videos between children. This includes;

- A person under the age of 18 creating and sharing self-generated intimate images and/or videos of themselves with a peer under the age of 18;
- A person under the age of 18 sharing sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with a peer under the age of 18 or an adult;
- A person under the age of 18 being in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18.

5.14.2 Charter Academy School has a responsibility to educate children in the risks relating to 'sharing consensual or non-consensual nude images or videos' and how to keep themselves safe online. E-safety policy Relationships and Sex Education policy Online safety and Cyber Security policy

5.14.3 Any incidents or suspected incidents of 'sharing consensual or non-consensual nude images or videos including those generated using AI' should be reported to the DSL without delay.

5.14.4 Once reported to the DSL, the DSL will decide on the appropriate course of action. This could include;

- Referrals to the Children and Family Initial Response Service in regards to all parties involved (also the police if urgent response required);
- Confiscation of mobile phones in line with guidance 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation, (July 2022);
- Sanctions in accordance with behaviour policy;
- Support for young people involved to prevent reoccurrence;

5.14.5 Any incidents of 'sharing consensual or non-consensual nude images or videos including those generated by AI' involving the following will result in a Request for support referral and sometimes a Police referral;

- Adult involvement;
- Coercion or blackmail;
- Children under the age of 13;
- Extreme, or violent content;
- Immediate risk of harm.

5.14.6 Staff should not view, copy, print, share or forward images or videos of this nature. Any concerns should be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Devices will be secured where appropriate, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will determine the next course of action in accordance with the current UKCIS, DFE and safeguarding guidance.

5.14.7 We will work with parents as necessary if their child is involved in the sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude images or videos.

5.14.8 We operate a culture of safeguarding and young people should feel confident to disclose if they have sent an inappropriate image of themselves. Children who share, receive or are affected by self-generated intimate images and/or videos will be supported

appropriately and in a non-judgemental manner. Children will always be supported to retrieve and delete the images.

5.15 Domestic Abuse

5.15.1 Domestic abuse can be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. It can also include psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional acts of abuse.

5.15.2 The school recognises that children can be a victim of Domestic Abuse by seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects or suffering domestic abuse in their own personal relationships. These all have a detrimental impact on children's health, well-being, development and ability to learn.

5.16 Searching, Screening and Confiscation

5.16.1 Where necessary, searching, screening and confiscation will be used to safeguard a child/children in Charter Academy School.

5.16.2 The school adheres to 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools (July 2022).

5.13.3 Please see searching, screening and confiscation policy (should either be a standalone policy, in positive handling or in behaviour policy) for further information.

5.17 Online Safety

5.17.1 The school recognises that in today's world, children need to be safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material with many children having unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via their mobile phone. Filtering and monitoring arrangements will be reviewed at least annually and records of these reviews maintained. The breadth of issues can be categorised currently into four areas of risk as taken from Keeping Children Safe In Education 2026:

- Content – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content (pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.)
- Contact – being subject to harmful online interaction with other users (peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit)
- Conduct – online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm (making, sending and receiving explicit images)
- Commerce – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams

5.17.2 The school understand that the above can take place on a students phone or smart device (including smart watches, smart glasses and 'air tags') whilst at school/college or elsewhere. The school have responded to this by having a whole school approach to online safety which aims to protect and educate students, parents and staff in their use of technology. (See Online Safety and Behaviour policies)

5.17.3 The school has also established mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any concerns highlighted through our filter and monitoring systems for both staff and

students. The effectiveness of this is regularly reviewed with staff aware of how to escalate concerns.

- Impero is our safeguarding monitoring tool which takes a screenshot of the computer screen and alerts the DSL and Headteacher for further investigation
- Screenshots will be escalated depending on the severity, and if necessary further investigation will take place and the outcome will be logged on CPOMS
- SOPHOS is the filtering system that includes firewall – set at Trust level to block content within a range of categories e.g. extremism, gambling, pornography, self-harm, violence
- SOPHOS creates logs of material that it has blocked and this is reviewed at Trust level
- Guest accounts with wifi access are also monitored
- Impero routinely updates in line with the current situation

The effectiveness of filtering and monitoring systems will be formally reviewed and recorded annually and reported to governors.

5.18 Serious violence

5.18.1 Staff will be alert to indicators that a child may be at risk of or involved in serious violence and will report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSLs.

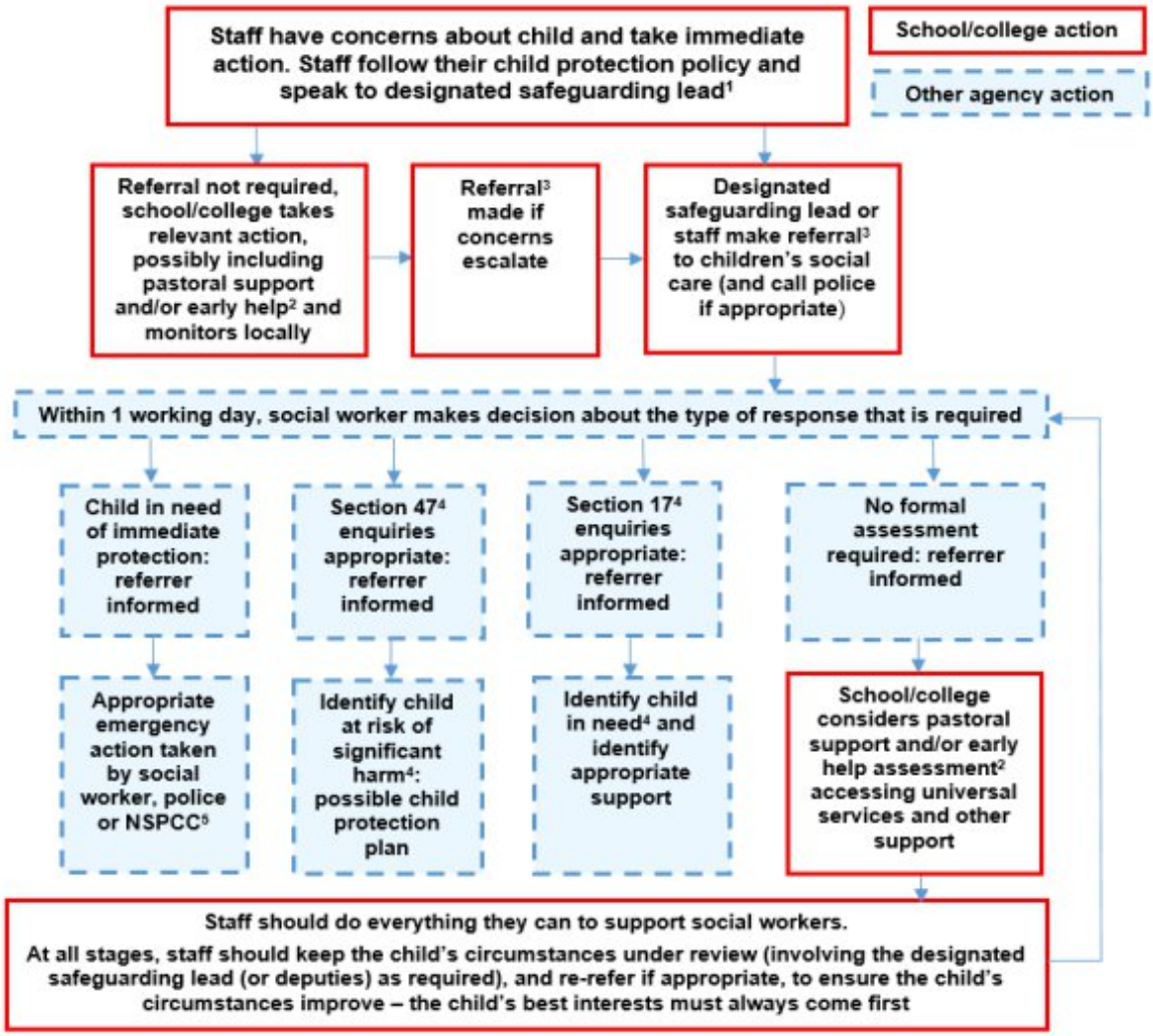
5.19 Referral pathways

5.19.1 Any concerns regarding a child carrying, using or expressing an intention to use a weapon will be treated seriously and reported without delay. The DSL will assess risk and take appropriate action, including referrals to external agencies where required.

5.19.2 Charter Academy School recognises that children involved in serious violence may also be victims of abuse, exploitation or other safeguarding concerns and will ensure appropriate support is provided.

DRAFT – NOT CURRENT DfE POLICY

Figure 1: Flowchart setting out the actions taken where there are concerns about a child



[1] In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.
[2] Family Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated Family Help, a family help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Working Together to Safeguard Children provides detailed guidance on the Family Help process.
[3] Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. See Working Together to Safeguard Children.
[4] Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Working Together to Safeguard Children.
[5] This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

5.19.3 To raise concerns about children, members of staff should contact the Coventry Children and Family Initial Response Service by telephone to discuss the referral. They

should then complete the online Request for support form and submit this. The school will follow up referrals if we do not receive feedback from Children's Services to ascertain the outcome of all referrals.

Children and Family Initial Response Service telephone number: 02476 788 555

Children and Family Initial Response Service online referral form: Children's Responsive Services

Out of hours Emergency Duty Team: 02476 832 222

Prevent/Channel Referrals: Refer to MASH (mash@coventry.gov.uk) and to CTU_GATEWAY@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk

5.18.1 If a child's situation does not appear to be improving following a referral, the school may re-refer the child. We will also consider using the Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership's Managing Professional Disagreements policy. to ensure that our concerns have been addressed and that the situation improves for the child.

6 Record-keeping

6.1 All concerns, discussions and decisions made will be recorded in writing and kept confidential and stored securely. Records will be clear, comprehensive, actioned and outcome noted.

6.2 A written record of all safeguarding and/or child protection concerns, discussions and decisions made will be kept in individual children's files. This will be separate from the main school file and will only be accessed by the relevant safeguarding staff.

6.3 Charter Academy School keeps all safeguarding files electronically, using a system called Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMs).

6.4 Staff will submit all concerns in writing (on either CPOMS or a paper referral sheet) to the DSL at the earliest opportunity. This may be after having a verbal conversation, but conversations will also be followed up in writing.

6.5 In the event that a child moves school, the safeguarding file will be transferred to the new setting securely and separately from the main school file in a timely manner (within 5 days for in-year transfers). A confirmation of receipt should be obtained from the receiving school, once received by the new school, this school will not retain the information.

6.6 The school will seek to hold at least two emergency contacts for every child.

6.7 All personal information processed by the school will be managed in accordance with applicable data protection laws, including the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.

Charter Academy School recognises that data protection laws do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. Where appropriate, information will be shared with relevant agencies and professionals to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

All data processed by Charter Academy School is done so in line with the General Data Protection Guidelines and the Data Protection Act (2018) and Information Sharing (2024). DPA and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. Please see the Charter Academy School website for the GDPR Data Protection Policy.

6.8 Further information regarding information sharing and data protection in relation to safeguarding can be found within Keeping Children Safe in Education and Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers.

7 Photography and Images

7.1 Consent from parents to photograph children at school events for promotional reasons will be sought when the child joins Charter Academy School.

7.2 Parents can withdraw consent at any time and must notify the school if they do not wish their child's photographs to be used.

7.3 Photographs of children used publicly will not be displayed with their name or other identifiable personal information.

7.4 Photographs of children will be processed in line with the General Data Protection Regulation.

8 Family Help Assessment

8.1 Charter Academy School is committed to supporting families as soon as a possible problem arises. It is more effective to support a family through early help than reacting to a problem later. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers have a role to play in safeguarding children. Charter Academy School is committed to working closely with its neighbouring family hub to work with families in the community to improve outcomes for children.

***Charter – Mosaic Family Hub, Jardine Crescent, Tile Hill, CV4* 9PL Tel: 02476 787801**

8.2 Any child may benefit from Family Help, but as guided by KCSIE (2026) all school and college staff will be particularly alert to the potential need for Family Help for a child who:

• is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs

• has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)

• has a mental health need

• is a young carer

• is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines

• is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care

• has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.

• is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation

• is at risk of being radicalised or exploited

• has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending

• is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse

8.3 Charter Academy School works within the Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership's Effective Support for Children and Families in Coventry framework, available on the CSCP website.

9 Staff training

9.1 In order for staff to be able to understand and discharge their safeguarding and child protection duties, Charter Academy School has committed to training staff throughout the academic year. All staff members will be made aware of Charter Academy School's safeguarding processes and structures and will receive training on these as part of their induction. As part of this training and their annual refresher, they will also receive;

- This 'Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy';
- The staff Code of Conduct
- Copies of Part 1 Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026)
- School procedures for Children Absent From Education
- The school Behaviour Policy

9.2 Staff at Charter Academy School will undertake a range of training, dependent on staff roles and responsibilities. Training will include an annual safeguarding refresher for all staff. Other training may include: Designated Safeguarding Lead, Team Teach, PREVENT, CSE, CCE, Safeguarding briefings, School Nursing Team, Mental Health and CSCP training. Governors receive annual safeguarding training.

9.3 Charter Academy School recognises that children may engage in risky behaviours that may put them at additional risk of danger. These can include drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and the sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude images or videos. Staff will also be trained in these areas in order to be able to further recognise if a child is at risk of harm.

9.4 All staff are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

10 Safer Recruitment

10.1 Charter Academy School is committed to providing children with a safe environment, in which they can learn. We take safer recruitment seriously and all staff are subject to the following checks;

- Identity check;
- DBS clearance;
- Prohibition from teaching checks (where required);
- Barred List check;
- Section 128 checks (as required – governors, leadership and management);
- Reference check (two references required);
- Professional qualifications check ;
- Right to work in the UK check;
- Further checks for those who have lived outside the UK;
- Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006 checks (as required).
- Online search on shortlisted candidates as part of its due diligence checks; and
- A health declaration and any necessary occupational health checks will be undertaken in accordance with the Equality Act 2010

10.2 A record of all checks completed for members of staff will be recorded on the Single Central Record.

10.3 All new members of staff will be required to obtain DBS clearance. Charter Academy School reserves the right to re-check DBS clearance for any member of staff where information is received that indicates that they may pose a risk to children and may ask candidates to be registered on the DBS update service.

10.4 At least one member of every interview panel will have undergone Safer Recruitment training which will be refreshed every 2 years.

10.5 We take proportionate decisions on whether to check individuals above and beyond what is legally required dependant on individual circumstance.

10.6 Any visitor to the school who has not been subject to the necessary checks will be supervised at all times and risk assessed.

10.7 All safer recruitment practices at Charter Academy School comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026). See Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education for further information. See Safer Recruitment policy for further details.

11 Allegations of abuse against staff

11.1 Charter Academy School takes all safeguarding matters including low level concerns and/or allegations that harm to a child has occurred against staff (including agency, volunteers and contractors) seriously and will manage them in line with this policy, Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026) and the CSCP Guidance, **'Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers'.**

11.2 Allegations or concerns may include:

- Staff having behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Staff possibly committing a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Staff behaving towards a child or children in a way that indicates they he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- Staff behaving or possibly behaving in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (including behaviour outside of work). This is known as 'Transferable risk'.

11.3 If a concern or allegation of abuse arises against the Headteacher, or should there be a conflict of interest to the Headteacher, it must be immediately reported to the Chair of Governors.

11.4 If a concern or allegation of abuse arises against any member of staff, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor other than the Headteacher, it must be reported to the Headteacher without delay.

11.5 Concerns or allegations of abuse against staff must be reported to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors as appropriate and not discussed directly with the person involved.

11.6 The Headteacher or Chair of Governors should consider if the concern or allegation meets the harms threshold as outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) guidance indicating that a person in a Position of Trust 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

• behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

• behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

11. 7 If they feel the criteria is met then they should refer in to Coventry LADO using the online referral form on:

https://myaccount.coventry.gov.uk/service/Allegations_against_people_who_work_in_positions_of_trust_with_children_referral

The Headteacher or Chair of Governors can also seek guidance/advice if unsure by emailing lado@coventry.gov.uk.

11.8 'Low-level' concern does not mean it is not significant. This is a term used for any concern (no matter how small) that an adult working with a child may have breached the staff Code of Conduct and does not meet the harm threshold. Examples of which may include:

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door. Or;
- Humiliating pupils.

The details of the LADO can be found of the front of this policy.

11.9 Concerns relating to a position of trust issue will be referred to the Local Authority designated officer within 24 hours. In accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026,* the school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

11.10 If a child has suffered or may have suffered abuse or harm, a MASH referral will also be made.

11.11 In the instances where an allegation is dealt with internally, the Local Authority designated officer will provide information and support to Charter Academy School in managing the allegation.

11.12 A referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service will be made if a member of staff is dismissed or removed from their post as a result of safeguarding concerns, irrespective of whether they have resigned.

11.13 Supply Teachers and all contracted staff

11.13.1 Although the school does not directly employ supply teachers and contractors, the school will ensure that any concerns or allegations are referred to LADO and the relevant agency informed as the employer.

11.13.2 The school will never cease to use a supply teacher for safeguarding reasons without liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer and reaching a suitable outcome.

11.13.3 Governing bodies/proprietors will liaise with the supply agency to determine whether to suspend or redeploy the supply teacher whilst they carry out their investigation.

11.13.4 The school will inform supply agencies of its process for managing allegations, including inviting the agency's human resource manager to meetings and regularly updating agencies on relevant school policies. The school will usually take the lead because agencies do not have direct contact with children or staff, so will not be able to gather information.

11.14 Governors

11.14.1 If an allegation or concern is about a Governor, Charter Academy School will follow local procedures.

11.15 Volunteers

11.15.1 Risk assessments and a DBS check will be requested for all volunteers. Under no circumstances will a volunteer prior to satisfactory checks being completed be alone with children unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

11.16 Whistleblowing

11.16.1 Charter Academy School operates a culture of safeguarding and all staff should report any concerns about poor or unsafe practice, or Charter Academy School's safeguarding processes to the senior leadership team.

11.16.2 Appropriate whistleblowing procedures are in place whereby the senior leadership team will take all concerns seriously.

11.16.3 In the event that a member of staff is unable to raise an issue with senior leadership in school, they should refer to Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education for additional guidance on whistleblowing procedures.

11.17 Complaints Procedure

11.17.1 The School operates a complaint procedure which will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a pupil that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a pupil or attempting to humiliate them, bullying or belittling a pupil or discriminating

against them in some way. Complaints are managed by the headteacher, other members of the senior leadership team and governors.

11.17.2 Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures. (Also refer to Low level concerns)

11.17.3 Complaints which escalate into a child protection concern will automatically be managed under the school's child protection procedures.

12 Promoting safeguarding and welfare in the curriculum

12.1 Charter Academy School recognises the importance of teaching children how to stay safe and look after their mental health and are committed to equipping children with the skills and knowledge to have successful and happy lives.

12.2 The school will teach children about safeguarding, including online safety. Pupils will receive age-appropriate education about artificial intelligence, deepfakes, online manipulation, misinformation and disinformation to support safe and responsible use of technology. As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, the school will cover relevant issues in line with government guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education.

12.3 Schools and colleges play a crucial role in preventative education. Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-school or college approach that prepares pupils and students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment. The school/college will have a clear set of values and standards, upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school/college life. These will be underpinned by the school/college's behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence based RSHE delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum (RSHE)

12.4 Children at Charter Academy School will receive the following as part of our promotion of safeguarding across the curriculum: Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE); Sex and Relationship Education (SRE); Speak out and Stay Safe programme (NSPCC); PANTS (NSPCC); Anti-Bullying work and Online Safety work. The school values the opinion of its pupils and through pupil voice views are sought on how safe children feel, online safety, bullying and any other identified areas annually. We participate in annual- anti bullying week, online safety week, and many other safeguarding events. Keeping safe is also promoted through assemblies such as road safety, stranger danger, keeping safe in the dark, keeping safe in the sun. Parents are encouraged to keep their children safe through regular inserts on the school's weekly newsletter. Posters throughout school give children the named people they should go to should they have a worry.

12.5 Education at home and remote learning

12.5.1 Charter Academy School recognises that children both on-site and off-site are vulnerable to abuse and radicalisation online. Children who are at home may be spending more time online and this increases their vulnerability.

12.5.2 Charter Academy recognises that additional safeguarding arrangements are required to ensure that children are safe online.

12.5.3 Children who are not attending school have access to online safety guidance on our school website and through the communication tool Dojo that the school uses to communicate with home. Esafety guidance has been shared with children across school as part of their Computing curriculum. Further guidance has been added to Class Dojo for children and parents to access.

12.5.4 Governors will review arrangements to ensure that they continue to be appropriate.

12.5.5 Online activity in school will continue to be monitored through our usual IT monitoring systems. Impero alerts are sent to the DSL and Headteacher. The DSL/DDSL will follow school procedures for such incidents.

12.5.6 If there is a need for children to be educated remotely, there are protocols detailed in the school's Remote Learning Policy, that will be followed. Charter Academy will continue to operate under this policy and KCSIE/WTTSC whilst children are learning at home.

13 Children Looked After

13.1 The most common reason for children to be looked-after is because they have experienced abuse and/or neglect. Charter Academy School recognises that children looked after may have additional vulnerabilities by virtue of this. The Designated Lead for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children is Laura Drew (Deputy Headteacher).

13.2 Staff will receive training on how to best safeguard children who are Looked-After and who have been Previously Looked-After.

13.3 The school will work with Personal Advisors when children leave care (where applicable).

13.4 Charter Academy School is committed to working with other agencies to ensure the best outcomes for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After children.

14 Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or physical health needs

14.1 As outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026), Charter Academy School is aware that children with additional needs or disabilities may be more vulnerable to abuse both online and offline and additional barriers may exist when recognising abuse and neglect. This could be because;

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities or certain medical conditions being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- Being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content.

14.2 Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the designated safeguarding lead and SENCO. Staff will also be trained in recognising signs of abuse in children with SEN and disabilities or certain medical conditions.

14.3 Staff will take into account the needs of a child when responding to concerns of abuse or when taking a disclosure. We recognise that some children require specialist intervention to communicate and advice from the SENCO will be sought in these circumstances.

14.4 Safeguarding learning opportunities within the curriculum will be appropriately differentiated to ensure all children can access it.

15 Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions

15.1 Charter Academy School will seek to avoid the use of restrictive interventions wherever possible. There may be occasions when staff are required to use reasonable force to safeguard children. We will not use any more force than is proportionate, necessary and in the best interests of protecting pupils and/or others from harm.

15.2 There may be occasions when staff are required to use reasonable force to safeguard children, prevent injury, prevent serious damage to property or maintain good order and discipline. Any use of force will be lawful, reasonable, proportionate, necessary and for the minimum time required to achieve a legitimate aim. Staff will not use any more force than is necessary in the circumstances.

15.3 The school adopts Team Teach principles and staff receive appropriate training in behaviour support, de-escalation and, where required, positive handling strategies. De-escalation techniques will always be considered before any restrictive intervention is used unless there is an immediate risk of harm.

15.4 Particular consideration will be given to the needs of pupils with SEND, medical conditions or other vulnerabilities. Where appropriate, risk assessments and individual behaviour support plans will identify preventative strategies and agreed responses.

15.5 Any significant incident involving the use of reasonable force or other restrictive intervention will be recorded promptly in accordance with school procedures. Records will include the circumstances leading to the incident, de-escalation strategies used, the nature of the intervention, the outcome and any follow-up actions.

15.6 Parents/carers will be informed of significant incidents involving the use of force as soon as reasonably practicable, unless there are safeguarding reasons not to do so.

15.7 Further information can be found in the school Behaviour Policy, Physical Intervention/Positive Handling Policy and the DfE guidance *Use of Reasonable Force and Other Restrictive Interventions in Schools (2026)*.

16 Work Experience/Alternative Provision

16.1 Charter Academy School will continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of Students placed with an alternative provision provider or work experience and will be satisfied that this provider meets the needs of the pupil. Written confirmation from the

provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out will be sought on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff.

16.2 The DSL will continue to have oversight of all pupils accessing any part of their learning from an alternative provider or delivery online or offsite provided by any organisation or individual not employed by the school. The DSL will ensure that robust arrangements are in place for timely and effective information sharing of safeguarding information between the school and alternative/external providers.

16.3 The DSL will also take responsibility for ensuring that robust procedures are in place to confirm attendance and to enable the swift reporting of non-attendance and children going missing from alternative/ external providers at any time when they should be with that provider.

17 Use of school or college premises for non-school/college activities

The School may hire or rent out school or college facilities/premises to organisations or individuals. Safeguarding is still considered with this, and the school will seek assurance that the provider has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place including liaising directly with the school on these matters were appropriate. This applies whether the children in attendance are on the school's roll or not. The governing body/proprietor will ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement and that failure to comply with this would result in termination of the agreement. Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings offers guidance on this. In the event of an incident, the school will follow its own policy including informing the LADO.

18 Children staying with host families

18.1 Charter Academy School recognises its responsibility to safeguard children who stay with host families as part of exchange visits, educational visits or other school-arranged activities.

18.2 Where the school arranges host family accommodation, appropriate suitability and safeguarding checks will be undertaken in line with KCSIE requirements. Any safeguarding concerns identified before, during or after the placement will be managed.

18.3 Where arrangements meet the definition of private fostering, the school will notify the relevant local authority and work with partner agencies to promote the child's welfare and safety.

19 Boarding schools and Residential settings

19.1 Charter Academy School recognises that children living in boarding or residential settings require robust safeguarding arrangements to ensure their safety, welfare and wellbeing.

19.2 Safeguarding procedures apply throughout the residential day and night. Staff will receive appropriate safeguarding training, maintain professional boundaries and follow established reporting procedures for all concerns, allegations and incidents of child-on-child abuse

19.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will work closely with residential leaders and relevant agencies to ensure safeguarding concerns are identified, shared and responded to promptly, using a child-centred approach

20 Summary

20.1 The school is committed to safeguarding children and will always make safeguarding decisions that are in the best interests of each child. For further information or if you have any queries about this policy, please contact the school.

Appendix A

The school's safeguarding policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the following policies which are available on the Charter Academy website.

The school adheres to Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership Policies, which can be found here:

- Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers (CSCP)
- Allegations Against Members of Staff
- Anti – Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Children/Young people with Medical Needs
- Children Missing in Education Procedures
- Concerns and Complaints Policy
- Critical Incident Plan

- Data Protection Policy and GDPR Privacy Notice
- Drugs and Alcohol Policy
- Equalities Policy
- Managing Professional Disagreements (CSCP)
- Health & Safety Policy
- HR & Governance Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Acceptable use of the Internet Policy
- Medicine & First Aid Policy
- PSHE Policy
- SRE Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Site Security Policy
- SEND Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Trips and Visits Policy
- Positive Handling Policy
- Visitor Management/External Speaker's Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

Appendix B – Further Safeguarding Information

Types of Abuse

As outlined in paragraph 4.4, the school will take action if we believe a child is at risk of or is suffering from abuse. Abuse is not limited to physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect. For further information on the definitions of the types of abuse below, please refer to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026), Annex A.

See below for policy information relating to other key safeguarding issues. All decisions taken in responding to concerns of abuse will be taken in the best interests of the child.

Bullying, including cyber- or online-bullying

Charter Academy School takes all forms of bullying seriously and will respond sensitively and quickly to any reported bullying. Children should report any bullying to a staff member e.g. class teacher, teaching assistant, pastoral staff member or to the DSL or to any trusted member of staff and we will work to resolve it. We also teach children about the dangers

of bullying through our curriculum. Bullying can take many forms and we have several policies that cover different aspects of bullying. Please see the Anti-Bullying Policy, the Behaviour Policy, Online Safety policy and paragraph 5.8 of this policy for further information.

Child criminal exploitation (including involvement in county lines)

Charter Academy School is fully aware of the risk of child criminal exploitation and staff are trained to notice any signs or indicators that this may be occurring, for example missing episodes. Each school within the federation has an attendance lead/team who closely monitors attendance. The DSL should be alerted if child criminal exploitation is suspected.

Domestic abuse

Charter Academy School is aware that exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and staff are trained to notice any signs or indicators that this may be occurring. The DSL receives notifications from Operation Encompass about any incidents of domestic violence, where these have required a police presence. The DSL should be alerted if there are signs of domestic abuse either through pupils or parents/carers.

Fabricated or induced illness

Charter Academy School is aware that fabricated or induced illness is a form of child abuse and staff are trained to notice any signs or indicators that this may be occurring. It is highlighted to staff that this is likely to occur over a long period of time and therefore it is crucial to record all concerns, no matter how small. The DSL should be alerted if there are signs of fabricated or induced illness.

Faith-based abuse

Charter Academy School staff know that abuse linked to faith or belief (including belief in witchcraft or possession) is not acceptable by people of any culture, community or faith. Staff know that they need to alert the DSL if they are concerned and the DSL will take appropriate action.

Female genital mutilation (A form of so-called 'honour-based' abuse)

Charter Academy School staff are fully aware that FGM is illegal and they are trained to notice any signs or indicators that this may be planned, especially in the approach to a long school break. Staff know that they need to alert the DSL if they are concerned and the DSL will alert, as necessary, Social Services and the police. If teachers have reason to suspect FGM has occurred they are aware they have a duty to report it to the police.

Forced marriage (A form of so-called 'honour-based' abuse)

Charter Academy School staff are aware that forced marriage is a crime and they are trained to notice any signs or indicators that this may be planned, especially in the approach to a long school break. Staff know that they need to alert the DSL if they are concerned and the DSL will take appropriate action.

Gangs or youth violence

Charter Academy School understands that it has a duty and a responsibility to protect pupils and students from the danger of gangs and youth violence. Staff are trained to notice common signs or indicators that any pupil is in a gang or may be affected by gangs or youth violence. Staff know that they need to alert the DSL if they are concerned and the DSL will take appropriate action.

Gender-based violence

Charter Academy School understands that it has a duty and a responsibility to protect pupils and students from the danger of gender-based violence. Staff are trained to notice any signs or indicators that any pupil is affected by gender-based violence. Staff know that they need to alert the DSL if they are concerned and the DSL will take appropriate action. Please see the Inclusion and Equality Policy and the Single Equality Policy for further information.

Hate

Charter Academy School takes all forms of hate against pupils very seriously and will respond sensitively and quickly to any reported incidences. Staff know that they need to alert the DSL if they are concerned and the DSL will take appropriate action. Please see the Anti-Bullying Policy, and the Behaviour Policy for further information.

Homelessness

Charter Academy School will support families where homelessness is an issue and staff are trained to alert an appropriate member of staff (DSL and Pastoral Team) if this is an issue. The Safeguarding Teams have good communication and work in partnership with their local Family Hub and will alert them if homelessness is an issue affecting a pupil and school and the hub will work together to support the pupil and their family.

(So-called) 'Honour-based' abuse

Charter Academy School staff know that Honour-based abuse can include female genital mutilation, forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing. Staff are aware that abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. Staff know that they need to alert the DSL if they are concerned and the DSL will take appropriate action.

Radicalisation and Extremism

Charter Academy School staff are aware that children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation and staff have been trained to recognise and respond to any concerns around radicalisation. Staff know that the federation is subject to the Prevent duty which prevents people from being drawn into terrorism. Staff are aware of Channel, which is a programme that focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Staff know that they need to alert the DSL if they are concerned about radicalisation or extremism and the DSL will take appropriate action, including a referral to Channel, if this is appropriate. Please see the Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation guidance for further information.

Relationship abuse

Charter Academy School staff are aware that exposure to relationship abuse can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and staff are trained to notice any signs or indicators that this may be occurring. The DSL should be alerted if there are signs of domestic abuse either through pupils or parents/carers.

Serious Violence

Charter Academy School understands that it has a duty and a responsibility to protect pupils from the risk of or involvement in serious violent crime. Staff are trained to notice any signs or indicators that this may be occurring such as absence from school, signs of self-harm or unexplained gifts; amongst others. Staff know that they need to alert the DSL if they are concerned a pupil may be at risk or involved in serious violent crime and the DSL will take appropriate action, including referrals to outside agencies as necessary.

Sexual violence or sexual harassment (including peer-on-peer abuse)

Charter Academy School understands that it has a duty and a responsibility to protect pupils and students from sexual violence or sexual harassment (including peer-on-peer abuse). Staff are trained to notice any signs or indicators that this is occurring and they know that it is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. Staff know that they need to alert the DSL if they are concerned and the DSL will take appropriate action, including referrals to outside agencies as necessary.

Sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude images and videos

Charter Academy School is aware of its duty to protect children against sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude images and videos (youth produced sexual imagery – photos or videos). Staff know that they should alert the DSL immediately if sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude images and videos is suspected and they must not view the imagery themselves. The DSL will hold an initial review meeting, interviews will be held with the young people involved and parents will be informed (if this is appropriate). The police and social services will be informed, if this is deemed necessary following the initial review meeting.

Trafficking and modern slavery

Charter Academy School staff are aware that they need to be vigilant about trafficking and modern slavery. They are trained to notice any signs or indicators that this may have or be occurring. Staff know that they need to alert the DSL if they are
concerned and the DSL will take appropriate action.

Children absent from education, home or care

The school will also take action to protect;

- Children absent from education
- Children missing from home or care

Children Absent from Education

If a child is missing from school it is the school's responsibility to:

- make telephone enquiries to the parent/carer/relatives/contacts;
- write to the parents/carers/relatives;
- visit the home of the child/relatives;
- speak to other people to ascertain the child's whereabouts e.g. friends, neighbours and other relatives

School will work in partnership with their Local Authority Attendance Officer and local Family Hub.

After a **maximum** of 10 days (less if the child is deemed vulnerable e.g. under social care, previous attendance concerns etc..) if the whereabouts of the child and family are still not known following these checks, the school should follow the steps outlined in Children Missing Education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools (2025) This includes completing a Child Missing from Education form.

If the missing pupil, or any sibling, is subject to a Child Protection Plan, then action should be taken on the same day. Schools should refer to the Child Protection Plan and inform the Key Worker of the child's circumstances immediately. If the child is Looked After by the Local Authority, then the child's Social Worker and/or carer should be contacted directly.

See the Charter Academy's Attendance Policy for further information.

Children Missing from home or care

All staff are aware that children going missing from home or care is a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities: children may run away from a problem e.g. abuse or neglect at home, or they may run to somewhere they want to be. Staff are trained to notice signs and indicators that this has occurred and they will alert the DSL. The DSL will notify the relevant authorities i.e. social services and the police. See Children missing from home or care: statutory guidance for local authorities and the attendance policy for further information.

Private Fostering

The school have a duty to refer any children who are living in a private fostering arrangement to the local authority.

We will do this through a MASH referral. It is important that parents/carers inform us if a child is going to be staying at an alternative address to that of their primary care-givers for more than 28 days.

Indicators of abuse

See below for possible indicators of abuse. (Taken from *What to do if you are worried a child is being abused*, 2015)

- Children whose behaviour changes – they may become aggressive, challenging,
- disruptive, withdrawn or clingy, or they might have difficulty sleeping or start wetting the bed;
- Children with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty;
- Children with consistently poor hygiene;
- Children who make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends, without an obvious reason;

- Children who don't want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities;
- Children who are having problems at school, for example, a sudden lack of concentration and learning or they appear to be tired and hungry;
- Children who talk about being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers;
- Children who reach developmental milestones, such as learning to speak or walk, late, with no medical reason;
- Children who are regularly missing from school or education;
- Children who are reluctant to go home after school;
- Children with poor school attendance and punctuality, or who are consistently late being picked up;
- Parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to practitioners' concerns;
- Parents who collect their children from school when drunk, or under the influence of drugs;
- Children who drink alcohol regularly from an early age;
- Children who are concerned for younger siblings without explaining why;
- Children who talk about running away; and
- Children who shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements.

The school recognises that the above list of indicators is not exhaustive and staff will receive training on indicators of abuse.

Appendix C

Flowchart for responding to incidents of Peer on Peer abuse (child on child abuse)

Considerations – risk assessment

- Vulnerability of the child.
- Coercion
- How shared and where
- Impact on children
- Age of children

5 points for referral

1. Adult involvement.
2. Coercion or blackmail
3. Extreme or violent
4. Under 13
5. Immediate risk of harm

Initial disclosure
This could come from a pupil directly, a parent, a pupils friend.

Initial review with safeguarding team
At this initial stage the safeguarding team review the information and consider the 5 points for immediate referral. The team will also use the Brook Traffic Light Tool to inform their decision and possible actions.

Police / Social Care/ MASH referral
Refer to your local arrangements for dealing with incidents and contact local services.

Risk assessment/ dealing with the incident.
Consider the risk of harm and at any point if there are 'causes for concern' you can refer back to police/social care.

Management in school
Ensure parents are informed and the incident recorded following all child protection and safeguarding procedures.