



All Saints CE Primary School and
Nursery

Child Protection Handbook



This document has been prepared for the use of the school's staff and they are required to be able to demonstrate they have read and understood its contents. Some aspects are statutory by law.

To apply it through their role in the school is part of their conditions of employment.

It is also important that the school's governors should understand its contents and recognise their responsibilities towards child protection.

Version: September 2026

Review Cycle: Annual

Contents of this Handbook:

- 1. Staff Code of Conduct – Page 3**
- 2. Relationships at Work Policy – Page 12**
- 3. Low Level Concerns Policy – Page 17**
- 4. Social Media Policy – Page 24**
- 5. Whistleblowing Policy – Page 28**
- 6. Comment on Fostering – Page 32**
- 7. Physical Intervention Policy – Page 33**

Other Statutory Policies linked to this handbook but available separately:

- A) Child Protection Policy
- B) Safeguarding Policy
- C) Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- D) Attendance Policy
- E) Leave of Absence Policy
- F) Health & Attendance Policy
- G) Grievance Procedure
- H) Safer Recruitment Policy
- I) Alcohol Drugs & Gambling Policy
- J) Health and Safety Policy
- K) Pay Policy
- L) Appraisal Policy (Teachers and Support Staff)
- M) Safeguarding Induction
- N) Health and Safety Induction

The current version of each is located on the school server:

Teacher (T:) → Policies

Should you require a paper copy, please ask at the School Office.



STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Based on the HfL Model Policy, July 2026

Objective, Scope and Principles

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all employees and those acting on behalf of us are expected to observe. All staff are role models, and are in a unique position of influence, and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all pupils.

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees of the school. This policy does not form part of any employees' contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time.

In addition to this Code of Conduct, all employees engaged to work under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards 2012', in particular relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.

This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable, and regard should also be given to the disciplinary rules set out in the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure which may be found on the server (T:/ POLICIES / Personnel).

Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including but not limited to dismissal.

Where this policy requires an employee to disclose matters from their personal life we will consider the circumstances and context of each matter before determining whether any further action is required.

Principles

You are expected to familiarise yourselves and comply with all of our policies and procedures.

Staff must not undermine fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

All staff must attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays.

1. Setting an Example

All staff set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. Therefore, all staff must:

- avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.
- demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same.
- avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

2. Safeguarding Pupils

Staff have a duty to have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education throughout their employment and abide by the duties placed upon them within this.

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect.

The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil or colleague to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection.

The school's DSL is Philip Asher. The Deputy DSLs are Mrs Heather Foster and Mrs Victoria Moore.

Staff have access to the school's Child Protection Policy (available on the server and school website) and Whistleblowing Procedure (found in this handbook) and staff must be familiar with these documents.

Staff should treat children with respect and dignity and must not seriously demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.

Staff should not demonstrate behaviours that may be perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of students, embarrassing or humiliating students, discriminating against or favouring students.

Staff must take reasonable care of pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

Staff should be aware that the management of any safeguarding concerns is dealt in accordance with the latest statutory guidance as detailed in Keeping Children Safe in Education and includes any allegations that meet the harm test and/or allegations considered to be low level concerns. (i. e those which do not meet the harm test).

Low Level Concerns

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the harm test threshold.

A low-level concern is any concern that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

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

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Procedures for dealing with Low Level Concerns are outlined in detail in a separate policy, included within this handbook. They are also outlined in the Child Protection Policy, Sections 13 & 14.

3. Relationships

Staff must declare any relationships that they may have with pupils, staff, clients, contractors supplies or parents outside of the school. This may include mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, and/or family connections.

Existing or new personal relationships at work between colleagues should be declared to the Headteacher where there is a potential for this to impact upon the work of either colleague (for example: a risk of allegations of bias or conflict of interest). The Headteacher will treat declarations in

confidence in accordance with the Relationships at Work Policy which may be found in this handbook.

Staff should not assume that the school are aware of any such connections and should use Appendix 1 and/or 2 to make a declaration, and to update any existing declarations at least annually.

3.1 Relationships with Pupils

Relationships with pupils must be professional at all times. Physical relationships with pupils are not permitted and may lead to a criminal conviction.

Encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which may lead to a sexual relationship or any other inappropriate relationship will be viewed as a grave breach of trust.

Contact with pupils must be via school-authorised mechanisms and solely for educational purposes. At no time should personal telephone number(s), text, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with pupils.

If contacted by a pupil by an inappropriate route, staff should report the contact to the Headteacher immediately.

Behaviour giving rise to concern should also be reported which includes pupils seeking affection, being sexually provocative or exhibiting overly familiar behaviour.

If you are a parent of a child in school, it is understood that you will come into contact with students and parents outside of work, we would expect you to use your discretion and maintain appropriate relationships at all times.

3.2 Contact with Ex-Pupils

The expectations of this Code of conduct extends to ex-pupils, particularly where individuals are under the age of 18 or have only recently left the school. Staff must not use their position, or the knowledge and influence gained through their role, to establish or pursue personal, social, or inappropriate relationships with ex-pupils. Such behaviour may constitute a breach of trust and professional boundaries, even where the pupil is no longer on roll, and may undermine professional integrity and public confidence in the school.

Staff should be mindful that relationships with ex-pupils can still be open to scrutiny, particularly where a perceived power imbalance remains or where contact could reasonably be viewed as grooming or exploitative behaviour. Where there is any uncertainty about the appropriateness of contact, staff must seek advice from the Headteacher or the DSL before engaging.

If a member of staff becomes aware that they, or another member of staff, has had contact with a pupil or ex-pupil that may be inappropriate, or could be perceived as a breach of professional boundaries, this must be reported immediately to the Headteacher or DSL in line with safeguarding and whistleblowing procedures.

4. Pupil Development

Staff must adhere to all policies and procedures that promote the wellbeing and development of pupils, including those relating to safeguarding and the appropriate use of restrictive interventions, including reasonable use of force as set out in the DfE guidance Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force in schools.

Any restrictive intervention must only be used where it is necessary, proportionate, and for the minimum time required to protect the safety of pupils or others and must never be used as a punishment.

Staff must work collaboratively with colleagues and, where appropriate, with external agencies to ensure that pupils' needs are met and their development is effectively supported.

Staff must follow reasonable and lawful instructions that are intended to safeguard pupils and support their wellbeing, safety and development.

Staff must promptly and accurately report any incidents, concerns or use of restrictive interventions, including reasonable force in accordance with the school's reporting procedures and statutory guidance, including statutory duties relating to the recording and reporting of significant incidents.

5. Honesty and Integrity

Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.

All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they

- offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone;
- or if they request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person.

If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer to the Whistleblowing procedure for schools (in this handbook). For further information see the HCC Anti Bribery Policy for Schools available on the Grid.

Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Headteacher, with the exception of "one off" token gifts from students or parents.

Personal gifts from individual members of staff to students are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted and may lead to disciplinary action. A record will be kept of all gifts received.

Staff must not act on behalf of the school unless they have the authority to do so.

Professional references from the school will be provided by the Headteacher. References, or endorsements on social media given by other members of staff, must be clear that they are provided in a **personal capacity only**.

6. Conduct outside of Work

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.

In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, any conduct or behaviour that indicates an employee may not be suitable to work with children including such behaviour outside of the workplace which may or may not involve children is likely to be regarded as unacceptable.

For example, should a member of staff be involved in domestic violence at home and no children were involved, the school will need to consider what triggered these actions and question whether a child in the school could trigger the same reaction, therefore be put at risk.

In addition, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable where it brings into question an employee's suitability or ability to do their role/work in an educational setting.

Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school, nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance in the school. It is recommended that permission is sought in advance.

- Staff must declare any work outside school or outside business interests where there is a potential conflict of interests with their employment at the school.
- If any allegation of wrongdoing occurs in a staff member's additional workplace (whether or not they deny this) which may have a bearing on their employment, they must disclose this immediately to the Headteacher.

Forming inappropriate relationships or friendships with children or young people who are pupils or students under the age of 18 at another school/college will be viewed as inappropriate and impact upon the schools' ability to trust the member of staff to maintain professional boundaries with pupils at the school.

Any work-related social event is considered to be an extension of the workplace and as such the standards of behaviour expected at these events is in line with this policy.

7. E-Safety and Internet Use

Staff must exercise caution at all times both inside and outside of work when using information technology. Staff should be aware of the risks to themselves and others.

Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute. Staff should ensure that they adopt suitably high security settings on any personal profiles they may have.

Staff should exercise caution in their use of all social media or any other web-based presence that they may have. This includes creating, endorsing, liking, posting, retweeting, sharing direct messaging or sending any statements, photo's, videos, audios or messages. This also includes speaking and/or lip syncing to other creators' content and any music used.

This may also include the use of dating websites where staff could encounter pupils either with their own profile or acting covertly.

Contact with pupils should only made via the use of school email accounts or telephone equipment when appropriate and strictly for educational reasons.

Photographs or video footage of pupils should only be taken using school equipment, for purposes authorised by the school. Any such use should always be transparent and only occur where parental consent has been given. The resultant files from such recording or taking of photographs must be stored in accordance with the school's procedures on school equipment.

Further details on this can be found in the Online Safety Policy and Acceptable User Agreements (found on the school website and also on the server (T:/ POLCIES), and the Social Media Policy which may be found in this handbook.

Professional Responsibilities for use of ICT, including the Internet, in school and outside school

Employees of the school have a duty to report any eSafety incident which may impact on them, or their professionalism, or the school.

- Emails are to be checked daily as a minimum (on working days).
- Ensure all electronic communication with students, parents, carers, staff and others is compatible with your professional role and in line with school policies.
- Do not talk about your professional role in any capacity when using social media such as (but not limited to) Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook and YouTube.
- Do not put online any text, image, sound or video that could upset or offend any member of the whole school community or be incompatible with your professional role.

- Use school ICT systems and resources for school business – avoid using any personal devices or resources (do not use personal email addresses for school business).
- Only use school devices for taking/recording images, videos and audio (do not use personal devices for this purpose).
- Do not disclose any passwords and ensure that sensitive and personal data (such as data held on Arbor, CPOMs or other information management systems) is kept secure and used appropriately (do not access this information on shared personal devices).
- Only take images of students and/or staff for professional purposes, in accordance with school policy and with the knowledge of SLT.
- Do not browse, download, upload or distribute any material that could be considered offensive, illegal or discriminatory.
- Ensure that your online activity, both in school and outside school, will not bring the school or professional role into disrepute.
- Staff must comply with the acceptable use policy/guidance in regard to use of personal devices in school (including mobile phones, tablets, and wearable technology e.g. smart watches/fitbits).

8. Confidentiality

Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil.

All staff may at some point witness actions or events which need to be confidential.

For example, where a pupil is bullied by another pupil (or by a member of staff/colleague), once reported through the appropriate procedure, it must not be discussed outside the school, including with other staff, pupils, parents, or carers, except with the appropriate member of staff to deal with the matter.

Staff have an obligation to share with the Headteacher or the school's Designated Safeguarding Leads any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil. Staff must never promise a pupil that they will not act on information that they are told by them.

Staff are not allowed to make any comment to the media about the school, its performance, governance, pupils or parents without written approval. Any media queries should be directed to the Headteacher.

9. Dress and Appearance

The Governors recognise the rights of staff to choose what they wear and how they appear. However, as role models, staff need to set an example to the pupils and be mindful that pupils have a strict uniform code.

All staff must therefore dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role and promote a professional image, not casual wear, and not in a way that undermines the pupil uniform policy (particularly with reference to jewellery and hair styles). This generally means all staff should follow the principles outlined here.

- Shoulders must be covered – wide strap tops/dresses, short/long sleeves.
- Skirts/shorts/dresses should be of an appropriate length (just above the knees as a guide)
- Shirts/tops should not be low cut or revealing (e.g. underwear should not be visible)
- Certain types and styles of clothing are generally not acceptable: jeans, leggings (except under a dress/skirt), clothing that reveals underwear, transparent or sheer clothing, thin/'spaghetti' strap tops/vests, sports clothing (unless teaching/supporting PE).

- Sports clothing is permitted on days teaching/supporting PE, or if leading an after school/ lunch time sports club (see below).
- Staff should dress in a manner that is absent from political or other contentious slogans. If clothing has wording or pictures on it, this should not be offensive. Fashion logos/emblems should be kept to a minimum.
- Footwear should be reflective of your role within the school and not pose a health and safety risk. Trainers should only be worn for PE/active sessions or lunchtime cover. Open toed sandals can be worn but must have a back strap (not flip-flops, sliders or similar). Sandals are worn at own risk and the school takes no responsibility for injury to feet caused by or while wearing open toed sandals or shoes. Staff working in the Early Years and KS1 should be mindful this is an active environment and wear footwear that enables full engagement with the children.

PPE will be provided as directed by health & safety/tasks or risk assessments.

Staff should wear sportswear when teaching PE. This can be worn all day when teaching PE. Earrings & necklaces should be removed (as for children) even if just supporting. A watch and rings of significance may be worn (avoid rings which may injure a child should you need to support them physically). Staff may choose to change on days they have meetings with parents/outside agencies.

Clothing and footwear for forest school and school visits should be appropriate for the activities being undertaken, while maintaining a professional appearance.

Where employees are transitioning to live in the gender with which they identify, the school will apply and adapt this code sensitively and flexibly.

The school understands that there may be circumstances that make it difficult for some employees to follow a code (for example, if an employee has a disability or is experiencing certain medical/ menopausal symptoms). If this is the case, the school will discuss with the employee how we can support them and make reasonable adjustments where possible.

The school has the final say on whether clothing and appearance is appropriate.

10. Compliance

All staff must complete the annual declaration form (detailed in the Child Protection Policy, Appendix 5) to confirm they have read, understood and agreed to comply with the Code of Conduct alongside other relevant statutory policies, guidance and documentation. This declaration must be signed and dated on an annual basis and/or each time the code is amended.

All staff should be aware that a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including but not limited to dismissal. Please see the disciplinary policy for further information.

Code of Conduct: Appendix 1

Relationships with pupils outside of work declaration

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees of the school are known to pupils outside of work. Examples include membership of sports clubs, family connections, or private tutoring.

Staff must declare any relationship outside of school that they may have with any pupils by using this form.

Employee Name	
Pupil Name	Relationship

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to contact out of school with students in line with this policy.

If I am tutoring a student outside of school I am aware that the following must be adhered to:

- I do not, at any point, teach or directly work with the child in question as part of my daily timetable - this is a stipulation of such tutoring.
- I emphasise to parents that this is done completely independently of the school
- No monies come through the school at any point, either informally (e.g. via the child) or formally
- No private tutoring has/will take place on the school premises

I confirm that if these circumstances change **at any time** I will complete a new form to ensure the school are aware of any relationships.

Full Name:

Current Position:

Signed

Date

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Headteacher.

Code of Conduct: Appendix 2

Relationships with staff, clients, contractors etc. outside of work declaration

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees of the school are known to others connected with the school outside of work.

Staff must declare any relationship outside of the school that they may have with others that could create a conflict of interest.

Employee Name	
3 rd Party Name	Relationship

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct and relationships at work policy, and I am not in breach of these.

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time, I will complete a new form to ensure the school are aware of any relationships.

Full Name:

Current Position:

Signed Date

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Headteacher.



RELATIONSHIPS AT WORK POLICY

Based on the HfL Model Policy, July 2026

1. Introduction and scope

The school recognises that employees who work together may form personal friendships and, in some cases, close personal relationships. While we do not wish to interfere with these personal relationships, it is necessary for the school to ensure that all employees behave in an appropriate and professional manner while at work.

This policy therefore applies to all employees regardless of their job or level of seniority including but not limited to all employees, casual workers, agency workers, apprentices, volunteers and governors.

A relationship at work can be with any of the above-mentioned parties but also includes but is not limited to parents and third-party providers.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time.

2. Definition of related persons

In the context of this policy a personal relationship is defined as;

- a family relationship (including extended family)
- a business/commercial/financial relationship
- a romantic/sexual relationship.

The above definitions are examples of personal relationships which may give rise to conflicts of interest in the workplace, however personal relationships are not restricted to these examples and anyone who considers that they are in a potential conflict of interest should declare it as outlined in the policy.

3. Personal relationships at work

Whilst the school accepts that partners and family members and friends do work together within the school, some regulation is necessary.

You must declare any relationships that you may have with other employees, clients, contractors supplies or parents outside of the school. This may include connections such as mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, and/or family connections. (Use the relevant form in Appendix 1 or 2 of the Code of Conduct).

Existing or new personal relationships at work between colleagues should be declared to the headteacher as soon as possible, especially where there is a potential for this to impact upon the work of either party (for example: a risk of allegations of bias or conflict of interest).

You should not assume that the school are aware of any such connections and should declare it using the declaration form in Appendix 1 or 2 of the Code of Conduct.

If you have a close personal relationship with another colleague, parent, contractor, supplier, or any other party related to the school, you must not allow that relationship to influence your conduct while at work.

Where there is evidence that a conflict of interest, breach of confidentiality or unfair advantage may occur as a result of having a personal relationship working together, the headteacher may consider an alternative arrangement, e.g., a change in reporting arrangements, or duties within a team if appropriate in the circumstances.

Any action taken will be proportionate, fair and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

3.1 Personal relationships with third parties

If you have a close personal relationship with a third party (such as parent, contractor, supplier, or any other party related to the school), you must not allow that relationship to influence your conduct while at work.

If your job allows you authority over any third party, that you have a relationship with (for example if you have the authority to decide to whom to award contracts), the relationship must be declared to the Headteacher.

In these circumstances, the school reserves the right to transfer, or as a last resort to dismiss you following consultation with you.

3.2 Behaviour at work

Intimate behaviour during work time, for example kissing, touching or holding hands, is expressly prohibited where this could cause offence, discomfort, distraction or undermines professional standards. This rule applies during all working time, whether at the normal workplace, at school events or on other premises.

Any breach of this rule will be regarded as a disciplinary offence leading to disciplinary action.

3.3 Safeguarding

Any relationships at work that create or cause a safeguarding breach will be investigated in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education and the school's Disciplinary Policy.

3.4 Identifying and declaring personal relationship at work

Existing or new personal relationships should be declared to the employee's headteacher.

Where personal relationships occur between employees, it is the responsibility of both individuals to avoid any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

If you are uncertain about whether there is likely to be any risk of a potential conflict of interest emerging from a personal relationship at work, you should discuss the matter with the headteacher in the first instance.

All of you have a duty to protect the school and children, so if you see a conflict of interest, or any unfairness arise due to others having a personal relationship, you must report it as soon as possible to the headteacher.

Should the conflict of interest involve the headteacher then this should involve the Chair of Governors. In addition, should the conflict of interest involve the Chair of Governors then this should involve the Governance team.

4. Process for managing personal relationships at work

If you declare a personal relationship at work, this should be treated fairly and with due regard to equality of treatment issues.

The headteacher will treat these matters in confidence and in consultation with you and will find ways to avoid potential conflicts of interest.

All declarations should be treated in confidence, recorded in writing and kept securely. Should there be any changes in the future, you should request that the document should be removed from the file and destroyed (subject to potential conflict no longer being in existence).

5. Personal relationships involving a more senior role

In order to avoid any actual or potential conflict of interest, if you are in a line management or supervisory role you should ensure you are not involved in any management activity or process involving anyone you have a declared personal relationship. This includes but is not limited to:

- appraisal/performance reviews;
- promotion or discipline;
- authorisation of any financial payments/decisions relating to financial matters e.g., timesheets, fees payments, expense claims, salary changes or allocation of external funding for an employee with whom they have a declared personal relationship. However, if the person is the budget holder, then they should/can see the financial transaction (as part of their role) but have additional independent authorisation;
- recruitment and selection – where it is not practical to remove an employee from the recruitment process, all panel members should be made aware of the personal relationship and every panel decision should be justified as fair and equitable, without bias or conflict of interest.

To avoid a situation in which you have managerial authority over another with whom you have a close personal relationship, the school reserves the right to elect to transfer one or both of you involved in the relationship to a job in another department/section/area.

In these circumstances, the school will consult both of you and seek to reach a satisfactory agreement regarding the transfer of one or both of you.

In such a situation, if it is not possible to transfer at least one of you (for example if no suitable vacancies exist, or if they refuse to transfer), the school reserves the right to dismiss one or both of you (with notice in accordance with the employee's contract or pay in lieu of notice). Dismissal would, however, be undertaken only as a last resort in circumstances where no other course of action was reasonably open to the school.

6. When a relationship breaks down

There may be occasions when a relationship as described above, breaks down and the individuals concerned remain working together. This can cause a potential impact on the direct team, wider team, school or pupils.

If it is envisaged that the breakdown of the relationship is or will cause ongoing issues, these should be addressed sensitively in discussion with the employees with a view to the issues being resolved.

7. Raising concerns

If you believe that you may be personally adversely affected by a misuse of power/authority or conflict of interest, you should raise this with the headteacher in the first instance.

Where you feel that there is a possible or actual misuse of power/authority or conflict of interest relating to a personal relationship at work you should raise this with the headteacher in the first instance.

Where this relates to headteacher the employee should raise it to the next appropriate person, likely to be Chair of Governors. In addition, should the conflict of interest involve the Chair of Governors then this should involve the Governance team.

8. Breach of this policy

Where there is evidence that a conflict of interest, breach of confidentiality or unfair advantage may result from a personal relationship the headteacher may wish to consider an alternative arrangement e.g., a change in reporting arrangements, or duties within a team; investigating one party being moved to another area of work or work location, if appropriate in the circumstances.

In such a situation, if it is not possible to transfer at least one of the employees (for example if no suitable vacancies exist, or if an employee refuses to transfer), the school reserves the right to dismiss one or both employees (with notice in accordance with the employee's contract or pay in lieu of notice). Dismissal would, however, be undertaken only as a last resort in circumstances where no other course of action was reasonably open to the school.

Where there is evidence that a conflict of interest, breach of confidentiality, unfair advantage or created disadvantage has resulted from a personal relationship, the matter will be considered seriously by the school.

Breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal in accordance with the schools Disciplinary Policy.

Any disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with our Disciplinary Policy and the principles of fairness and proportionality.



LOW LEVEL CONCERNS POLICY

This is a duplication of the relevant parts from Sections 13 and 14 of the school's Child Protection Policy and includes templates to use for recording concerns.

Introduction

All Saints CE Primary School & Nursery 'low-level concern and allegations policy' is compliant with:

- [KCSiE, Part four](#)
- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures Manual, [Section 5.1.5 Managing Allegations Against People who work with Children and Young People](#)
- [Developing and implementing a low-level concerns policy \(Farrer & Co\)](#), which provides detailed guidance and examples.

This policy is a reflection and extension of All Saints CE Primary School's wider staff code of conduct.

All staff and volunteers at All Saints CE Primary School & Nursery hold positions of trust and are expected to uphold safe working practices outlined in our staff code of conduct and 'Guide for Volunteers'.

All staff, governors, trustees, contractors, and volunteers are in a **position of trust** and are expected to maintain professional boundaries and high standards of conduct at all times. A position of trust exists where an adult, through their role, has responsibility for, authority over, or influence on a child or young person.

Under the [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#), it is a criminal offence for a person in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a child in their care, including those aged 16 or 17.

A **breach of trust** occurs when an adult misuses their position to develop an inappropriate relationship with a child or young person. This may include personal, romantic, sexual, or otherwise inappropriate contact, including through social media. Such behaviour may constitute a safeguarding concern even where it is not criminal or where the young person is over the age of consent.

Any breach of trust undermines professional integrity, compromises safeguarding, and is likely to result in disciplinary action and, where appropriate, referral to external agencies or criminal investigation. Adults must always maintain clear and appropriate professional boundaries with children and young people.

Allegation, Concerns about the quality of care/practice and complaints

In line with [Section 11 of the 2004 Children's Act](#), All Saints CE Primary School & Nursery has clear procedures for managing safeguarding concerns about professionals working or volunteering with children, in addition we understand the differences between:

- **Allegations:** these are concerns that an adult may have harmed or posed a risk to a child, committed a criminal offence involving a child, or behaved in a way that raises concerns about their suitability to work with children. This can include behaviour that occurs both inside and outside the workplace.
- **Concerns about the Quality of Care or Practice:** these can relate to issues relating to professional standards, performance, or conduct that do not meet expected levels but are not safeguarding or child protection concerns.
- **Complaints:** Are based on a personal expression of dissatisfaction regarding actions taken, decisions made, or a failure to act. While concerns may seek reassurance or clarification, complaints indicate that something is considered unacceptable.

At All Saints CE Primary School & Nursery, we ensure that each type of concern is identified, managed, and escalated appropriately in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

Identifying Low Level Concerns and Allegations

Low-Level Concerns and Allegations may emerge because of either observed suspicions or direct disclosures made by a child. In assessing the potential harm and impact to a child or young person, DSLs will consider the four categories of abuse – physical, emotional, sexual and neglect – as well as any safeguarding elements related to exploitation. Detailed definitions of these terms can be found in section 9 of this policy.

The Harm Test is explained in the Disclosure and Barring service Guidance: [Making barring referrals to the DBS and Section 31\(9\) of the Children Act 1989 \(as amended by the Adoption and Children Act 2002\)](#).

1. Levels of Concern and Allegation

There are two levels of Concerns and Allegations relating to adults (in both paid and voluntary roles) working with children either directly and/or online:

1. Low-Level Concerns

These are behaviours by one or more adults (paid or voluntary) which are inconsistent with All Saints CE Primary School's staff code of conduct but *do not meet the Harm Threshold* (see above under definition of Allegations) and are referred to as 'Low-Level Concerns'. Examples include repeated breaches of All Saints CE Primary School's staff code of conduct in relation to safeguarding.

2. Allegations

These are behaviours by one or more adults (paid or voluntary) that *do meet or may meet the Harm Threshold* (see above under definition of Allegations). Such cases require referral within **one working day** to the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** and potentially other statutory bodies such as the police or children's social care.

Low-Level Concerns and Allegations may emerge as a result of either observed suspicions or direct disclosures made by a child. In assessing the potential harm and impact to a child or young person, DSLs will consider the four categories of abuse – physical, emotional, sexual and neglect – as well as any safeguarding elements related to exploitation. Detailed definitions of these terms can be found in Chapters 4 and 9 on this policy.

The Harm Test is explained in the Disclosure and Barring service Guidance: [Making barring referrals to the DBS and Section 31\(9\) of the Children Act 1989 \(as amended by the Adoption and Children Act 2002\)](#).

*This specific policy covers **Low-Level concerns** that **do not meet** the harm threshold.*

***Allegations** that may meet the harm threshold should be assessed accordingly and advice should be sought from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and/or HR Services. Sections 13 & 14 of the school's Child Protection Policy outlines how Allegations are managed alongside the following section from the HSCP: [Section 5.1.5 Managing Allegations Against Adults Who Work With Children and Young People](#)*

This policy should be used in conjunction with the school's Code of Conduct, disciplinary and safeguarding policies and procedures.

2. What is a low-level concern?

A 'Low-Level' Concern does not mean the behaviour or actions taken place are insignificant. It refers to any behaviour – however minor – that causes a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' about whether an adult's behaviour:

- Is inconsistent with All Saints CE Primary School's staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
- Although not acceptable and considered serious, would not meet the threshold criteria for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Examples may include (but are not limited to):

- Being over-friendly with children.
- Having favourites or showing preferential treatment towards specific pupils.
- Taking photographs or videos of children on a personal mobile phone or device, contrary to school policy.
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door without a clear professional reason.
- Humiliating, belittling, or intimidating children.
- Mishandling children, including using inappropriate physical intervention.
- Using inappropriate, offensive, sexualised, or discriminatory language in the presence of children.
- Sharing personal information with pupils or encouraging them to share personal information unnecessarily.
- Contacting or communicating with pupils through personal social media accounts, messaging apps, or personal devices.
- Giving a child personal gifts, money, or special treatment without approval or a clear professional reason.
- Spending excessive time with a particular child or creating an inappropriate dependency.
- Transporting a child in a personal vehicle without prior authorisation or appropriate safeguards.
- Failing to maintain professional boundaries online or in person.
- Making inappropriate jokes, comments, or remarks that could be viewed as unprofessional.
- Entering personal, secretive, or overly familiar communications with a child or young person.
- Not following school safeguarding, behaviour, or safer working practice procedures.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse. Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

2.1 Avoiding Low Level concerning behaviour

Staff education and reinforcement on avoiding circumstances which may put them in a difficult situation is key to avoiding the need for dealing with these types of concerns.

Our school ensures that staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is through their induction and regular reinforcement/reminders of documents/policies such as:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- ‘Avoiding Allegations’ guidance
- Child Protection Policies and training
- Teachers Standards (for teaching staff)

3. Reporting a Low-Level Concern

Low Level concerns about a person working/volunteering in school must be reported in confidence to the Headteacher (or Deputy Headteacher in their absence). This can be done in person or using the form in Appendix 1 – but in all cases a written record will be made. If the concern is about the Headteacher, this should be reported in the same way to the Chair of Governors.

Low Level concerns about supply staff, contractors, Local Authority visiting staff and other visiting professionals should be reported to the Headteacher, who will pass them on to their respective employers in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should:

- Report any low-level concern as soon as possible to the Headteacher.
- If the concern relates to the Headteacher, report it to the Chair of Governors.
- Record the concern promptly, providing a clear and factual account of what was observed, heard, or disclosed.
- Avoid making assumptions, conducting investigations, or discussing the matter unnecessarily with colleagues.
- Continue to report concerns even if they appear minor, isolated, or have already been addressed informally.
- Maintain confidentiality and share information only with those who need to know.
- Seek advice from the DSL or Headteacher if they are unsure whether a concern meets the low-level concerns threshold.

4. Dealing with a Low-Level Concern

Where a concern is raised this must be recorded (using the form in Appendix 1) and passed to the Headteacher (an envelope must be used if they are not available to receive the record in person). Where the low-level concern is provided verbally, the Headteacher/DSL will make an appropriate record of the conversation (using the form in Appendix 1), either at the time, or immediately following the discussion, and ask the person raising the concern to sign the record.

When a Low-Level Concern is raised (including third-party reports), the Case Manager (usually the Headteacher) or their nominated deputy will:

- Speak with the person who raised the concern (unless this was raised anonymously)
- Speak with the individual subject to the concern
- Identify and interview any other involved parties or witnesses

The information gathered will help us to categorise the type of behaviour and determine what further action may need to be taken. This information will be recorded in writing along with the rationale for our decisions and action taken.

The Case Manager, a nominated deputy, or Chair of Governors will respond to reports of Low-Level Concerns in-line with the schools’ internal due processes for managing safe-staffing. Our response may include the following:

- Prioritise the safety and wellbeing of any alleged victim and all other pupils

- Share details only with those who need to know to maintain confidentiality
- Conduct further inquiries with relevant children, staff, parents, or witnesses
- If there are reasonable grounds, launch a formal internal investigation following the school's internal processes
- Consult Human Resources on possible breaches of the staff code of conduct, [Teachers' Standards](#), or TA regulations to assess disciplinary thresholds
- Inform the subject of the concerns and outline available support during the inquiry
- Determine when to allow the subject to present their account
- Review all evidence and decide on an outcome
- If no risk of harm is found, consider additional training or monitoring for the staff member
- If new information raises serious risk or meets the harm threshold, refer the matter to the LADO
- Record the findings and the rationale for any decisions and actions taken.

All Saints CE Primary School & Nursery fosters a safeguarding culture where every staff member is professionally curious. We:

- Clarify expected staff behaviour and help them distinguish it from concerning conduct
- Encourage prompt reporting of Low-Level Concerns
- Address unprofessional behaviour early and support corrective measures
- Handle concerns sensitively and in proportion to their nature
- Use reported concerns to identify and address any weaknesses in our safeguarding systems

All low-level concerns will be reviewed and managed proportionately. Consideration will be given to whether the behaviour is a one-off incident, part of a pattern of behaviour, or whether it meets the threshold for escalation under the school's Allegations Against Staff procedures or referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

This approach enables the school to identify concerning patterns of behaviour at an early stage, provide support where appropriate, and ensure that children remain safe.

Most low-level concerns are likely to be dealt with by means of management guidance, training etc. In dealing with a low-level concern with a member of staff, this will be approached in a sensitive and proportionate way. In many cases, a low-level concern will need a conversation with the individual the concern is about.

5. Record Keeping for Low-Level Concerns

All low-level concerns must be formally recorded by a member of staff when they are made aware of them. This record must then be passed to the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Headteacher).

The record should include:

- Clear and comprehensive summary of the concern.
- The context in which the concern arose.
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved.
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- The name of the individual sharing their concerns (if known).

Records are confidential, stored securely, and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. If a pattern of inappropriate behaviour emerges, the Case Manager will decide on disciplinary action, or if the Harm Threshold is reached, refer to the LADO (per KCSiE Part Four, Section One).

We will review and revise relevant policies or training to address any school-culture factors that enabled the behaviour.

Records are retained by All Saints CE Primary School & Nursery until the individual reaches retirement-age or for the next ten years, whichever period is longer.

6. Reviewing Low-Level Concerns

Records will be reviewed periodically so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified, and to ensure that such concerns are being dealt with promptly and appropriately. A record of these reviews and any further actions will be kept.

Upon review, it may be found that:

- Behaviour is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct but there is no pattern of behaviour and does not meet the threshold of harm or is not considered serious enough to refer to the LADO.
 - Low-Level concerns should continue to be recorded and periodically reviewed, support, retraining or disciplinary action considered
- Whilst not sufficiently a cause for concern and may not meet the threshold of harm or considered serious enough to refer to the LADO; nonetheless merits consulting with and seeking advice.
 - Advice should be sought from the LADO or HR Services and support / disciplinary action considered
- When considered with any other low-level concerns that have previously been shared about the same individual, could now meet the threshold of an allegation, or in and of itself meets the threshold of an allegation.
 - This should be referred to the LADO/other relevant external agencies, and in accordance with the school Child Protection Policy and Part 4 of KCSiE.

The school will also review appropriate policies and training, or other wider cultural issues in the school, to see whether anything needs to be done to minimise the risk of similar behaviour happening again.

7. Staff requests of anonymity

If the staff member who raises the concern wishes to remain anonymous, the school should respect the person's request as far as possible. However, there may be circumstances where the staff member will need to be named and for this reason, anonymity should never be promised to members of staff who share low-level concerns.

Where possible, staff should be encouraged to consent to be named, as this will help to create a culture of openness and transparency.

8. Data Protection

The Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) is not a barrier to a low-level concerns procedure but an important factor to consider. Issues may arise when schools are providing employment references, setting retention periods and dealing with subject access requests. DPA 2018 includes a specific

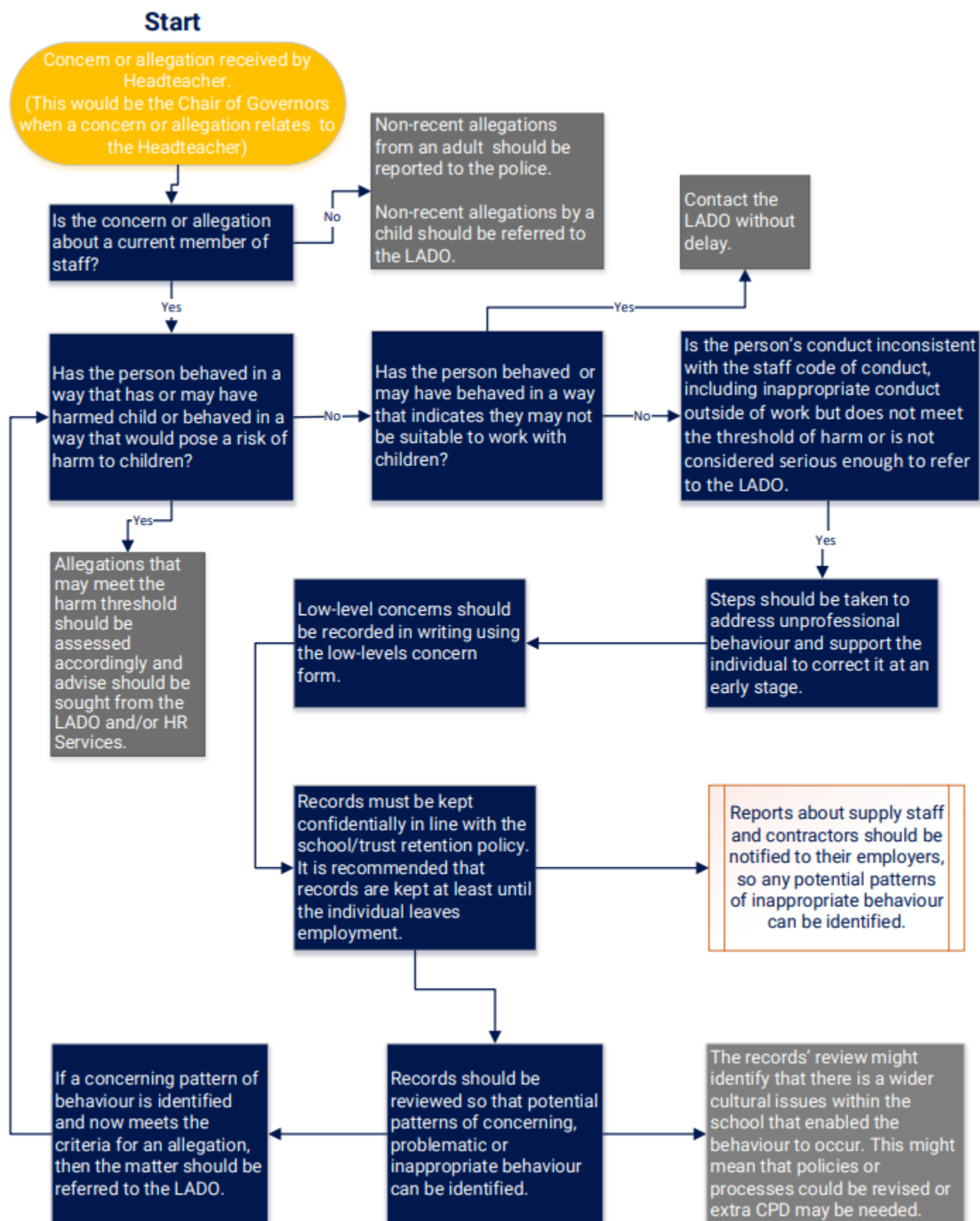
provision which permits organisations to process even the most sensitive personal data where it is necessary for the purposes of protecting children from harm. Low-level concerns recording must meet the relevant threshold of necessity.

School leaders should be mindful staff they are making records about may have rights to access them through a subject access request (SAR). In consideration of this, schools should be mindful when recording low-level concerns, particularly where the issue relates to a specific child. If a child may be identifiable from the record then it is likely to be inappropriate to share this record following a subject access request. Please contact your Data Protection Officer (DPO) for further advice.

Pathway for reporting Concerns and Allegations

Concern/Allegation about	Report to
Member of staff / volunteer (including volunteers, supply staff and contractors)	Headteacher, Principal or Proprietor (or equivalent) If the allegation is against supply staff or contractor, leadership, management will pass on report to the adult's employer at their agency/company.
Headteacher, Principal or Proprietor	Chair of Governors / Vice Chair of Governors / Trustee board Your school website or Child Protection policy will have details of your Chair/Vice Chair of Governors.
Chair of Governors / Vice Chair of Governors / Trustee board Or Manager who is the sole proprietor	Local Authority Designated Officer LADO (for staff only) LADO.Referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk and/or Report to the police on 101 or if urgent 999
If you are worried that the concerns raised have not been taken seriously or escalated.	Chair of Governors Police 101 Children Services 0300 123 4043 NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline 0800 028 0285 NSPCC Whistleblowing Email help@nspcc.org.uk
Concerns/Allegations relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation has hired school premises for running activities for children e.g. community groups, sports and faith associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities)	Headteacher, Principal or Proprietor As with any safeguarding allegation, DSL will follow their schools safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO. Out-of-school settings: safeguarding guidance for providers - GOV.UK

9. Flowchart for Dealing with Low-Level Concerns





Low-Level Concerns Policy – Appendix 1: Record of Low-Level Concern Form

Please use this form to share any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than a ‘nagging doubt’ – that an adult may have acted in a manner which:

- is not consistent with All Saints’ Staff Code of Conduct, and/or;
- is a cause for concern but does not meet the threshold of harm or is not considered serious enough to refer to the LADO

Use this form to document your concerns as soon as possible after they arise, and then pass this to the Headteacher or a DSL. Where possible please also speak with the Headteacher as soon as possible. If the concern is about the Headteacher, please pass it onto the Chair of Governors or email them at chair@allsaints.herts.sch.uk

Name of adult recording this concern:				Role:	
Date of Concern:		Date Written:		Signature:	
Name of adult whom this concern is about:				Their role:	

Details of concern: *You should provide a concise record – including brief context in which the low-level concern arose, and details which are chronological, and as precise and accurate as possible. Include any actions you took, if relevant. Consider any contextual information that may be appropriate to know.*

Continue overleaf if needed. Please date and sign all additional sheets.

For Headteacher/DSL:
Actions Taken: (Specify when, by whom etc., and any rationale)

Name:		Role:	
Signature:		Date & Time:	

Please note that low-level concerns will be treated in confidence as far as possible, but All Saints CE Primary School and Nursery may in certain circumstances be subject to legal reporting requirements or other legal obligations to share information with appropriate persons, including legal claims and formal investigations.



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Based on the HfL Model Policy, July 2026

1. Introduction

The aims of this policy are to:

- enable appropriate use of social networking sites in a safe and secure manner
- safeguard employees in their use of social networking sites and ensure they do not make themselves vulnerable
- minimise the risks to the school through use of social media.

This policy applies to use of social media for business purposes as well as personal use that may affect the school in any way. This includes conduct outside working hours where use of social media may impact the school, its reputation, safeguarding obligations, or the trust and confidence required in the employment relationship. It covers all employees, consultants, volunteers, and agency workers.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time. The school may also vary this policy as appropriate in any case.

2. What is social media?

For the purposes of this policy, social media is any online platform or app that allows parties to publish information, share content and interact with others either to a wide audience or through private conversations, such as private messages.

Social media is the term used for internet-enabled tools used on computers, tablets, smart phones and other smart devices etc to allow people to share information, ideas and views.

3. Types of social media

This policy covers all social media platforms, including, but not limited to: X (Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, TikTok and message boards. It also includes any website where you can contribute or edit content and instant messaging services i.e., WhatsApp, Snapchat etc.

This policy also applies to any other existing or new social media platform not mentioned, whether internal or external or used on a personal or work device.

All forms of social media use are covered by this policy, this can include but is not limited to; posting comments, pictures or videos, blogging, using forums, sending private messages, endorsing other people's content, re-tweeting/circulating posts or adding/editing content on a website.

If it can be determined from your account that you work for All Saints CE Primary School and Nursery (either visually, verbally or written), we ask that you make it clear any content and views are your own. Confirming this point does not make you exempt from following this policy.

Please include "these views are my own and not that of my employer" on your profile.

4. Personal use of social media within working time

Occasional personal use of social media on personal equipment/devices (including wearable devices such as SMART Watches) during working hours is permitted in the school's designated place (**the staff room, not in the presence of pupils**) so long as it does not involve unprofessional or inappropriate content, does not interfere with employment responsibilities or productivity, and complies with this policy.

5. Business use of social media

If you are contacted for comments about the school for publication anywhere, including in any social media outlet, the enquiry should be directed to the headteacher, and you should not respond without written approval from the headteacher.

The school operates some social media accounts for communicating with parents and others about school activities. Employees tasked to speak on behalf of the school through these accounts must ensure all communication is professional and reflective of the school as a place for education. They must also ensure any personal accounts linked to social media have appropriate safeguards to prevent inappropriate access by any individual accessing public facing school social media accounts.

Informal use of social media by staff to communicate about work-related matters (such as WhatsApp groups for class teams) must be in compliance with the Code of Conduct, Social Media and other communication policies as relevant (including the Staff Handbook). Any concerns should be raised in line with the Low Level Concern policy or another relevant policy (e.g. Grievance or Disciplinary Policy).

6. Prohibited use of social media

You must avoid making any social media communications that could damage the school's interests or reputation, even indirectly. This includes content posted, shared or endorsed intentionally or recklessly, whether publicly or through private messaging, where it may reasonably be expected to cause harm or reputational damage.

You should not use social media in a way that breaches any of the school's policies, the law, or any other regulatory requirements.

6.1. Inappropriate use

Social media use is permitted as long as it does not involve unprofessional or inappropriate content and does not interfere with the school or your role or responsibilities. Inappropriate use includes, but is not limited to:

- any content that could be viewed as malicious, abusive, offensive, obscene, threatening, intimidating or contain nudity or images of a sexual nature
- discrimination (e.g., racism, homophobia etc.)
- swearing (both verbal and gestured), any content including explicit lyrics
- making or endorsing harmful or derogatory comments
- any threatening behaviour that may cause harm to others or the interests or reputation of the school
- bullying and harassment

- making false or misleading claims/ statements
- impersonating colleagues or third parties
- posting or sharing information that could jeopardise the school's confidentiality, particularly regarding sensitive school-related topics, such as the school's performance, internal disputes involving pupils, parents or employees
- disparaging the school, its employees or any third party
- sharing sensitive or personal information about the school or employees that should not be discussed or shared or is covered under GDPR i.e., absence information or phone numbers
- endorsing, liking, sharing content that could be offensive, speculative or may cause reputational damage to the school. this includes adding or commending on speculation
- sharing login details or allowing others to post on your behalf
- using your school email address for a personal social media account
- create social media accounts representing the school without prior authorisation from the headteacher
- expressing opinions on behalf of the school or using the school's logo or other trademarks without express authorisation.

These examples include creating, endorsing, liking, posting, retweeting, sharing, direct messaging or sending any statements, photo's, videos, audios or messages. They also include speaking and/or lip syncing to other creators' content and any music used.

You should never provide professional references or endorsements on behalf of the school for other individuals without the express authority of the Headteacher, including on social or professional networking sites. Such references, positive and negative, can be attributed to the school and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and the school.

6.2. Safeguarding and social media

You must not abuse your professional position with pupils on social media. Examples of abuse of position include, but not limited to:

- Accepting any former pupil under the age of 18, or any current pupils, as friends, or requesting such friendships
- Communicating personally with pupils.
- Posting photographs of pupils on sites not owned by us.
- Commenting about or naming pupils.
- Staff must not seek out or engage with pupils via personal social media accounts, including searching for pupils or viewing their profiles unless there is a legitimate safeguarding concern and this is authorised.
- Engagement with ex-pupils – staff should exercise caution in relation to ex-pupils, particularly those who have recently left the school or who may still be under the age of 18. Engaging with ex-pupils through personal social media accounts, or forming personal relationships with them, may constitute a breach of professional boundaries and trust. This is particularly relevant where there is a perceived imbalance of power or influence arising from the staff members former position. Staff must not exploit their professional position to pursue or establish personal, social or otherwise inappropriate relationships with ex-pupils.

If any member of staff becomes aware that they themselves have been or another staff member has been speaking to a pupil or ex-pupil online, they should raise it to their line manager or Headteacher immediately.

Any failure to report concerns relating to safeguarding and social media may itself be treated as a disciplinary matter.

6.3. Use of emojis, GIF's and Memes

Using emojis, GIF's or Memes do have their benefits, however it is important to use them correctly and appropriately.

You should be aware that messages and comments that include emojis may affect the way text is read. Emojis may mean different things to different people, the use of them may mean the text is deemed inappropriate.

If you chose to use emojis, GIF's or Memes you should ensure they are appropriate and easily understood within the context – or consider not using them if unsure.

6.4. Absence from work and use of social media

Use of social media whilst absent can create the impression that staff are well enough to be working. We accept that this is not necessarily the case, but this may be how it is perceived by colleagues and others. Taking this into account, we would guide staff to be mindful of their use of social media during absence from work. Each case will be considered on its individual facts, and no assumptions will be made solely based on social media activity.

7. Guidelines for responsible use of social media

You should make it clear in social media postings that you are speaking on your own behalf.

You should be respectful to others when making any statement on social media and be aware that you are personally responsible for all communications which will be published on the internet for anyone to see. You should ensure that you use privacy and access settings whilst being aware that you cannot control the use of your postings by others.

All communication with pupils must take place through approved school systems.

You should also ensure any content you post on social media is consistent with the professional image you present to colleagues, pupils and parents.

If you are uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, you are advised to refrain from posting it until you have discussed it with your manager.

Any contact with ex-pupils must be approached with professional judgement and transparency. Where there is any doubt about the appropriateness of contact, staff should seek advice from their line manager or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) before engaging.

If you become aware of social media content that disparages or reflects poorly on the school, you should contact the Headteacher as soon as possible.

8. Monitoring

The school reserves the right to monitor, intercept and review your use of social media. The school considers valid reasons for checking your internet usage include suspicions that you have:

- been using social media when you should have been working
- acted in a way that is in breach of the rules set out in this policy.

Monitoring is in the school's legitimate interests and is to ensure that this policy is being complied with. For further information, please refer to the Online Safety Policy and Data Protection (GDPR) Policy.

9. Breach of this policy

Any concerns or alleged breaches will be considered fairly and may be investigated in line with the School's disciplinary procedures. Breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

You may be required to remove any social media content that the school consider to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may in itself result in disciplinary action.

Where this policy requires you to disclose matters from your personal life, the school will consider the circumstances and context of each matter before determining whether any further action is required.



WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Based on the HfL Model Policy, April 2026

1. Introduction

The aim of this policy is to encourage employees and others who have serious concerns about any aspect of the school to voice those concerns and feel secure in doing so.

It is important that any fraud, misconduct, or wrongdoing is reported and properly dealt with. We encourage all individuals to raise any concerns they may have about the conduct of others or the way in which we operate.

We are committed to the principles of honesty and integrity. A culture of openness and accountability is critical to ensuring these values are authentically lived by.

This policy applies to all employees, workers, agency staff, contractors, service providers, volunteers, and governors. Concerns raised will be addressed promptly and appropriately, in line with statutory requirements and Ofsted guidance.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time.

2. Scope

If an employee's concern relates to how they have been treated this should be raised under the grievance or bullying and harassment policies.

The whistleblowing policy will not replace any existing policies or procedures. If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this policy our disciplinary policy will be used.

We encourage individuals to disclose any concerns they may have regardless of whether they are covered by this or another policy.

3. What is whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing means the reporting of information under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA) which relates to actual or suspected wrongdoing. This is called a "qualifying disclosure".

Qualifying disclosures are disclosures of information where the worker reasonably believes (and it is in the public interest) that one or more of the following matters is either happening, has taken place, or is likely to happen in the future:

- a criminal offence
- the breach of a legal obligation
- a miscarriage of justice
- a danger to the health and safety of any individual
- damage to the environment
- the deliberate attempt to conceal any of the above.

Whistleblowing also applies to unsafe or poor practice that may put children at risk, breaches of safeguarding procedures and failure to comply with statutory requirements.

If a worker is going to make a disclosure it should be made to the employer first, or if they feel unable to use the organisations procedure the disclosure should be made to a prescribed person (e.g. Head teacher, Chair of Governors, Trustees), so that employment rights are protected.

It is not necessary for a whistle-blower to have proof of such an act for the protections of this policy to apply.

Potential whistle-blowers are encouraged to seek support from a senior manager or their trade union representative if they are unsure whether to make a disclosure or to access support in making a disclosure, regardless of whether it is qualifying or not.

4. Protections for whistle-blowers

This policy has been written to take account of the Part IVA of the Employment Rights Act 1996 which protects workers making protected disclosures.

A qualifying disclosure made to the worker's employer is a protected disclosure. A qualifying disclosure made by a worker under this policy will also be a protected disclosure.

A whistle-blower who makes a protected disclosure has the right not to be dismissed (if they are an employee) or subjected to any other detriment, because they have made a protected disclosure.

Dismissing, or subjecting a whistle-blower to any other detriment for raising a protected disclosure, such as demotion, or harassment or sexual harassment or victimisation (under the Worker Protection Act 2024) will be a disciplinary offence.

We will not determine that anyone should cease to work at the school on the basis that they have made a qualifying disclosure in accordance with the law and this policy.

Whistle-blowers may seek support and advice from organisations such as the whistle blowing charity Protect (<https://protect-advice.org.uk> /020 3117 2520) or ACAS (www.acas.org.uk).

5. Obligations for the whistle-blower

You are encouraged to raise potential whistleblowing concerns as early as possible and to follow the whistleblowing procedure set out in this policy.

An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is a disciplinary offence. A whistleblower who is told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority, should not agree to remain silent.

Whistleblowing to an external agency without first using the procedure below may be considered a breach of our Code of Conduct. However, should an employee feel unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed they should use the other channels open to them (as detailed in Section 11 below)

It is not appropriate to whistle blow to the media except in limited circumstances and where those circumstances do not apply such whistleblowing may be considered gross misconduct.

Maliciously making a false allegation is a disciplinary offence.

6. Confidentiality

We encourage individuals to voice their concerns openly. If anyone wishes to raise concerns confidentially, we will make every effort to keep their identity secret.

The person(s) to whom the disclosure is made will consult with the whistle-blower before divulging their identity to any party, including an investigator.

We do not encourage anonymous disclosures as this may make it harder to establish the credibility of an allegation and may make investigation difficult or impossible. Anonymous concerns will be taken seriously and investigated as far as is possible under this policy.

7. Our commitment

Any matter raised under this policy and procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly, and confidentially.

8. Obligations for the Governing Board

An appropriate representative (headteacher or the governor named in section 11 (the named Governor)) will inform Hertfordshire County Council as the maintaining authority of any qualifying disclosures at the earliest opportunity.

Concerns regarding financial irregularity will be reported to the Shared Internal Audit Service (SIAS); where concerns relate to child protection these will be handled in keeping with the relevant policy of the school and reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where the threshold is met.

9. Whistleblowing procedure

9.1. Stage 1 – Disclosure

You should initially raise your concern with the Headteacher or DSL. You may do this orally or in writing. The DSL should then inform the headteacher of the concern.

If the concern relates to your line manager or any person to whom you report (other than the headteacher) you should raise the issue with the headteacher.

If the concern relates to the headteacher, you should raise this with the named governor, (e.g. Chair of Governors).

We aim to acknowledge your concern within 5 working days during term time, this may be longer during school closure periods.

Where external agencies such as LADO and Police are involved schools will follow their advice and this may delay the internal investigation.

9.2. Stage 2 – Investigation

The headteacher will arrange an investigation into the concerns raised, unless the concern relates to the headteacher, in which case the investigation will be arranged by the named governor. This will take place as soon as is reasonably practicable.

The investigation may involve you and other individuals involved meeting with the investigator and giving a written statement.

At any investigatory meetings you are entitled to be accompanied by a recognised trade union representative or a work colleague.

Whilst the person carrying out the investigation will aim to keep the whistle-blower informed of the progress of the investigation and likely timescales, sometimes the requirement for confidentiality will prevent full information about the investigation and any consequential disciplinary action from being disclosed.

9.3. Stage 3 – Report to Headteacher/Governors

The investigator will report to the person who arranged the investigation before any further action is taken. That person will decide on potential outcomes including, but not limited to:

- invoking our disciplinary process, or other relevant policy
- referral to the police, Hertfordshire County Council department, government department or regulatory agency
- no further action.

On conclusion of any investigation, you will, as far as is practicable and where it is reasonable to do so, be told the outcome of the investigation and what the headteacher/ named governor has done, or proposes to do, about it. If no action is to be taken, the reason for this will be explained.

9.4. Stage 4 – Escalation

If, on conclusion of stages 1, 2 and 3 you believe that the appropriate action has not been taken, you should report the matter to the proper authority. The Public Interest Disclosure (Prescribed Persons) Order 2014 (as amended) sets out a number of bodies prescribed by the Secretary of State to which qualifying disclosures may be made. In order for the report to one of these bodies to be a protected disclosure, you must reasonably believe that the matter falls within the matters covered by that body. You must also reasonably believe that the information disclosed, and any allegations contained in it, are substantially true.

These bodies include:

- the Financial Conduct Authority
- the Health and Safety Executive
- the Environment Agency
- His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education Children's Services and Skills
- the Secretary of State for Education
- the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation
- the Equality and Human Rights Commission.
- LADO

A full list can be obtained from the charity, Protect or the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) on the website [Whistleblowing: list of prescribed people and bodies - GOV.UK](#). The DBT list contains a description of the matters covered by each prescribed body. Alternatively, you may contact their professional association or trade union representative for guidance.

10. Data Protection

When you make a disclosure, the headteacher/named governor will process any personal data collected in accordance with our data protection policy. Data collected from the point at which the individual makes the report is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of dealing with the disclosure.

11. Contacts

Our appointed Governor for this purpose is: Mr Steve Hammond (Chair of Governors).

The independent whistleblowing charity: **Protect**

Web address : [Protect - Speak up stop harm - Protect - Speak up stop harm \(protect-advice.org.uk\)](https://protect-advice.org.uk)

Helpline [020 3117 2520](tel:02031172520)

Webform: [Contact Our Advisors](#)

Ofsted Whistleblowing Hotline: 0300 123 3155 or email; whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO); 0300 123 4043.

NSPCC whistleblowing advice line – 0800 0280285 8am – 8pm Monday – Friday and at weekend 9am – 6pm. Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Alternatively, you can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH.



Comment on Private Fostering

Although All Saints' School does not usually become involved in pupil exchanges with other schools, we need to be aware that placing children with families other than their own can constitute a "Private Fostering" arrangement. Many families do not realise it is a legal requirement that the parent or carer notify the Local Authority such an arrangement is in place, in order for the LA's Friends and Family Fostering Team to be able to provide the necessary support to ensure that the child is well cared for, safe and thriving.

Any staff member that is made aware of such an arrangement should ensure the DSL is informed and this information is recorded using CPOMS so that we can support the parents in meeting their legal obligation and provide any other signposting or support as may be required.



RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION IN SCHOOL

Based on the HCC Model Guidance for reducing the need for Restrictive Physical Intervention in School, April 2026

1 Introduction and purpose of policy

On rare occasions, school staff may need to use restrictive interventions to safeguard pupils or maintain discipline within the school environment. Department for Education, *Keeping children safe in education statutory guidance for schools and colleges* recognises that there are circumstances where it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to achieve these aims and states that schools must not have a no contact policy as this can put staff and pupils at risk.

This policy is based on guidance written to help schools develop policies around the use of restrictive interventions so that any interventions used are lawful and carried out in a safe and responsible manner. The aim of any guidance is to ensure staff are confident about the context in which they have the power to use restrictive interventions and restraint in order to safeguard pupil welfare.

Restrictive interventions and reasonable force should only be used when they are **necessary and proportionate**, after de-escalation strategies have been attempted where appropriate and when there is a clear risk of serious harm to the pupil or others, or serious damage to property or to prevent disorder.

Decisions on when to use restrictive intervention is a matter of professional judgement, and any intervention or restraint should be proportionate and reasonable in the context of the perceived risk and in the pupil's best interests. This would normally be after de-escalation strategies have failed. Should such an intervention be required the school should record the details, including any injury, and contact the parent/carer on the same day to explain the circumstances involved.

This guidance adopts the statutory terminology from *Restrictive interventions, including reasonable force, in schools (DfE, 2026)*, including the definitions of 'restrictive intervention', 'reasonable force', 'significant incident', 'restraint' and 'seclusion'. Restrictive intervention refers to any action, physical or non-physical, that restricts a pupil's movement.

2 Legal framework

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives schools the power to **use reasonable force** to:

- prevent a pupil from hurting themselves or others
- prevent a pupil from causing serious damage to property
- remove a disruptive pupil from a classroom
- prevent a pupil from causing disorder among pupils during school activities, including during off-site visits
- prevent a pupil from leaving a classroom where there is a risk to their safety or the safety of others.

Section 93A of the Education and Inspection Act ("the 2006 Act"), states schools must have procedures for recording and informing parents of significant incidents when force is used against pupils.

Additionally, 'The Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025' which requires written record where a pupil is secluded or immobilises a pupil and supplying a record to the parent as soon as possible.

Statutory guidance makes it clear that restrictive interventions and restraint cannot be used as a punishment. It is essential that schools have effective reporting and recording systems, data reviews of incident of restraint and seclusion, and reviews of relevant policies for example, safeguarding and behaviour policies and staff training needs and records.

Section 550ZB of the Education Act 1996 also gives schools the power to **use reasonable force to carry out searches** for prohibited items where the young person has not consented to the search. Prohibited items are:

- knives and weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that has been or likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage property.

Schools should read this current guidance alongside the following DfE Guidance: [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](#)

When conducting searches, schools/colleges should refer to the DfE: [Searching, screening and confiscation in schools - GOV.UK](#). The advice document was published in July 2022, and the guidance was last updated on GOV.UK in July 2023.

Schools should also refer to the following government guidance for further details:

DfE Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools Guidance for schools in England, April 2026. [Use of reasonable force in schools - GOV.UK](#)

3 Senior leadership responsibilities

Senior leaders in schools, including governors and head teachers, should ensure the following:

- There is a culture of respect and positive relationships between staff and pupils so that the need for high-level intervention is reduced.
- All staff are aware of the school policy and their powers and responsibilities regarding the use of restrictive interventions and restraint and their part in implementing this policy.
- Staff are able to use de-escalation techniques strategies in the first instance unless the situation requires an immediate physical response.
- All staff receive appropriate training in behaviour management that promotes positive relationships, including de-escalation techniques so that they are confident to deal with incidents and only use restrictive interventions where necessary.
- Schools may wish to consider whether certain staff members should receive specialist training on restrictive interventions and restraint techniques.
- The school will assess any risk posed to staff and take steps to reduce these risks. Staff do not place themselves at risk when using physical restraint and are able to access medical treatment and take time off if injured.
- The use of restrictive interventions and restraint is part of an overarching strategy of behaviour management and therapeutic support within the school environment and that its use is closely aligned to the school's behaviour policies.
- Staff are aware of any agreed adjustments to the policy and procedures that are in place for individual pupils who are vulnerable due to learning and other disabilities, autism or mental health difficulties (see section 5).

- Staff are supported to use restrictive interventions and restraint where this is within acceptable parameters and in line with school policies.
- Support is offered to pupils and staff involved in incidents requiring restrictive interventions and restraint.
- There is a system in place to record and monitor incidents where restrictive interventions or restraint have been used.
- The policy on restrictive interventions and restraint is reviewed at least annually and more frequently where thought appropriate.

4 Restrictive interventions and use of reasonable force

School powers allow the use of reasonable force to control or restrain pupils where necessary and its lawful use will be a defence to any related criminal prosecution or where an allegation is made against teaching staff.

To ensure the welfare of pupils and to protect staff from any misplaced allegations, any physical contact between staff and pupils must be appropriate within the context of the teacher/pupil relationship, the pupils' age and the circumstances. There are many examples of appropriate positive physical contact that can be used to reassure, comfort, guide or calm a pupil.

Occasions where staff may have cause to have physical intervention with a child may include:

- To comfort a child in distress (so long as this is appropriate to their age).
- For affirmation/praise (such as shaking hands, or gentle pat on the back).
- To gently direct a child or young person (e.g. holding hands).
- For curricular reasons (for example in PE, Drama, etc).
- First aid and medical treatment.
- In an emergency to avert danger to the child.

Not all children feel comfortable with certain types of physical contact; this should be recognised and, wherever possible, adults should seek the child's permission before initiating contact and be sensitive to any signs that they may be uncomfortable or embarrassed.

Staff should acknowledge that some children are more comfortable with touch than others and/or may be more comfortable with touch from some adults than others. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and so far as is possible, use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the child.

It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with a child, in one set of circumstances, may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child. In all situations where physical contact between staff and children takes place, staff must consider the following:

- The child's age and level of understanding.
- The child's individual characteristics and history.
- The duration of contact.
- The location where the contact takes place (it should not take place in private without others present).
- The purpose of the physical contact.

It is often appropriate for children to be given some physical contact and comfort, but this must always be offered with the following caution:

- Ensure there are other adults around and staff should be prepared to be accountable to them.
- Do not show favour to individual children.

- The area between a child's waist and mid-thigh or near the chest should not be touched in normal circumstances
- Where a child tries to become physically closer than appropriate, it is important they do not feel rejected, but are gently guided to a more appropriate behaviour by a positive suggestion.
- Cuddles/hugs should be short and side by side.
- Never kiss a child, and do not encourage children to kiss adults other than their parents.
- A school-age child should only sit on an adult's knee for a short time and for a specific reason such as following an injury, and not too close to the body.
- For younger children in EYFS, there is a greater need for a more nurturing environment where it may be more appropriate for closer physical contact during some activities. The above cautions still apply, except that sitting on a knee, or longer cuddles may be more acceptable.
- Where children require help with changing or toileting, the dignity of the child must be respected.
- Great care must be taken to ensure that all physical contact is specifically and only for the purpose of the operation being carried out.
- Children with additional needs that may require specific physical contact should have this identified in their medical plan or SEND plan.
- Wherever a member of staff feels uncomfortable about the way in which a child or staff member is using or abusing physical contact, even if this concern is small or uncertain, this must be immediately discussed with a DSL (and may be considered a Low-Level Concern).

Restrictive intervention can cover a wide variety of contact with pupils of varying degrees of intrusiveness ranging from positive handling, such as gentle guiding to physical restraint. The level of intervention and the degree of force required will be determined by the circumstances and the level of assessed risk to the pupil and others.

Generally, low-level physical contact/positive handling can be used to manage most behaviour, for example gentle contact to comfort, reassure or guide a pupil away from risk.

For younger pupils, this positive handling can be used to control the child's movements in order to keep them from harm or danger. The level of contact and force that would be acceptable to achieve this would be like the actions that a reasonable parent would do to keep their own child safe.

In some situations, it may be necessary to use a restrictive intervention to hold back a pupil or control their movement, and which involves restraint or the use of force. Where force is used, it must be **reasonable** – a proportionate response to the risk involved and used with a clear intent to prevent harm.

Reasonable force should involve “no more force than is needed” to achieve the desired outcome and should only be used for the purposes of restraining or controlling a pupil to safeguard pupils, stop damage to property or keep order in the classroom. What is reasonable force will be down to the professional judgement of the staff member, but any use of force must be justifiable, and the paramount consideration is that any action is taken in the interests of the pupil.

Staff must never use any restraint or physical restrictive intervention that restricts a pupil's airway, breathing or circulation, including pressure on the neck, chest or abdomen. Prone or ground-based restraint must be avoided and, if it occurs unintentionally, released immediately.

5 Vulnerable pupils

Some pupils may exhibit challenging behaviour in response to overstimulating environments, stressful situations or an inability to communicate distress in any other way. This can make them more vulnerable to experiencing restrictive intervention and restraint and it is likely the experience will be traumatising.

Schools should be mindful of pupils that may be vulnerable such as (but not limited to):

- children with special educational needs and disabilities (with or without an Education, Health and Care Plan)
- children who are experiencing mental health difficulties
- children who have experienced trauma in their lives, for example, looked after children, refugee children and unaccompanied minors, children living with domestic abuse and children with child protection plans.

Under the Equalities Act 2010, it is essential that schools can demonstrate that reasonable adjustments have been made to ensure any policy on physical intervention and restraint does not disadvantage these pupils.

Government guidance *Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention* also requires schools to take steps to reduce the use of physical intervention for vulnerable children and this will be a feature of any inspection carried out by the CQC and Ofsted

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reducing-the-need-for-restraint-and-restrictive-intervention>

Special schools where pupils have a high level of needs requiring regular restrictive intervention to manage behaviour may wish to consider use of a bespoke policy that takes account of the specific needs of the pupils using this guidance.

Schools must demonstrate that the specific needs of these pupils have been considered and that the school will tailor their approach accordingly to avoid discrimination against these pupils.

School policies on behaviour management should uphold the rights of vulnerable pupils, ensure their safety and dignity, and work in partnership with parents to reduce the need for restrictive interventions and restraint.

Vulnerable pupils will be subject to the requirements set out in this policy, but schools will also need to meet the following extra requirements.

- Vulnerable pupils whose behaviour is likely to increase the risk of restrictive intervention and restraint should have a plan in place from the outset and pupils and parents should be fully involved in agreeing this plan. However not all vulnerable pupils will require this.
- The plan should set out the strategies for managing challenging behaviour and should include a hierarchical response ranging from prevention, de-escalation and detailing how incidents will be dealt with.
- The plan should be based on an assessment of the pupil's particular needs and how these contribute to challenging behaviour, including any triggers for challenging behaviour and what steps can be taken to avoid these triggers and maintain a positive learning environment for the pupil.
- The plan should include any techniques for de-escalating situations and how best to manage challenging behaviour in order to avoid use of restrictive interventions and restraint.
- Staff must adapt verbal and non-verbal communication during incidents for pupils with communication needs or sensory profiles.
- Forms of restraint or restrictive intervention to be used should be identified and agreed in advance and the circumstances for its use set out clearly so that pupils and parents understand the circumstances in which it will be used.
- The plan should include which staff members will be responsible for its implementation and what specific training they will receive to support them in this role.

- Specific support plans should also cover any transitions that a pupil may experience between services or locations as movement to unfamiliar places may be a trigger for challenging behaviour.
- Schools using forms of restriction intervention involving seclusion or a withdrawal that potentially restricts a child's liberty should have written rules about how and when these measures will be used.
- Seclusion, as defined in the *DfE Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools, April 2026* may only be used as an emergency safety measure and must be recorded and reported in line with statutory requirements.
- Schools may discuss approaches with parents/carers but do not need their consent to use restrictive interventions or seclusion when it is necessary, safe and lawful.

6 Planning and prevention

6.1 Whole school

Schools should be alert to situations and circumstances that can lead to incidents that may require restrictive intervention and take active steps to avoid issues escalating.

The school should regularly review environmental factors within the school that may lead to incidents in the school or elsewhere and should consider:

- the general school environment and any potential hot-spots
- any difficulties that may arise at different times of the day, ie: breaks
- any issues around supervision of pupils
- specific environmental factors for vulnerable pupils
- specific risks related to gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality or disability
- specific risks related to gang activity
- specific risks off-site/school trips.

This should address:

- the nature of the risk and likely impact on pupils
- the likelihood of incidents
- actions and/or reasonable adjustments for vulnerable pupils
- actions to be taken to avoid incidents and reduce risk
- actions to be taken in the event of an incident in order to reduce risk to staff and pupils.

6.2 Individual pupils

All vulnerable pupils' who are at heightened risk of experiencing restrictive interventions and restraint should have an individual behaviour support plan (see section 5).

Seclusion refers to confining a pupil alone in a space from which they are prevented from leaving, physically or through perceived consequences. This requires continuous supervision and must always be recorded and reported.

Where a pupil requires restrictive intervention on more than one occasion, or where there is a known risk of restrictive intervention being required, the school should ensure an individual behaviour support plan and risk assessment are in place. This should consider their specific circumstances, any triggers to behaviours, and strategies or approaches that may reduce the number of incidents. The plan should be reviewed regularly.

Where it is known that restrictive interventions involving force or restraint may be required in order to manage an individual pupil's behaviour this should be planned for in partnership with parents and the pupil (where appropriate) and an intervention plan/risk assessment put in place.

The risk assessment should consider:

- the risks to the pupil and others from their behaviour
- the risks from use of restrictive interventions
- the risks from not intervening
- the form of restrictive intervention that would be the least restrictive.

The behaviour support plan should:

- identify the triggers to the behaviour that may lead to the need to intervene or restrain
- relevant background information, such as experiences of home life or history of abuse
- detail any de-escalation techniques that should be used in the first instance to deal with incidents
- set out what forms of restrictive interventions and restraint may be used without injury to the pupil, staff member or anyone else present
- provide details of how incidents will be reviewed and who will be involved in the review.

Individual behaviour support plans must be reviewed with the pupil and parents after any significant incident involving restrictive intervention.

Planned intervention can be viewed as positive as it demonstrates a commitment to keeping children safe and enables them to take part in the planning process.

7 Dealing with incidents

7.1 Initial consideration

Before any action is taken staff should quickly weigh up the situation and decide if intervention is needed immediately to avert risk of harm. It is for the staff member to make a professional judgement on whether the situation requires the use of restrictive interventions and the degree of force needed.

The staff member must be clear on the justification of the action and the intended outcome of intervention, for example stopping a young child from leaving the classroom to stopping an older pupil from attacking another pupil, and how the intervention is in the best interests of those involved. This could be important in terms of providing a defence to any allegation of assault arising following the incident.

Staff should also consider the risks of not intervening, for example if no intervention is made and the pupil causes serious injury to another, the school could be considered negligent in the duty of care owed to that pupil.

7.2 De-escalation

De-escalation techniques, if possible, must be used in the first instance and staff should:

- make the pupil and others present aware that the staff member is taking control of the situation
- ask other pupils to leave to calm the situation
- send for assistance from another staff member (particularly if restraint is likely to be needed)
- remain calm and respectful and speak slowly and clearly to the pupil to give reassurance and instructions
- be aware of their tone of voice and body language
- where possible, use minimal force/positive handling to gently guide the pupil away from danger (but be aware of risk to self)
- be aware of their own emotions and avoid allowing the situation to spiral
- if the pupil is pacing, try to remain still and avoid mirroring their anxiety

- keep a respectful distance and avoid encroaching on the pupil's personal space
- give the young person options so that they have an opportunity to resolve the situation in a dignified manner
- be specific to a pupil's SEND.

De-escalation techniques can be used where there is an opportunity to do so but not in a situation where a pupil is already at risk of harm and action is needed. However, staff can continue to use many of the techniques listed above during restraint to calm and reassure the young person.

7.3 Use of reasonable force and restraint

All staff have a duty of care to pupils and have the power to use restrictive interventions and restraint where required. However, staff can send for help if it is thought that assistance will be needed.

Use of force must be reasonable, proportionate and necessary and restraint should only be used for as long as is needed.

- Ideally, staff should not have to deal with incidents requiring restraint alone for any period of time and it is recommended that other staff attend the incident as soon as possible to reduce risk.
- Where possible, before intervening, staff should warn the pupil clearly and calmly that physical force may be used to restrain them and they should be given an opportunity to comply with any instructions to avoid this.
- When using restraint, staff should remain calm and continue to talk to the pupil calmly throughout to reassure them and let them know what is happening and why.
- The restraint should:
 - only involve the minimum of force necessary to restrict movement
 - only be used temporarily until the risk has passed
 - should not restrict breathing or blood supply
 - should avoid bringing pupil to the ground
 - should not involve any contact that may be amount to a criminal offence such as assault.
- The child or young person should be released slowly and safely when it is felt they are sufficiently in control of their emotions.
- If the restrictive intervention appears to escalate rather than reduce the risk, staff should reassess the situation and modify or cease the intervention where safe to do so.

8 Following incidents

Schools must have effective and practical recording and reporting systems. It is essential schools review these systems and ensure they are in line with the new guidance- *DfE Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools, April 2026*.

8.1 Recording and reporting incidents

- The school **must** keep a written record of every significant incident involving use of force the same day, and always as soon as possible thereafter, including all details required by statutory guidance. See Section: Reporting the use of force (statutory guidance) Page 15: *DfE Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools, April 2026*.

This **must** cover as a minimum:

- names of pupils and staff directly involved
- any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including whether the pupil involved has an identified special educational need or disability and their SEN status code

- time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- brief account of the incident, including what led up to the incident, identified or potential triggers if known, any preventative or de-escalation strategies used, and (where relevant) what type of reasonable force was applied, the degree of force, and details of any physical injuries sustained
- brief account of why the use of force was assessed as necessary in that instance
- any post-incident support, such as details of any medical treatment for injuries or other adverse impacts.

Please see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 of this policy for template forms that can be used for this purpose. Once completed, they must be given to the Headteacher. They will be uploaded to CPOMS.

8.2 Notifying others

- The head teacher must be informed of all incidents immediately to decide on what further actions are required.
- The designated safeguarding lead should also be informed of incidents that may raise any safeguarding issues.
- The school **must** notify parents of any significant use of force, seclusion or restraint as soon as practicable and ideally the same day, in writing.
- Reports to parents/carers should include the following details as a minimum:
 - time, date, location and approximate duration of the interventions
 - brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that instance
 - brief account of what type of force was applied, and the degree of force
 - details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable.
- For seclusion or non-physical restraint, reports should describe the nature of the restrictive intervention used and why it was assessed as necessary.
- Schools should also consider inviting parents/carers to have a follow-up discussion about the incident where this is appropriate to do so.
- Where reporting to a parent may cause serious harm to the pupil, the school should report to an alternative parent (or foster carer where the child is looked after) or, if there are none, the Local Authority.
- The governing body must be updated regularly on the use of restrictive intervention, seclusion, restraint and significant incidents to identify patterns and ensure compliance with statutory duties. They must review data to identify any disproportionate use of restrictive interventions affecting pupils with protected characteristics, SEND or other vulnerabilities.
- In settings where the use of restrictive interventions and restraint is a regular feature due to pupils' individual needs the setting should have in place a system for recording, analysing and reporting incidents. This can be particularly helpful during Ofsted inspections and where an allegation or complaint is made.

8.3 Support following incidents

It should be acknowledged that the use of restrictive interventions and restraint carry an inherent risk of injury to staff and pupils involved.

Use of restrictive interventions and restraint can be upsetting for pupils and staff. Schools should have procedures in place for dealing with the follow-up of incidents so that those involved have time and space to recover and reflect on what happened. Learning can then be used to review and improve policies.

It may be necessary to ensure staff and pupils receive any required medical attention and are able to talk to someone who was not involved in the incident about what happened and why.

For vulnerable pupils, staff and parents should discuss the incident and consider whether the behaviour support plan needs to be changed and what learning can be taken from the incident.

8.4 Monitoring and reviewing incidents

Schools should monitor and review the use of force, restrictive interventions and restraint as a means of learning from incidents to improve practice and inform risk assessments and ultimately, to avoid the need for restrictive interventions and restraint. Information on incidents can help inform any risk assessment both on a whole-school level and in terms of individual or groups of pupils. This is particularly important in the case of vulnerable pupils who may be more susceptible to experiencing restrictive interventions and restraint.

When reviewing incidents, the school should consider the following:

- Was the use of restrictive intervention necessary, appropriate and proportionate?
- What steps were taken to ensure that minimum reasonable force was used?
- Have the incidents needing restrictive intervention increased/decreased?
- Are vulnerable pupils over-represented in the numbers and if so, why? Is the school confident that vulnerable pupils are not being discriminated against by policy and procedures?
- Was the length of time restrictive intervention was used kept to a minimum?
- Could alternative methods other than restrictive intervention been used?
- What steps were taken to ensure that restrictive intervention used causes a minimum of pain or distress?
- What steps were taken following restrictive intervention for the pupil and the staff involved?
- Were there separate debriefing sessions for both pupil and members of staff who have been involved in the intervention? What were the antecedents, consequences and alternative courses of action?

9 Training for staff

Training from a relevant training provider increases staff confidence in dealing with incidents and reduces risks. Training must equip staff to apply restrictive interventions safely, assess proportionality under pressure, understand individual risk assessments, and comply with statutory recording and reporting duties.

When considering training, schools should be aware that any member of staff may need to intervene in emergency situations. Schools may consider training in the context of the needs of pupils and the number and seriousness of incidents that are likely to occur in the school.

- All staff should receive training on how to prevent the need for restrictive interventions, including how to de-escalate situations and awareness of positive handling techniques.
- Schools should identify the most appropriate members of staff for specialist training in restraint techniques.
- Schools should keep a record of the types of training staff have received and those staff who have received specialist training in restraint techniques.
- Some settings such as special educational needs or pupil referral units may have a higher level of incidents requiring a higher proportion of staff to receive specialist training on positive handling techniques. Where settings have a regular need to use restrictive interventions and restraint it is recommended that all staff should be trained.

10 Publicising the guidance

It is recommended that the school guidance on restrictive interventions and restraint is part of the behaviour management policy and available on the school website.

It is important that pupils and parents are aware of the school's legal powers to use restrictive interventions and restraint and the circumstances in which it is likely to be used. It should also be acknowledged that reasonable adjustments will be made for more vulnerable pupils such as those with SEND.

Parents should be made aware that their consent is not required to use restrictive interventions and restraint. Parents should also be aware of how the school will inform them of any incidents requiring the use of restrictive interventions and restraint.

11 Complaints and allegations

The use of restrictive interventions can lead to accusations against staff by pupils and parents of improper conduct or assault, so it is essential that schools have in place clear policies and procedures around the use of restrictive interventions and restraint so that staff have a defence against such allegations.

Schools should publish the complaints policy and ensure pupils and parents know how to make a complaint following the use of restrictive interventions or restraint. When dealing with complaints and allegations it should be remembered that the onus is on the person making the complaint/allegation to set out how the member of staff did not act reasonably in the circumstances.

However, it must be demonstrated that the staff member followed agreed practice and procedure. It should be made clear to staff that force may only be used within the parameters set out in the school's policy and that any deviation from acceptable practice will leave the staff member vulnerable to complaints and allegations.

Where an incident involving restrictive intervention or physical restraint results in an allegation being made against a member of staff, the matter must be managed as an allegation against a person who works with children. The school must follow the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) procedures for managing [Allegations against staff - Hertfordshire Grid for Learning](#) who work with children and young people. All such cases must be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day, and no internal investigation should take place unless agreed with the LADO.

APPENDIX 1: Reporting to Parents

Student Name:	
D.O.B:	
SEND Code	
Identified SEN or disability	

Date of Incident	
Time of Incident	
Duration of Incident	
Duration of Restrictive Intervention	

Recording staff name:	
-----------------------	--

Location of Incident:	

Type of Restrictive Intervention	
Physical restraint	☐
Non-physical restraint	☐
Mechanical restraint	☐
Chemical restraint	☐
Supervised seclusion	☐

Description of Restrictive Intervention

Justification for restrictive intervention Why the intervention was assessed as necessary (tick all that apply):	Harm prevented by physical intervention with predicted levels (see Individual Plan) e.g. bruising to peers, lacerations, destruction of computer, 20 mins of geography lost for 15 child or young person's etc.
To prevent harm to self ☐	
To prevent harm to other children ☐	
To prevent harm to adults ☐	
To prevent damage to property ☐	
To prevent loss of learning (see plan) ☐	

Is there any physical or emotional harm caused by the	Y/N	Details:

use of the restrictive intervention?		
Has the student indicated that this was caused by the use of restrictive intervention?	Y/N	Actions:

Who has received a copy of this report?		
Reported to:	Method of reporting (e.g. post)	Time and date of reporting

APPENDIX 2: Recording form

(Compliant with Restrictive Intervention, including the use of reasonable force, in schools (April 2026)).

Triggers:
Additional factors:

De-escalation techniques used (please state order in which they were used)			
Verbal advice and support		Offering services of other staff	
Calm talking		Informing of consequences	
Distraction		Taking non-threatening body position	
Reassurance		De-escalation script	
Humour		Clear instruction / warning	
Negotiation		Withdrawal from activity	
Offering choices and options		Diversion	
Other (please specify)			
Number	Description of how technique was employed		
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

Restrictive intervention, in sequence.			
Time	Technique	Shape	Staff name
Duration of restraint:		Duration of incident:	
Additional information and justification		Additional information and justification	

Unresolved Harm/ Details of damage to property (costs and details of harm to property and people, including medical intervention:

Management:	Details:	
How was the incident resolved?		
What are the protective and educational consequences?		
Has necessary student de-brief taken place?	Y/N	
Has necessary staff de-brief taken place?	Y/N	
Has the Risk Reduction Plan been reviewed?	Y/N	
Was there involvement of external agencies?	Y/N	

Name(s) of student witnesses:		

Verification of account by adult witnesses:			
Name	Staff signature	Verification	Date and time
		☐	
		☐	
		☐	

	Name	Signature	Date
Recording staff	_____	_____	_____
Headteacher (or delegated member of SLT)	_____	_____	_____

APPENDIX. 3. Therapeutic Tree (Roots and Fruits)

Analysis tool to explore behaviours, feelings and experiences

Therapeutic Tree

Name	
Supporting Staff	
Date	
Review Date	

Anti-social / difficult / dangerous Behaviours

Pro- social behaviours

DEFAULT

Anti-social / negative feelings

Pro-social / positive feelings

Anti-social / negative experiences

Pro-social / positive experiences

APPENDIX 4: Risk reduction plan

For assessing and managing foreseeable risks for child or young persons who are likely to need Restrictive Intervention

Risk Assessment Calculator

Name	
DOB	
Date of Assessment	

Harm/Behaviour	Opinion Evidenced O/E	Conscious Sub-conscious C/S	Seriousness Of Harm A 1/2/3/4	Probability Of Harm B 1/2/3/4	Severity Risk Score A x B
Harm to self					
Harm to peers					
Harm to staff					
Damage to property					
Harm from disruption					
Criminal offence					
Other harm					

Seriousness	
1	Foreseeable outcome is upset or disruption
2	Foreseeable outcome is harm requiring first aid, distress or minor damage
3	Foreseeable outcome is hospitalisation, significant distress, extensive damage
4	Foreseeable outcome is loss of life or permanent disability, emotional trauma requiring counselling or critical property damage
Probability	
1	There is evidence of historical risk, but the behaviour has been dormant for over 12 months and no identified triggers remain
2	The risk of harm has occurred within the last 12 months, the context has changed to make a reoccurrence unlikely
3	The risk of harm is more likely than not to occur again
4	The risk of harm is persistent and constant

Risks which score 6 or more (probability x seriousness) should have strategies listed on next page

Individual Risk Reduction Plan

Name	DOB	Date	Review Date
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Photo	Risk reduction measures and differentiated measures (to respond to triggers)
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Pro social / positive behaviour	Strategies to respond
Anxiety / DIFFICULT behaviours	Strategies to respond
Crisis / DANGEROUS behaviours	Strategies to respond
Post incident recovery and debrief measures	

Signature of Plan Co-ordinator..... Date

Signature of Parent / Carer..... Date

Signature of Young Person.....Date.....

APPENDIX 5: Audited Need for identifying Restrictive Intervention or Restraint needs

Name:	DOB:	Age:
Sex / gender:	Cultural heritage:	Diagnosis (if known):
How well equipped is the school/setting to manage this inclusion (position in circles)? Summary of the risks posed to self and others by the behaviour of concern.		
Is the Therapeutic Tree / Roots and Fruits updated		
Experiences affecting the child		
Feelings affecting the child		
Physical characteristics (height, weight, physical differences)		
Additional risk factors (medical or emotional diagnosis or needs, substance misuse etc.)		
Any known developmental issues		
Communication differences (visual or hearing impairment, adaptive communication, any known sensory processing issues)		
Is the therapeutic plan / risk reduction plan updated?		
Context or triggers (high risk times, places, people activities)		
De-escalation options to use (unusual strategies that are effective)		
De-escalation options to avoid (common strategies that have proved ineffective)		
Principle of 'last resort' why may de-escalation be ineffective (triggers are hidden, difficulty in communicating)		
Staff matching (who is best to de-escalate, who is safest for involvement with RPI)		
Training needs (does anybody require additional training in de-escalation, RPI, Communication)		

JUSTIFICATION (what harm will be prevented at what level)
Environmental Risk Assessment (necessary changes chairs etc, limited access)
Student Shape (standing, seated on chairs, seated on the floor)
Adult shape (standing, kneeling, seated in chairs)
Destination technique (elbow tuck lone worker, elbow tuck figure 4, etc.)
Transitions (describe the messy bits, taking hold, letting go etc.)
What makes it safe? (reminders of detail)
What makes it effective? (reminders of detail)
Social validity (how will it feel for the child, how will it look to others)
How has the person (or their advocate) been consulted with and contributed to this assessment?
Protective consequences (limits to freedom to CONTROL risk of harm)
Educational consequences (how are we going to TEACH internal discipline)
Unresolved risk factors (issues for management)