Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Updated August 2026 to reflect Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
Next Review: September 2027
Reviewed by: Charlotte Burdett (Designated Safeguarding Lead)
Endorsed by: Claire Barlow (Care and Compliance Trustee)

Related Policies: RSE & PSHEE Policy, Behaviour Policy, SEND Policy, Equal Opportunities/Inclusion Policy, Accessibility Policy, Attendance Policy, Online Safety Policy, Safer Recruitment Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Whistleblowing Policy.

Introduction

Waldorf Cambridge fully recognises its responsibilities under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (as amended), the Independent School Standards Regulations (2014), the Children Acts 1989/2004, and subsequent legislation.

This policy is informed by statutory guidance, including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2026, in force from 1 September 2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2026)
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (May 2024)
- Prevent Duty Guidance (March 2024)
- Information Sharing Guidance (May 2024)
- Cyber Security Standards for Schools and Colleges (2023)
- DfE Guidance on Filtering, Monitoring and Generative AI in Education (2025)
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- Crime and Policing Act 2026 (regulated activity provisions)

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff, trustees, volunteers, and contractors share a duty to protect children from harm, both in and outside school and online.

1. Prevention

1.1 Whole School Culture

- Children know there are trusted adults to whom they can speak.
- Staff actively challenge prejudice-related behaviour, including misogyny, misandry, racism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and other prejudice relating to a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010; such behaviour is never dismissed as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".
- Curriculum explicitly teaches consent, healthy relationships, resilience to misinformation, and online awareness.

All staff must maintain an active understanding of their individual safeguarding responsibilities, including how their role supports the DSL. Safeguarding responsibilities are distinct from pedagogical and pastoral duties, especially for Class Teachers**.** Safeguarding is always the responsibility of every staff member, including outside school hours and during school holidays.

1.2 Curriculum

Primary pupils learn:

- Unsafe family/friendship dynamics
- Body autonomy, safe/unsafe touch, secrets, online risks

Secondary pupils learn:

- Healthy friendships and intimate relationships
- Sexual harassment/violence, coercive control, consent
- Online reputation, harmful content, deepfakes, AI manipulation

2. Procedures

2.1 Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL/DDSLs)

- DSL: Charlotte Burdett
- DDSL: Sofia Muncke Moutinho
- DDSL: Begoña Telechea Velez
- Safeguarding Trustee: Joel Chalfen
- To ensure continuity of safeguarding cover, the school maintains a confidential shared safeguarding mailbox, monitored by the DDSLs, for periods when the DSL is unavailable due to illness, leave or other circumstances.

2.2 Referrals & Reporting

- All staff use MyConcern to log safeguarding issues.
- Urgent concerns must be raised in person with the DSL.
- Staff have a mandatory duty under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as amended) to report to the police any case where a girl under 18 discloses that FGM has been carried out on her, or where staff otherwise identify that FGM may have taken place.
- The Crime and Policing Act 2026 introduces a statutory duty for those in regulated activity with children, including teachers, to report to the appropriate authority when made aware that a child has been sexually abused; this policy will be updated to reflect operational guidance once the duty is brought into force by commencement regulations.
- If a child is at risk and the DSL is unavailable, staff must contact the Local Authority directly.
- Out of hours contacts:
    1. DSL: Charlotte Burdett – 07969 068862

2. **Immediate Danger:** If a child or adult is in immediate danger, call **999** for the police.
3. For out-of-hours emergencies in Cambridgeshire regarding a child or adult at risk (evenings, weekends, and bank holidays), contact the **Emergency Duty Team (EDT) at 01733 234724**.

Safeguarding concerns must be managed with strict confidentiality and communicated only through defined lines of responsibility. Staff must follow the agreed referral pathways and must not share information informally. A clear out-of-hours reporting protocol, supported by a flowchart, must be followed for concerns arising outside normal school hours.

2.3 Multi-Agency Working

- Liaise with Local Authority, Police, and safeguarding partners.
- Follow Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board (CPSCPB/ SCPB) procedures.

Information shared with partners must follow confidentiality principles and be provided only on a need-to-know basis.

2.4 Attendance

- Persistent absence is treated as a safeguarding risk.
- The school must escalate concerns to children's services.

2.5 Alternative Provision

- Written confirmation of safeguarding checks is required.
- DSL maintains oversight of attendance and placement.
- Half-termly reviews are undertaken.
- Placements may be terminated if safeguarding concerns arise.

3. Supporting Children

- We recognise that any child may be vulnerable to abuse. Additional attention is given to children with SEND, young carers, children at risk of exploitation (including criminal exploitation such as county lines, which may be committed or facilitated by an organised network or gang), those affected by domestic abuse, children with social workers, and children in kinship care.
- Mental health difficulties can themselves constitute a safeguarding concern and may also be an indicator of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff are alert to changes in a child's mental health or emotional wellbeing and consider whether these may signal an underlying safeguarding issue, escalating to the DSL where appropriate rather than treating such presentations solely as a pastoral or wellbeing matter.
- Children with SEND or relevant medical conditions can face additional barriers to recognising and disclosing abuse; any such concerns are addressed in close liaison between the DSL and the SENCo.

- A medical incident (for example relating to an allergy) will only trigger a safeguarding referral where it indicates a risk of neglect, abuse or exploitation.
- Where a pupil has a relevant medical condition, the DSL works in close liaison with the school's appointed allergy lead to ensure safeguarding and medical safety responses are aligned.

Staff must always maintain professional boundaries when supporting children and families. Only official school communication channels may be used to contact parents; personal messaging platforms such as WhatsApp must not be used.

4. Child-on-Child Abuse (including harassment and violence)

- Child-on-child abuse can happen between children of any age, in any school, and is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and the alleged perpetrator. It is preventable, and even where no cases have been reported, such abuse may still be taking place and simply not disclosed.
- It is never acceptable and must never be dismissed as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up', 'boys being boys', or any other language that excuses harmful behavior because of a child's gender., as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, misogyny, misandry and an unsafe environment for children. It is recognised that for some (but not all) forms of child-on-child abuse, girls are more likely to be victims and boys more likely to be perpetrators; all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and is taken equally seriously regardless of who is involved.

Child-on-child abuse can take many forms, including:

- bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying relating to any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 (including race, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation, and gender reassignment)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (teenage relationship abuse)
- physical abuse, and physical assault or the threat of harm involving a weapon
- harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence and sexual harassment, which may include misogyny or misandry
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of self-generated intimate images and videos, and AI-generated intimate images and videos
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent
- upskirting
- initiation or hazing-type violence and rituals

Serious violence is a continuing safeguarding concern and may involve physical assault or carrying, threatening with, or using a weapon. Where a child carries, uses or threatens to use a weapon, or expresses an intention to do so, staff must report this to the DSL (or a deputy) immediately. The DSL assesses the risk to the individual pupil and to others in the

school and, where appropriate, puts in place a safety and support plan, considering options to de-escalate peer conflict, in line with KCSIE 2026.

All staff must report any concern or allegation of child-on-child abuse, no matter how small, to the DSL immediately via MyConcern. Reports are recorded, investigated and responded to in a way that supports the victim, the alleged perpetrator and any other children affected, in line with Part five of KCSIE 2026. Systems for children to report abuse are well promoted, easily understood and accessible, and children are supported to report confidently, knowing their concerns will be taken seriously.

5. Online Safety, Filtering & AI Governance

- Age-appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place and their effectiveness is reviewed at least once every academic year by the senior leader responsible for filtering and monitoring, working with the DSL and IT support; checks are recorded.
- DSL oversees online safety procedures.
- The school is a mobile phone-free environment by default during the school day, in line with DfE statutory guidance on mobile phones in schools.
- School follows DfE guidance on Generative artificial intelligence in education and on filtering, monitoring and digital safety. This includes awareness of risks arising from pupils' interactions with AI chatbots and other generative AI systems, not solely AI-generated images or content.
- Staff and pupils are trained to critically assess online content.

6. Safer Recruitment & Allegations

- The school maintains a Single Central Record of all staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors, recording the required pre-appointment checks in line with Part Three of KCSIE 2026.
- Safer recruitment procedures are followed, including DBS, identity, and reference checks.
- Following the Crime and Policing Act 2026, the "supervision exemption" has been removed from regulated activity. From 1 September 2026, any volunteer who teaches, trains, instructs or supervises children frequently (more than 3 days in a 30-day period) or overnight is in regulated activity, regardless of whether they are supervised, and must have an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information. Existing volunteers affected by this change will have their barred list status checked accordingly.
- At least one panel member has Safer Recruitment training.
- Allegations against staff, supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors follow Part Four of KCSIE 2026 and are referred immediately to the LADO.
- Low-level concerns are recorded and monitored.

Staff must avoid conflicts of interest and uphold professional boundaries. Any situation that may compromise professional judgement must be reported to senior leadership or the DSL.

7. Governance & Oversight

- Safeguarding is embedded across all policies.
- Trustees receive safeguarding training.
- The DSL is given sufficient time, funding, training, resources and support to carry out the role effectively, including protected time proportionate to the size and complexity of the school. Robust cover arrangements are maintained for periods when the DSL is unavailable, including illness and leave, in line with the arrangements set out in section 2.1.
- In line with KCSIE 2026, all staff - including those who do not work directly with children, such as catering, site and administrative staff - read Part One of KCSIE in full as part of induction and annual refresher training; the condensed summary previously provided in Annex A has been withdrawn.
- Trainee teachers are included within the school's safeguarding and allegations management arrangements on the same basis as qualified staff, and receive appropriate safeguarding induction on arrival.
- Children's voices are listened to and acted upon.
- Annual safeguarding review submitted to the LA.

The school promotes a culture of critical self-reflection on confidentiality and professional conduct. Staff are expected to regularly review how they manage sensitive information, including within personal relationships.

8. RSHE & Gender Guidance

- RSHE policy reflects the DfE's statutory RSHE guidance (published July 2025), which becomes mandatory for all schools from 1 September 2026
- In line with Part Two of KCSIE 2026, the school maintains separate toilet and changing facilities on the basis of biological sex; pupils are not permitted to use facilities allocated to the opposite biological sex. Where a pupil does not wish to use the facility assigned to their biological sex, the school will provide a separate, secure, self-contained alternative, with the pupil's privacy and dignity prioritised throughout.
- The school follows the guidance on supporting children who are questioning their gender, including requests relating to social transition, as set out in Part Two of KCSIE 2026 (paragraphs 251–282). In line with this guidance, the school does not initiate any action relating to social transition and responds only where a pupil or their parent has raised a request; any school-level decision on social transition is led by the DSL; parents and carers are involved as a matter of course, save in narrow circumstances where this would place the child at greater risk of harm, in which case the DSL determines the appropriate course of action; and arrangements for toilets,

changing facilities and sport reflect the school's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

- Staff must not make or implement any change relating to a pupil's social transition - including changes to names, pronouns, uniform, or facilities used - in the absence of a formal decision taken through the school's agreed process; individual staff members do not have authority to agree such changes independently.
- Pupils should understand that anyone can be a victim of sexual violence, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or any other protected characteristic, and that the victim is never to blame. It is important to acknowledge that most sexual violence is committed against women and girls, and it often has a gendered component - for example, manifesting an inequality of power between men and women. However, anyone can be affected by sexual violence and teachers should avoid language which stigmatises boys or suggests that boys or men are always perpetrators or that girls or women are always victims.
- Both within and beyond the classroom, staff should be conscious of everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and stereotypes, and should take action to build a culture where prejudice is identified and tackled. Staff have an important role in modelling positive behaviour and avoiding language that might perpetuate harmful stereotypes. Pupils should understand the importance of challenging harmful beliefs and attitudes and should understand the links between sexism and misogyny and violence against women and girls. Where misogynistic ideas are expressed at school, staff should challenge the ideas, rather than the person expressing them.
- Pupils should have opportunities to develop positive conceptions of masculinity and femininity, including how to identify and learn from positive male role models. It is important for pupils to understand that most boys and young men are respectful to girls and young women and each other. Pupils may be exposed to online content which normalises harmful or violent sexual behaviours, which might include sexist and misogynistic influencers who normalise sexual harassment and abuse. Young people may be more vulnerable to this content when they have low self-esteem, are being bullied, or have other challenges in their lives. Teachers should encourage pupils to consider how this content may be harmful to both men and women, while avoiding stigmatising or perpetuating harmful stereotypes about boys, and avoiding directly signposting to specific content and content producers.

9. Confidentiality & Data Protection

- All safeguarding information is “special category data” under UK data protection law (the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR, and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025).
- Staff cannot promise confidentiality where safety is at risk.
- Information is shared on a need-to-know basis.

Staff must understand and uphold confidentiality, ensuring sensitive information is discussed only within appropriate professional contexts. Staff must use only approved school communication channels and must not share safeguarding information informally with friends, family members, or others outside the safeguarding structure.

10. Policy Monitoring & Review

- Reviewed annually or sooner if guidance changes.
- Next review due September 2027.

11. Professional Boundaries, Communication & Handover Protocol

11.1 Professional Boundaries

- Staff must maintain clear boundaries with pupils, families, and colleagues.
- Only official school communication channels may be used.
- Personal platforms (e.g., WhatsApp) must not be used for school communication.
- Conflicts of interest must be disclosed.

11.2 Support for the DSL Role

- Staff must understand their safeguarding responsibilities and the structure of the safeguarding system.
- Safeguarding responsibilities operate separately from teaching and pastoral roles.

11.3 Out-of-Hours Safeguarding Protocol

- Staff must follow the out-of-hours protocol for reporting concerns during evenings, weekends, and holidays.
- The DSL will maintain an accessible flowchart.

11.4 Confidentiality & Reflective Practice

- Staff must reflect regularly on how they handle and discuss sensitive information.
- Discussions about safeguarding cases must not occur within personal or informal contexts.
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11.5 Formal Handover of Safeguarding Information

- When a Class Teacher changes, a structured safeguarding handover must take place.
- Current and historical safeguarding concerns must be shared on a need-to-know basis.
- New staff must be briefed to prevent them receiving sensitive information informally from parents.

11.6 Communication from Parents During Holidays or Out-of-Hours, Including Where Their Child Is Implicated in a Safeguarding Concern

- Statutory safeguarding guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), does **not** require teachers to be contactable or available during evenings, weekends, or school holiday periods. Teachers are not expected to monitor communication or respond to messages outside their contracted working hours.

- However, in recognition of the relational nature of Waldorf Cambridge, where strong teacher–parent relationships are part of the educational culture, parents may occasionally contact a Class Teacher directly during a school holiday regarding a situation involving their child. This may include situations where their child is the subject of concern, a witness, or an alleged perpetrator.

To ensure confidentiality, protect children, and maintain statutory safeguarding processes, the following expectations apply:

11.6.1 Teachers are not required to respond to parents during holidays

Teachers are under no obligation to read or reply to communication received during holiday periods. They are not responsible for taking safeguarding action outside term time; this remains the responsibility of the DSL team and, where necessary, Children's Social Care.

11.6.2 If a teacher inadvertently sees a safeguarding-related message

Should a teacher become aware of a message from a parent during school closure that appears to relate to a safeguarding matter:

- The teacher must not engage in discussion, offer advice, gather information, or provide reassurance.
- The teacher must not confirm or deny whether a concern has been raised.
- The teacher should send one neutral redirection message only, such as:

"Thank you for your message. As school is closed, I cannot discuss any safeguarding matters. If you are concerned about a child's safety or wellbeing, please contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead at safeguarding@waldorfcambridge.uk. If you believe a child is at immediate risk of harm, please contact the Police (999) or the Local Authority Emergency Duty Team on 01733 234724."

This complies with statutory guidance requiring that safeguarding information be shared through appropriate channels and handled only by trained staff.

11.6.3 No disclosure or exchange of safeguarding information

Teachers must not share any information about safeguarding concerns, including whether:

- a report has been made,
- another child is involved,
- Social Care has been contacted,
- the school has taken a particular action.

Such information constitutes **special category data** under UK data protection law and may only be managed by the DSL.

11.6.4 Reporting parent contact to the DSL

Any contact from a parent relating to safeguarding - whether the teacher responded with a redirection message or not - must be reported to the DSL. This ensures appropriate recording, oversight, and professional containment.

11.6.5 Courtesy DSL notification to Class Teachers

If a significant safeguarding concern arises during a school holiday and the DSL or Deputy DSL makes a referral to Children's Social Care:

- The DSL team will send a **courtesy notification** to the relevant Class Teacher.
- The notification will be brief and will **not include any confidential details**.
- Its purpose is to ensure the teacher is aware that a matter has been managed, acknowledging the relational structure of the school.
- Teachers are not required to take any action in response.

11.6.6 Rationale

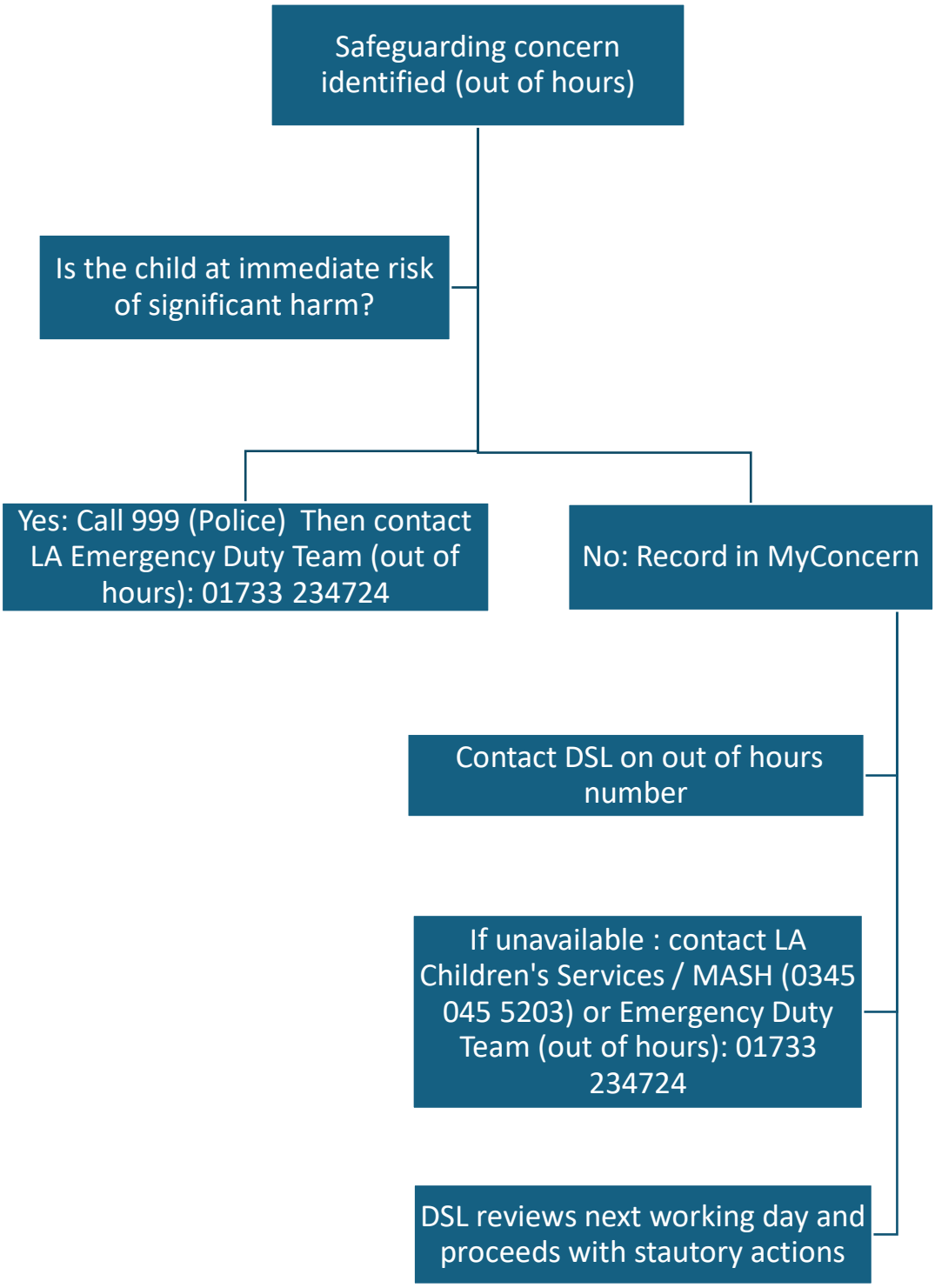
This approach ensures that:

- safeguarding is managed by trained DSL professionals,
- statutory confidentiality and information-sharing requirements are upheld,
- the integrity of Social Care processes is protected,
- Class Teachers are not placed in vulnerable or conflicted positions,
- professional boundaries are preserved within the close relational structure of the school.

Signatures

- Safeguarding Trustee: ?
- Designated Safeguarding Lead: Charlotte Burdett

Appendix A
Safeguarding Protocol – Out of Hours Flowchart



Appendix B
Safeguarding Policy: Parent–Staff Member Responding to a Safeguarding Concern

1. Immediate Principle

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Any concern - no matter how small - must be acted upon immediately and recorded. Parent–staff members must follow the same reporting pathway as all staff to protect confidentiality and professional boundaries.

2. If a Child Makes a Disclosure

- Stay calm, listen, reassure without promising confidentiality.
- Use minimal, open questions only.
- Record the disclosure promptly using factual language.
- Report immediately to the DSL or deputy.

Do NOT investigate, express judgement, or share information outside safeguarding channels.

3. Observing Concerning Behaviour or Indicators

Record what you see or hear factually and report immediately to the DSL. Do not interpret or investigate.

4. When a Parent or Adult Shares a Concern

Listen, acknowledge, avoid giving personal opinions, explain you must pass this to the DSL, then record and report.

5. Professional Boundaries for Parent–Staff Members

Parent–staff must maintain confidentiality, avoid discussing concerns socially, and avoid role confusion. Concerns related to their own child must still be passed to the DSL and not handled personally.

6. Recording Requirements

Records must be factual, dated, timed, attributable, and uploaded to the safeguarding system immediately.

7. Reporting to DSL

Report concerns to the DSL or DDSL. Concerns about staff must be reported to the DSL or Teaching and Learning Lead, and/or LADO.

8. When the Parent–Staff Member *Is* the DSL

8.1 If the concern does NOT involve their own child: DSL follows standard procedure.
8.2 If the concern DOES involve their own child or close connections: The DSL must pass the case to the DDSL and step back completely.
8.3 Allegations against the DSL must be referred to the Teaching and Learning Lead or LADO.
8.4 Conflicts of interest must be recorded and the DSL must not access the case file.

9. Immediate Danger

Call 999 if a child is in immediate danger. Notify DSL/Deputy and record actions.

10. Follow-Up

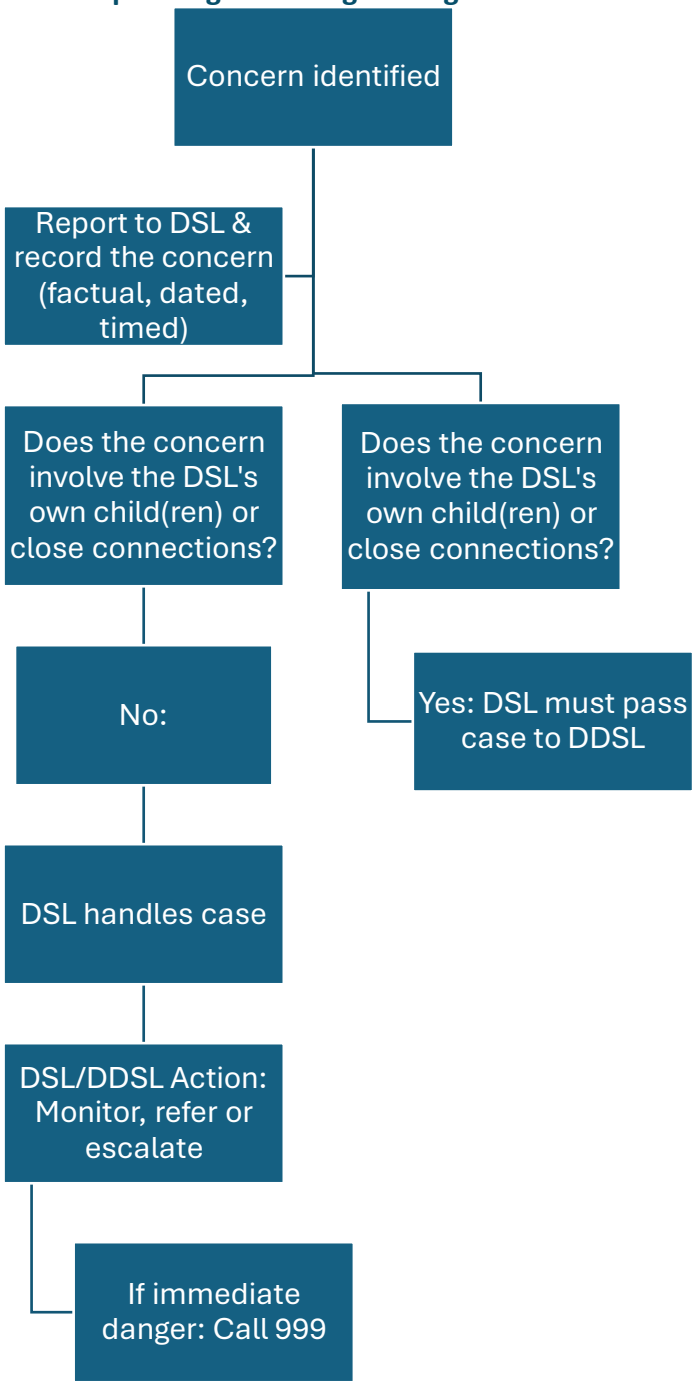
DSL determines next steps. Parent–staff should not follow up with families. They may request professional feedback if still concerned.

11. Whistleblowing

If safeguarding concerns are not handled properly, staff must follow the Whistleblowing Policy and notify the Chair of Trustees or LADO.

Appendix C

Parent–Staff Member Responding to a Safeguarding Concern - Flowchart



Appendix D
Policy Response Requirements

1. The DSL must recognise that they have a professional safeguarding duty even when approached informally. Once the DSL becomes aware of information that may indicate a child is at risk, they are legally and professionally obliged to act - regardless of the context in which it was shared.

The DSL cannot treat safeguarding-relevant information as private or "off the record."

2. Reassure the parent while clearly setting expectations

The DSL should:

Say something like:

"Thank you for telling me this. Because of my safeguarding role in school, I do need to ensure the right support is in place. I will treat what you've said sensitively and pass it through the proper safeguarding channels so your child can be supported."

The DSL must not promise confidentiality or secrecy.

3. Maintain boundaries and move the situation into the professional sphere

Once safeguarding relevance is identified:

- The DSL must shift into their professional role**,** regardless of how the information arose.
- Further discussion should be moved away from informal/social settings.
- The DSL may suggest a follow-up conversation on school grounds or in a professional context.

4. Record the concern factually, even if obtained informally

The DSL must:

- Make a factual safeguarding record (date, time, context, exact words where possible)
- Log it on the school safeguarding system (MyConcern)
- Note explicitly that the information was shared in a parent-to-parent context

5. Assess whether there is a conflict of interest

A conflict of interest may arise if:

- The DSL is socially close to the confiding parent
- The DSL's own child is involved in the situation
- The DSL has personal knowledge that could impair neutrality

If a conflict exists:

The DSL must immediately pass the case to the Deputy DSL or Teaching and Learning Lead and recuse themselves from:

- decision-making
- referrals
- monitoring
- further contact about the case

The DSL should record the reason for stepping back.

6. Take appropriate safeguarding action

If there is no conflict**,** the DSL should proceed with:

- Threshold assessment
- Consulting safeguarding partners if needed
- Considering Family Help, referral, or monitoring procedures

The DSL must treat the concern with the same seriousness as one disclosed in school.

7. Protect the relationship and confidentiality appropriately

The DSL should:

- Not share details of any decisions with the parent beyond what is professionally appropriate
- Avoid discussing the matter informally in future parent–to–parent interactions
- Always maintain privacy and discretion

8. Follow-up

Where appropriate, and in line with policy:

- The DSL or Deputy DSL may check in with the parent in a professional capacity only
- The DSL must not promise outcomes or specific interventions

Short Summary/Scenario

When a parent confides safeguarding-relevant information to the DSL in a parent-to-parent context, the DSL must treat this as a professional disclosure, record it factually, assess for conflicts of interest, and either manage the case or pass it to the Deputy DSL/Teaching and Learning Lead. Informal, “off-the-record” safeguarding conversations cannot remain private if a child may be at risk.

NB:

Referring = Asking the right agency to take over.
Escalating = Challenging or pushing further because the response isn’t enough.

Appendix E
Policy Response Requirements - Flowchart

