



Child Protection Policy

Safeguarding and the promoting of welfare of children is defined as

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

Child Protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, Open Box Education Centre recognises that all organisations and individuals should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

1. PURPOSE

Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.

(Keeping Children Safe in Education – DfE, 2020)

This Child Protection policy is for all staff, parents, governors, volunteers and the wider school community. It forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for our school and should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020)
- Open Box Education Centre Relationships and Behaviour Policy;
- Open Box Education Centre Staff Code of Conduct Policy;
- Open Box Education Centre safeguarding response to children missing from education (OBEC Attendance Policy)
- The role of the designated safeguarding lead (Annex B of KCSIE)

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (*everyone under the age of 18*) is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Open Box Education Centre takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care. "The welfare of the child is paramount" (Children Act 1989).

2.2 There are three main elements to our Child Protection policy:

- **Prevention** through the creation of a positive school atmosphere and the teaching and pastoral support offered to students.
- **Protection** by following agreed procedures and ensuring all staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.
- **Support** to students who may have been abused.

2.3 This policy applies to all students, staff, parents, governors, volunteers, students and visitors to our school.

2.4 This school recognises it is an agent of referral and not of investigation.

3. SCHOOL ETHOS

Our school is committed to keeping children safe and aims to:

- Create a culture of vigilance where the welfare of our students is promoted and where timely and appropriate safeguarding action is taken
- Establish and maintain an environment where students feel safe and secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to
- Ensure that students know that there are adults within the school they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty
- Ensure students receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities which equip students with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to develop healthy and safe relationships
- Include in the curriculum material which will help students develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills
- Protect children from harm and to ensure that they are taught in a way that is consistent with the law and our values and to promote respect for all others
- Facilitate understanding of wider issues within the context of learning about the values on which our society is founded and our system of democratic government
- Provide a curriculum which actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- promote tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), races, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientations
- Make parents/carers aware of the school policies and practice for safeguarding and ensure that, wherever possible, every effort will be made to establish open and honest effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from partner agencies

4. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

4.1 Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (*Section 157 for Independent schools*) places a statutory responsibility on the governing body to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are students of the school.

4.2 The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice in Essex are the responsibilities of the [Essex Safeguarding Children Board](#) (ESCB). In Essex, all professionals must work in accordance with the [SET Procedures \(ESCB, 2019\)](#). Our school also works in accordance with the following legislation and guidance (*this is not an exhaustive list*):

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DfE, 2020\)](#)

[Working Together \(HMG, 2018\)](#)

Education Act (2002)

[Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex](#) (ESCB, 2017)

[Children Missing Education - statutory guidance for local authorities \(DfE, 2016\)](#)

[Counter-Terrorism and Security Act \(HMG, 2015\)](#)

[Serious Crime Act 2015](#) (Home Office, 2015)

Children and Social Work Act (2017)

Sexual Offences Act (2003)

Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006

[Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners \(HMG, 2018\)](#)

[Data Protection Act \(2018\)](#)

[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) (HMG, 2015)

[Searching, screening and confiscation](#) (DfE, 2018)

Children Act (1989)

Children Act (2004)

[Preventing and Tackling Bullying \(DfE, 2017\)](#)

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (S. 74 - Serious Crime Act 2015)

[Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#) (DfE, 2018)

[Promoting positive emotional well-being and reducing the risk of suicide \(ESCB, 2018\)](#)

[Preventing youth violence and gang involvement \(Home Office, 2015\)](#)

[Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adult - county lines guidance \(Home Office, 2018\)](#)

[Teaching online safety in schools \(DfE, 2019\)](#)

[Education Access Team CME / Home Education policy and practice \(ECC, 2018\)](#)

[Understanding and Supporting Behaviour - safe practice for schools and educational settings \(ESCB 2020\)](#)

4.3 Child protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB)

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them and to provide a safe environment in which they can learn and achieve their full potential. However, there are key people within schools and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures. The names of those in our school with these specific responsibilities (the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) are shown on the last page of this document.

5.1 The Governing Body

The governing body ensures that the policies, procedures and training at Open Box Education Centre are effective and comply with the law at all times. It ensures that all required policies relating to safeguarding are in place, that the child protection policy reflects statutory and local guidance and is reviewed at least annually.

The governor for safeguarding arrangements is named on the last page of this document. This governor takes leadership responsibility for safeguarding arrangements in our school. The governing body ensures there is a named designated safeguarding lead and at least one deputy safeguarding lead in place (also named on the last page).

The governing body ensures the school contributes to inter-agency working, in line with statutory and local guidance. It ensures that information is shared and stored appropriately and in accordance with statutory requirements.

The governing body ensures that all staff members undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction and that it is then regularly updated. All staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to keep our children safe. Governors will not be given details relating to individual child protection cases or situations to ensure confidentiality is not breached.

The governing body ensures that children are taught about safeguarding, including online, ensuring that appropriate filters and monitoring systems for online usage are in place. Our children will be taught how to keep themselves safe through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

The governing body ensures our pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe (including online) through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. From September 2020, our school will work in accordance with new government regulations which make the subjects of Relationships Education (for primary age pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for secondary age pupils) and Health Education (for all pupils in state-funded schools) mandatory.

The governing body and Principal are responsible for ensuring the school follows recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. It adheres to statutory responsibilities to check adults working with children and has recruitment and selection procedures in place (see the Open Box Education Centre's 'Safer Recruitment' policy for further information). It ensures that volunteers are appropriately supervised in school.

5.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead in school has responsibility for managing child protection referrals, safeguarding training and raising awareness of all child protection policies and procedures. They must ensure that everyone in school (including temporary staff, volunteers and contractors) is aware of these procedures and that they are followed at all times. They act as a source of advice and support for other staff (on child protection matters) and ensure that timely referrals to Essex Children's Social Care (Family Operations Hub) are made in accordance with current SET procedures. They work with the local authority and other agencies as required. The Designated Safeguarding Lead reports regularly to the governing body detailing any changes to the policy and procedures, any training undertaken by staff and other relevant issues.

If for any reason the Designated Safeguarding Lead is unavailable, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will act in their absence.

5.3 Promoting Safeguarding

The school publishes its Child Protection policy on the school website and it should be read alongside 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE, 2020). The school actively promotes online safety on its website and signposts stakeholders to information that will help keep children safe online.

5.4 The Principal

The Principal works in accordance with the requirements upon all school staff. In addition, the Principal ensures that all safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are followed by all staff.

5.5 All school staff

Everyone at Open Box Education Centre has a responsibility to provide a safe learning environment in which our children can learn. All staff members are aware of the local early help process and our role in it. They are aware of signs of abuse and neglect so they are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection. All staff members are aware of and follow school processes (as set out in this policy) and are aware of how to make a referral to Social Care if there is a need to do so. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they must act on them immediately and speak with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) – they do not assume that others have taken action.

6. TYPES OF ABUSE / SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020) defines abuse as the maltreatment of a child.

"Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children"

The four main types of abuse referred to in Keeping Children Safe in Education are:

- **Physical** - Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
- **Emotional** - Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development
- **Sexual** - Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
- **Neglect** - Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Our school is aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so we are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection. All staff are aware of environmental factors which may impact on a child's welfare and safety and understand safeguarding in the wider context (contextual safeguarding). Staff are aware of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm and understand that behaviours linked to

issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting put children in danger.

Peer on peer abuse

Our school may be the only stable, secure and safe element in the lives of children at risk of, or who have suffered harm. Nevertheless, whilst at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant, or they may instead be withdrawn, or display abusive behaviours towards other children. Our school recognises that some children may abuse their peers and any incidents of peer on peer abuse will be managed in the same way as any other child protection concern and will follow the same procedures. We will seek advice and support from other agencies as appropriate.

Peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This may include bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse, sexual violence/sexual harassment, 'sexting', 'up-skirting' or initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. We do not tolerate any harmful behaviour in school and will take swift action to intervene where this occurs. We use lessons and assemblies to help children understand, in an age-appropriate way, what abuse is and we encourage them to tell a trusted adult if someone is behaving in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. Our school understands the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse. Please refer to the Anti-bullying Policy for details.

Serious violence

All staff are aware of indicators which may signal that children are at risk from or involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in well-being, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that a child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

Children at greater risk of harm and those with special educational needs and disabilities

Our school understands that children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability, without further exploration
- That they may be more prone to peer group isolation than others
- The potential to be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing signs
- Communication difficulties in overcoming these barriers

We recognise that some children may potentially be at risk of greater harm and require additional help and support. These may be children with a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan, those in Care or previously in Care or those requiring mental health support. We work with Social Care and other appropriate agencies to ensure there is a joined-up approach to planning for these children and that they receive the right help at the right time.

Children missing from education

All children, regardless of their age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs they may have are entitled to a full-time education. Our school recognises that a child missing education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and will follow the school procedures for unauthorised absence and for children missing education. It is also recognised that, when not in school, children may be vulnerable to or exposed to other risks, so we work with parents and other partners to keep children in school whenever possible.

Parents should always inform us of the reason for any absence. Where contact is not made, a referral may be made to another appropriate agency (Education Access Team, Social Care or Police). Parents are required to provide at least two emergency contact numbers to the school, so we are able to communicate with someone if we need to.

Our school must inform the local authority of any student who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without school permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

Please refer to Open Box Education Centre Attendance Policy for details of our response to CME.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse, which can happen to boys and girls from any background or community. In Essex, the definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) from the Department of Education (DfE, 2017) has been adopted:

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

It is understood that a significant number of children who are victims of CSE go missing from home, care and education at some point. Our school is alert to the signs and indicators of a child becoming at risk of, or subject to, CSE and will take appropriate action to respond to any concerns. The designated safeguarding will lead on these issues in school and will work with other agencies as appropriate. This [one page Essex process map](#) sets out arrangements for CSE in Essex.

Child criminal exploitation

Child criminal exploitation is a geographically widespread form of harm which is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity (county lines is when drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban areas and seaside towns). Our school works with key partners locally to prevent and respond to child criminal exploitation.

Online Safety

We recognise that our children are growing up in an increasingly complex world, living their lives on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but we recognise it also presents challenges and risks. Any student can be vulnerable online, and their vulnerability can fluctuate depending on their age, developmental stage and personal circumstance. We want to equip our students with the knowledge needed to make the best use of the internet and technology in a safe, considered and respectful way, so they are able to reap the benefits of the online world.

The three main areas of online risk could be categorised as:

Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;

Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults;

Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying

Our school seeks to help children keep themselves safe online in a range of ways - further information about our approach to online safety is available in our Online Safety Policy.

Contextual safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and behaviours can be associated with factors outside our school. All staff are aware of contextual safeguarding and the fact they should consider whether wider environmental factors present in a child's life are a threat to their safety and / or welfare. To this end, we will consider relevant information when assessing any risk to a child and share it with other agencies to support better understanding of a child and their family.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. Domestic abuse is not limited to physical acts of violence or threatening behaviour, and can include emotional, psychological, controlling or coercive behaviour, sexual and/or economic abuse. Our school recognises that exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious, long-term emotional and psychological impact on children. We work with other key partners and will share relevant information where there are concerns that domestic abuse may be an issue for a child or family or be placing a child at risk of harm.

So-called 'honour-based violence' (including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse.

As of October 2015, the Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015) introduced a duty on teachers (and other professionals) to notify the police of known cases of female genital mutilation where it appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. Our school will operate in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to this issue, and in line with local safeguarding procedures.

Forced marriage

A forced marriage is one entered into without the full consent of one or both parties. It is where violence, threats or other forms of coercion is used and is a crime. Our staff understand how to report concerns where this may be an issue.

Prevention of radicalisation

As of July 2015, the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act \(HMG, 2015\)](#) placed a new duty on schools and other education providers. Under section 26 of the Act, schools are required, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

It requires schools to:

- teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life and must promote community cohesion
- be safe spaces in which children / young people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas
- be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues

CHANNEL is a national programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Our school works in accordance with the PREVENT Duty and with local procedures for PREVENT and with other agencies, sharing information and concerns as appropriate. Our school approaches this issue in the same way as any other child protection matter. Any concerns that one of our students is at risk in this respect, will be referred to Children’s Social Care in line with the SET procedures.

Promoting Positive Mental Health and Resilience

Our staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. We understand that, where children have suffered abuse or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Where we have concerns this may impact on mental health, we will seek advice and work with other agencies as appropriate to support a child and ensure they receive the help they need.

Positive mental health is the concern of the whole community and we recognise that schools play a key part in this. Our school aims to develop the emotional wellbeing and resilience of all students and staff, as well as provide specific support for those with additional needs. We understand that there are risk factors which increase someone’s vulnerability and protective factors that can promote or strengthen resiliency. The more risk factors present in an individual’s life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are required to counter-balance and promote further growth of resilience.

It is vital that we work in partnership with parents to support the well-being of our students. Parents should share any concerns about the well-being of their child with school, so appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented.

7. PROCEDURES

7.1 Our school works with key local partners to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans which provide additional support (through a 'child in need' or a 'child protection' plan).

All staff members have a duty to identify and respond to suspected / actual abuse or disclosures of abuse. Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure or allegation of abuse, or suspects that abuse may have occurred **must** report it immediately to the designated safeguarding lead (or, in their absence, the deputy designated safeguarding lead).

All action is taken in accordance with the following guidance;

- Essex Safeguarding Children Board guidelines - the SET (Southend, Essex and Thurrock) Child Protection Procedures (ESCB, 2019)
- [Essex Effective Support](#)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2018)
- 'Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex' (ESCB, 2017)
- PREVENT Duty - Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015)

7.2 When new staff, volunteers or regular visitors join our school they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They are given a copy of our school's Child Protection policy, told who our Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy) is and are informed how to share concerns with them.

7.3 All staff are kept informed about child protection responsibilities and procedures through induction, briefings and regular awareness training.

7.4 Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school must refer any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or, in their absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead). In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff.

7.5 Where there is risk of immediate harm, concerns will be referred by telephone to the Children and Families Hub and / or the Police. Less urgent concerns or requests for support will be sent to the Children and Families Hub via the [Essex Effective Support](#) portal. The school may also seek advice from Social Care or another appropriate agency about a concern, if we are unsure how to respond to it. Wherever possible, the school will share any safeguarding concerns, or an intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care, with parents or carers. However, we will not do so where it is felt that to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On occasions, it may be necessary to consult with the Children and Families Hub and / or Essex Police for advice on when to share information with parents / carers.

7.6 If a member of staff continues to have concerns about a child and feels the situation is not being addressed or does not appear to be improving, the staff member concerned should press for re-consideration of the case with the designated safeguarding lead.

7.7 If, for any reason, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Safeguarding contact details are displayed in the school to ensure that all staff members have unfettered access to safeguarding support, should it be required. Any individual may refer to Social Care where there is suspected or actual risk of harm to a child.

8. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

8.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy) undergo updated Level 3 child protection training at least every two years. The Principal, all staff members and governors undergo child protection training which is updated regularly, in line with advice from the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB). In addition, all staff members receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. All Child Protection training is recorded.

8.2 The school ensures that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy) also undertakes training in inter-agency working and other matters as appropriate

8.3 All staff are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are outlined in the Staff Code of Conduct Policy.

9. PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

9.1 Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to anyone about a safeguarding concern (including parents / carers or students), or promise to keep a secret. In accordance with statutory requirements, where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the designated safeguarding lead and may require further referral to and subsequent investigation by appropriate authorities.

9.2 Staff are informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a 'need to know basis' only and where it is in the child's best interests to do so. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way is held treated confidentially.

10. RECORDS, MONITORING & INFORMATION SHARING

10.1 Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.

10.2 Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. Whilst the Data Protection Act 2018 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm. Similarly, human rights concerns, such as respecting the right to a private and family life would not prevent sharing information where there are real safeguarding concerns. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the

welfare of children at risk of abuse or neglect. Generic data flows related to child protection are recorded in our Records of Processing Activity and regularly reviewed; and our online school privacy notices accurately reflect our use of data for child protection purposes.

10.3 Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, will record it as soon as possible, noting what was said or seen (if appropriate, using a body map to record), giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and signed and will include the action taken. This is then presented to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), who will decide on appropriate action and record this accordingly. All members of staff have the right, if they deem it necessary, to make a call directly to the Children and Families Hub if they have a concern about a child. This number is displayed clearly in a number of places around the school.

10.4 Any records related to child protection are kept in an individual child protection file for that child (which is separate from the student file). All child protection records are stored securely and confidentially and will be retained for 25 years after the student's date of birth, or until they transfer to another school / educational setting.

10.5 In line with statutory guidance, where a student transfers from our school to another educational provision (including colleges), their child protection records will be forwarded to the new educational setting. These will be marked 'Confidential' and for the attention of the receiving school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, with a return address on the envelope so it can be returned to our school if it goes astray. We will obtain evidence that the paperwork has been received by the new school and then destroy any copies held in our school. Where appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead may also make contact with the new educational setting in advance of the child's move there, to enable planning so appropriate support is in place when the child arrives. Where a student joins our school, we will request child protection records from the previous educational establishment (if none are received).

11. INTERAGENCY WORKING

11.1 It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that the school is represented at, and that a report is submitted to, any child protection conference called for children on the school roll or previously known to them. Where possible and appropriate, any report will be shared in advance with the parent(s) / carer(s). The member of staff attending the meeting will be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the school has and be prepared to contribute to the discussions at the conference.

11.2 If a child is made subject to a Child Protection or a Child in Need plan, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure the child is monitored regarding their school attendance, emotional well-being, academic progress, welfare and presentation. If the school are part of the core group, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure the school is represented, provides appropriate information and contributes to the plan at these meetings. Any concerns about the Child Protection plan and / or the child's welfare will be discussed and recorded at the core group meeting, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of significant harm. In this case the Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the child's key worker immediately and then record that they have done so and the actions agreed.

12. SUPPORTING STUDENTS AT RISK

12.1 Our school is committed to ensuring that our students receive the right help at the right time

12.2 Our school may be the only stable, secure and safe element in the lives of children at risk of, or who have suffered harm. Nevertheless, whilst at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant, or they may instead be withdrawn, or display abusive behaviours towards other children.

12.3 Our school will endeavour to support all students through:

- The curriculum to encourage our students to stay safe, develop healthy relationships, self-esteem and self-motivation
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all students and adults a sense of being respected and valued
- The implementation of the school's Relationships and Behaviour Policy
- A consistent approach from all staff which will endeavour to ensure our students know that some behaviour is unacceptable but that they are valued
- Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the students and their families
- A commitment to develop open and honest and supportive relationships with parents, always with the child's best interest as paramount
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in all matters of child protection
- Recognition that children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse and that staff working in any capacity with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and / or emotional and behavioural problems must be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse
- Recognition that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children are vulnerable and in may be in need of support or protection

13. ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING A MEMBER OF STAFF

13.1 All staff members are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are outlined in the Staff Code of Conduct Policy. The school works in accordance with statutory guidance and the SET procedures (ESCB, 2019) in respect of allegations against an adult working with children (in a paid or voluntary capacity). Section 7 of the current SET procedures provides detailed information on this.

13.2 The school has processes in place for reporting any concerns about a member of staff (or any adult working with children). Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff will be referred to the Principal. Staffing matters are confidential and the school must operate within statutory guidance around Data Protection.

13.3 Where the concern involves the Principal, it should be reported direct to the Chair of Governors.

13.4 SET procedures (ESCB, 2019) require that, where an allegation against a member of staff is received, the Principal, senior named person or the Chair of Governors must inform the duty Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the Children's Workforce Allegations Management Team on **03330 139 797** within one working day. However, wherever possible, contact with the LADO should be made immediately as they will then advise on how to proceed and whether the matter requires Police involvement. This will include advice on speaking to students and parents and HR. The school does not carry out any investigation before speaking to the LADO.

14. WHISTLEBLOWING

14.1 Whistleblowing is “making a disclosure in the public interest” and occurs when a worker (or member of the wider school community) raises a concern about danger or illegality that affects others, for example students in the school or members of the public.

14.2 All members of staff and the wider school community should be able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and feel confident any concern will be taken seriously by the school leadership team. We have ‘whistleblowing’ procedures in place and these are available in the school Whistleblowing Policy.

14.3 We want everyone to feel able to raise concerns internally. However, for members of staff who feel unable to raise these concerns internally, they can call the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on: 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8:00am to 8:00pm, Monday to Friday) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk

14.4 Parents or others in the wider school community with concerns can contact the NSPCC general helpline on: 0808 800 5000 (24 hour helpline) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

15. USE OF REASONABLE FORCE

The term ‘reasonable force’ covers a broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people, such as guiding a child to safety or breaking up a fight. ‘Reasonable’ means using no more force than is needed. Our school works in accordance with statutory and local guidance on the use of reasonable force and recognises that where intervention is required, it should always be considered in a safeguarding context and in accordance with our Relationships and Behaviour Policy.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Alison Dolan

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Samantha Hutton

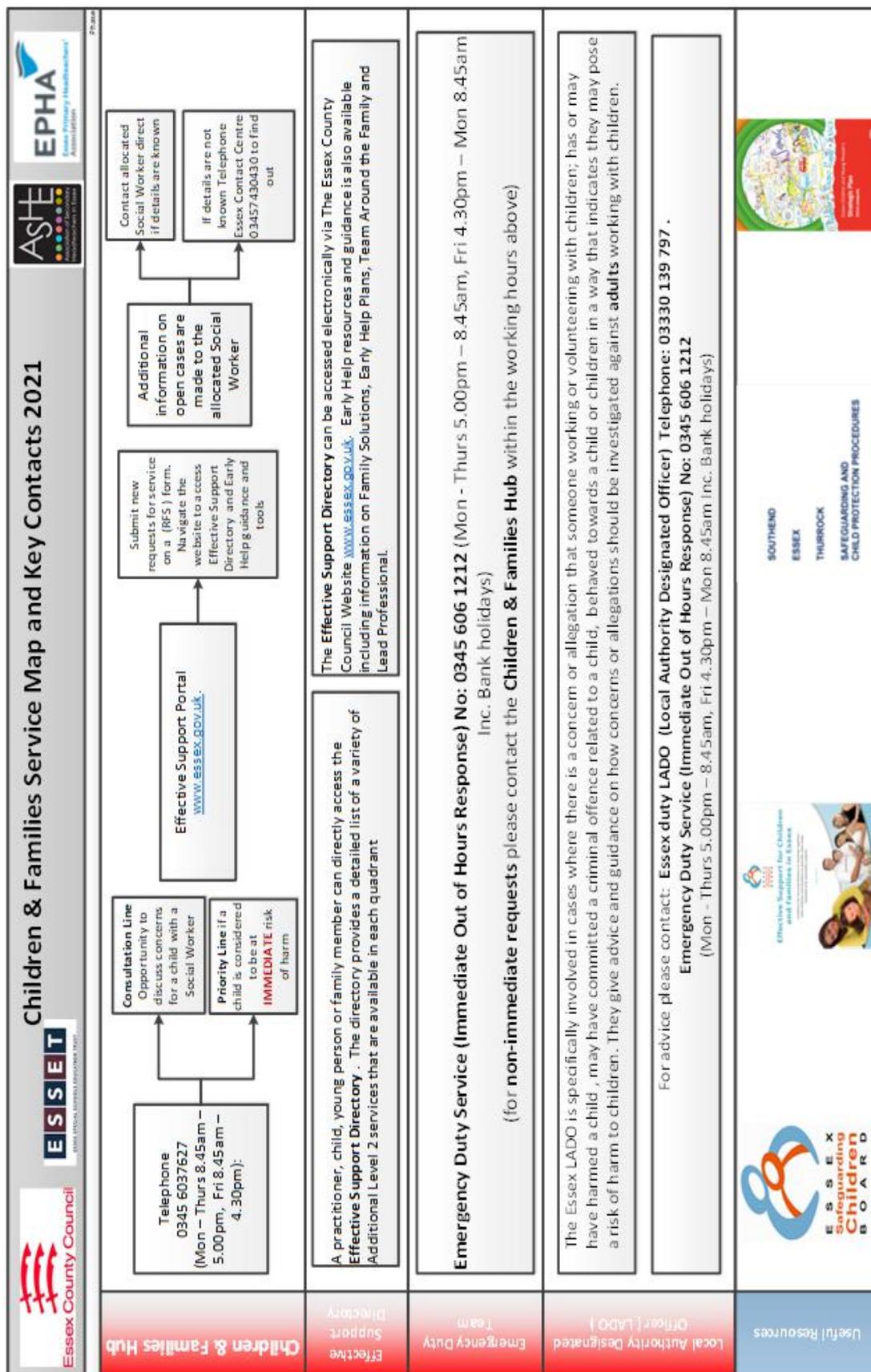
Designated Governor for Safeguarding: Melanie Grieg

Approved by: (Principal) (date)

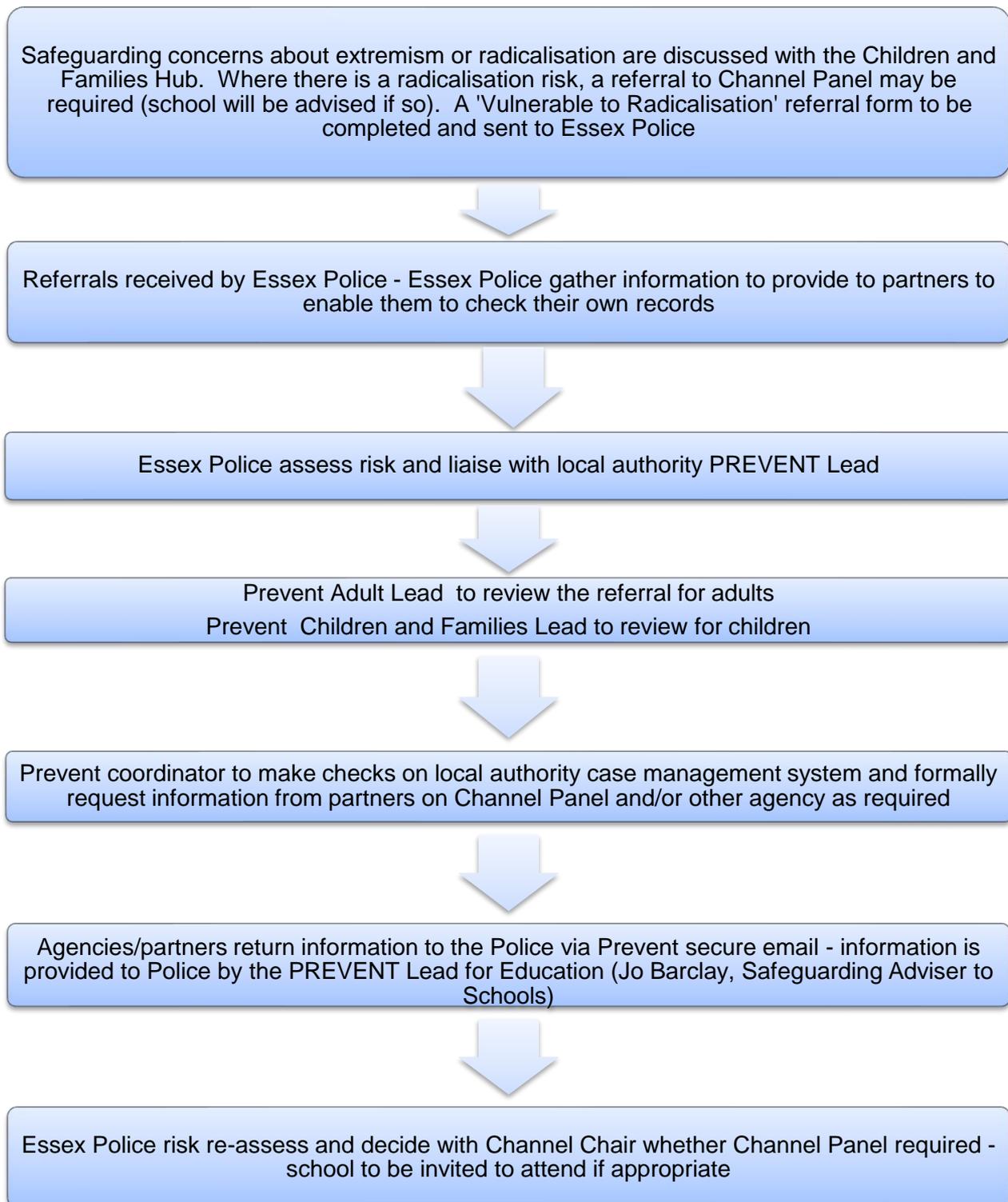
Authorised by:..... (Chair of Governors) (date)

To be reviewed April 2021

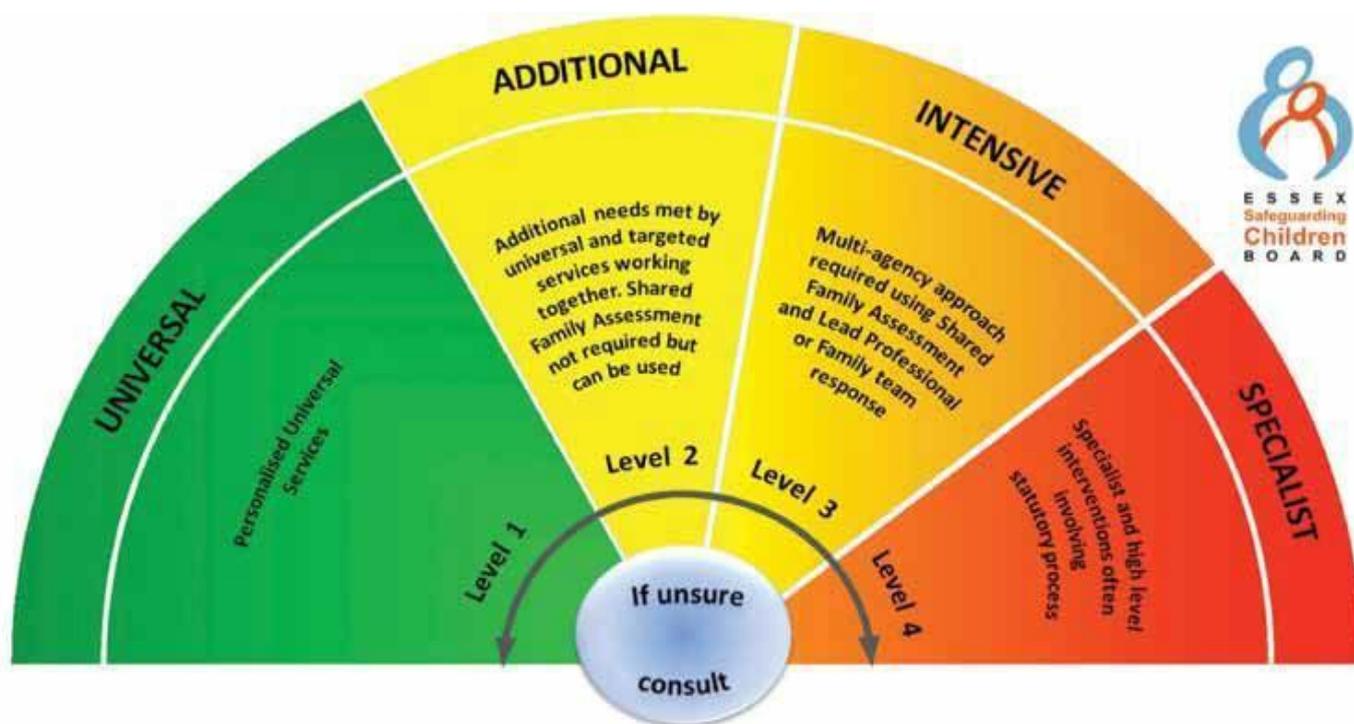
Appendix A: Children and Families Hub flow chart



Appendix B



Appendix C: Essex Windscreen of Need and levels of intervention



All partners working with children, young people and their families will offer support as soon as we are aware of any additional needs. We will always seek to work together to provide support to children, young people and their families at the lowest level possible in accordance with their needs

Children with **Additional** needs are best supported by those who already work with them, such as Family Hubs or schools, organising additional support with local partners as needed. When an agency is supporting these children, an Early Help Plan and a Lead Professional are helpful to share information and co-ordinate work alongside the child and family.

For children whose needs are **Intensive**, a coordinated multi-disciplinary approach is usually best, involving either an Early Help Plan or a Shared Family Assessment (SFA), with a Lead Professional to work closely with the child and family to ensure they receive all the support they require. Examples of intensive services are children's mental health services and Family Solutions.

Specialist services are where the needs of the child are so great that statutory and/or specialist intervention is required to keep them safe or to ensure their continued development. Examples of specialist services are Children's Social Care or Youth Offending Service. By working together effectively with children that have additional needs and by providing coordinated multi-disciplinary/agency support and services for those with intensive needs, we seek to prevent more children and young people requiring statutory interventions and reactive specialist services

Appendix D

Child Protection during COVID-19 Home Learning

1. Introduction

Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children and, in conjunction with other agencies, they play a vital role in safeguarding children during the current emergency arrangements. This appendix to the Child Protection Policy has been produced to cover arrangements in place for periods of Home Learning due to Covid-19 that might occur during this academic year.

These procedures are for all staff, parents, governors, volunteers and the wider school community. It forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for our school during periods of Home Learning and should be read in conjunction with the following:

- the current Child Protection Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020)
- the school Relationships and Behaviour Policy;
- the school Staff Code of Conduct;
- the safeguarding response to children missing from education (CME)
- the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Annex B of KCSIE)

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (*everyone under the age of 18*) is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

2. Current context / statutory framework

When schools were instructed to close in March 2020 and January 2021, we assessed the needs of all our pupils and put in place plans to support them and their families during the summer term. These plans included an education offer and arrangements to support pupils with their safety and wellbeing. Where appropriate, the plans included actions and interventions from other agencies, as we continued to work with partners to provide an appropriate level of support. These plans were regularly reviewed to ensure they reflected current need and were updated accordingly to ensure appropriate support is in place.

When we move back to full opening our usual Child Protection Policy applies. However, as a response to COVID-19 and to ensure we are compliant with government guidance and Health and Safety law, arrangements are in place should we be required to move to a period of Home Learning and we have communicated this to all parents.

We have a robust risk assessment in place and will continue to regularly review this and update it as required. This review process will consider whether our current plans and protective measures are:

- effective
- working as planned
- updated appropriately considering any issues identified and changes in public health advice

If, as a result of future COVID-19 cases or local lockdown arrangements, the school is required to move into a period of Home Learning, our previous arrangements for monitoring and supporting pupils will be reinstated, as outlined below.

3. Safeguarding procedures during any Home Learning or school closure period

Clearly, the school is required to work very differently during any period of Home Learning or school closure. However, the principles within our existing Child Protection Policy still apply, as does the duty on all staff to safeguard children.

We have assessed the needs of all our students and put in place plans to support them and their families during any periods of Home Learning. These plans include as full an educational offer as possible (details of which have been shared separately with parents for their child) and arrangements to support students with their safety and wellbeing. These plans may include actions and interventions from other agencies, as we continue to work with partners to provide an appropriate level of support.

During any period of COVID-19 related Home Learning or school closure, Open Box Education Centre will provide safeguarding arrangements as follows:

- Welfare checks will be made regularly by phone, email or text (and possibly home visits if self-isolation arrangements allow and paying careful attention to social distancing rules) to parents/carers and students at least weekly
- Students who would normally receive counselling and/or mentoring will continue to be offered weekly contact via phone or 'Microsoft Teams'
- Parents/carers and students are provided with a range of contact numbers and websites providing emotional support and advice
- The main school phone number will be open during school hours throughout any period of Home Learning or school closure and the Principal will respond to all parent/carer and student calls, texts and emails during school hours
- All staff will be responsible for recording and reporting any safeguarding concerns resulting from any student contact and sharing with the DSL immediately
- Risk assessments are in place for all students considered 'vulnerable' and for any face-to-face contact that may be deemed necessary
- The Principal and SEND, Health and Care Manager will continue to attend remote meetings with partner agencies and other professionals supporting students to ensure support and safeguarding is continued
- The school will work with the Virtual School Headteacher to ensure appropriate support for any children in care.

It is recognised that many children with EHC plans can continue to learn and be supported effectively during Home Learning through remote lessons. If it is felt that this is not effective for an individual student with an EHC Plan during any Home Learning or closure period, we will work with the local authority and parents / carers to produce a personalised plan that aims to meet need.

As always, all staff members have a duty to identify and respond to suspected / actual abuse or disclosures of abuse. Any member of staff who receives a disclosure or allegation of abuse, or suspects that abuse may have occurred **must** report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or, in their absence, the deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead). All action is taken in accordance with the procedures outlined in our Child Protection Policy.

6. Staff conduct

All staff members are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct and the principles in our Staff Code of Conduct still apply during any Home Learning or school closure period. The usual processes for reporting concerns about a member of staff apply.

7. Mental health and wellbeing

The mental health and wellbeing of all our students is always a priority and it is recognised that, without the protective factor of physical attendance at school, some of our children may be more vulnerable. We understand that families will be placed under additional pressures and may be coping with issues such as increased anxiety, financial difficulties, caring for children at home and bereavement.

It is vital that we work in partnership with parents to support the well-being of our students. Parents should share any concerns about the well-being of their child with school, so appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented.

8. Online safety (for students during Home Learning)

We recognise during a period of Home Learning or school closure it is likely students will be spending longer periods of time online, which may increase their vulnerability. Particularly useful websites are:

- [CEOP](#) (Child Exploitation and Online Protection)
- [Childnet](#)
- [Internet Matters](#)
- [Net Aware](#)
- [NSPCC](#)
- [Parent Info](#)
- [Safer Internet](#)

Staff are aware that children are vulnerable to being bullied or groomed for abuse or radicalisation online. Staff will be vigilant to any signs that that this may be occurring and report any concerns in the usual way. It is important that parents make the school aware of any concerns they may have about the online activity of their child, or any particular vulnerability they may have in this respect.