



Child Protection Policy

At Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford the named persons with responsibility for Safeguarding are:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral)
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Headteacher
Safeguarding Governor	Ms G Martin
Designated LAC	Head of Lower School

The names personnel with designated responsibility regarding allegations are:

Concern or disclosure (not involving school staff)	Inform DSL
Allegation against member of staff	Inform Headteacher (not DSL)
Allegation against headteacher	Inform Chair of Governors
Allegation against a governor	Inform Headteacher

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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

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CONTENTS

Introduction

Section 1: School Commitment page

Section 2: Student information pages

2.1 Student Information

2.2 Transfer of Files

Section 3: Role and Responsibilities pages

3.1 Governing Body

3.2 Headteacher

3.3 Designated Safeguarding Lead

3.4 All Staff and Volunteers

Section 4: Child Protection Procedures pages

4.1 Definitions

4.2 Concerns that Staff Must Immediately Report

4.3 Responding to Disclosure

4.4 Action by the Designated Safeguarding Lead

4.5 Action Following a Child Protection Referral

4.6 Recording and Monitoring

4.7 Equality Statement

Section 5: Safeguarding Issues pages

5.1 Children and the Court System

5.2 Children Missing from Education

5.3 Children with Family Members in Prison

5.4 Child Sexual Exploitation

5.5 Child Criminal Exploitation: County Lines

5.6 Domestic Abuse

5.7 Homelessness

5.8 'Honour-based' Violence (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

5.9 Female Genital Mutilation/FGM

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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- 5.10 Forced Marriage
- 5.11 Preventing Radicalisation, The Prevent Duty and Channel
- 5.12 Child on Child Abuse
- 5.13 Serious Violence
- 5.14 Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment
- 5.15 Upskirting
- 5.16 Youth Produced Sexual Imagery
- 5.17 Contextual Safeguarding
- 5.18 Carrying Knives /Offensive Weapons and Gang Culture
- 5.19 Children Who May Require Early Help
- 5.20 Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities
- 5.21 Looked After Children
- 5.22 Online Safety
- 5.23 Pre-Birth Protocol
- 5.24 Mental Health

Section 6: Providing a Safe and Supportive Environment

- 6.1 Safer Recruitment and Selection
- 6.2 Home-stays (Exchange Visits)
- 6.3 Safe Working Practice
- 6.4 Risk Assessments
- 6.5 Safeguarding Information for Students
- 6.6 Partnership with Parents
- 6.7 Partnership with Others
- 6.8 Safeguarding Training and Induction
- 6.9 Support, Advice and Guidance for Staff
- 6.10 Alternative Provision
- 6.11 Checking the identity and suitability of visitors
- 6.12 Pupils with special educational needs, disabilities and health issues
- 6.13 Pupils with a social worker
- 6.14 Looked-after and previously looked-after children

Approved by: Full Governing Body
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Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



Section 7: Allegations regarding Person(s) Working in or on behalf of School (including Volunteers)

7.1 Allegations against a member of staff or someone working in school

7.2 Complaints and concerns about safeguarding policies

7.3 Record Keeping

Approved by: Full Governing Body
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Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



INTRODUCTION

The aims of these procedures are:

- To clarify roles and responsibilities of everyone within our school in relation to child protection and safeguarding;
- To have clear procedures that are followed when a child is identified as needing more than universal services can provide;
- The term “child “or “children” refers to anyone under the age of 18 years.

SECTION 1: SCHOOL COMMITMENT

This policy applies to all adults, including volunteers, working in or on behalf of the school.

We aim to work in partnership with, and have an important role in, inter-agency safeguarding arrangements as set out by [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2024\)](#), [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#), Part 3 of the schedule to the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#) and the [Governance Handbook](#). Everyone working in or for our school service shares an objective to help keep children and young people safe by contributing to:

- providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn and develop in our school setting.
- identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in our school setting.

Additional legislation which informs our policy also includes:

- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what ‘regulated activity’ is in relation to children

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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism

Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford is committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of all of its students. Each student's welfare is of paramount importance. We recognise that some children may be especially vulnerable to abuse. We recognise that children who are abused or neglected may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. Whilst at school, behaviour may be challenging. We recognise that they may exhibit concerning behaviours, and at times, this may impact on other children either directly or indirectly. We will always take a considered and sensitive approach in order that we can support all of our students.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity have equal rights to protection.
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- Students and staff involved in safeguarding issues receive appropriate support.
- Staff adhere to a Code of Conduct and understand what to do if a child discloses any allegations against teaching staff, the Headteacher or the Governing Body: Thus, we are:
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Ensure that staff understand expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring systems as outlined in our Online Safety Policy.
- Raising awareness of safeguarding issues and equipping children and young adults with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse
- Supporting students who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.

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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, volunteers, sessional workers, students, agency staff or anyone working on behalf of Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford.

They are consistent with Lincolnshire Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) multi-agency child protection procedures. www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/lscb

TERMINOLOGY

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The focus of the law is on "safeguarding and promoting the child's welfare" (Children Act 1989).

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of children's health or development, ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

Working Together to Safeguard Children DfE 2018

There is a duty to take action to protect a child if there is cause to believe they are suffering or are likely to suffer "significant harm" and that the harm or likelihood of harm is attributable to a lack of adequate parental care or control. Action should also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or at immediate risk.

Teachers are required to safeguard children's welfare and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

Teaching Standards 2013

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. School staff are frequently in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children, preventing problems from escalating. Schools need to work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. On occasions, school staff may be called on to support a child's/family's social worker.

Child is defined as someone under the age of 18. (S105 of The Children Act 1989) (Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)).

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Parents refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role: step-parents, foster parents, carers and adoptive parents.

Child Protection refers to the activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



In the school context, this means:

- keeping children safe from abuse and harassment;
- providing a safe environment in which children can learn;
- staff acting in the interests of the child, when considering welfare;
- being alert to signs of abuse both in school and from outside;
- identifying children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm and to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed;
- staff maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here';
- dealing appropriately with every complaint and disclosure;
- designing and promoting procedures which promote these aims and which, so far as possible, ensure that teachers and others who are innocent are not subjected to or prejudiced by false accusations;
- understanding that a child going missing is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect;
- ensuring that the school has clear procedures in place for protecting children at risk of radicalisation. The school is firmly committed to implementing the national Prevent strategy and undertakes regular staff training to keeping children safe from the risk of radicalisation.

SECTION 2: STUDENT INFORMATION

2.1 In order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them the school requires accurate and up to date information regarding:

- names, contact details and relationship to the child of any persons with whom the child normally lives;
- names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above);
- emergency contact details (if different from above), ensuring that if the person(s) with parental responsibility is unable to collect the child, there is another contact who could collect the child and keep them safe until either the person(s) with parental responsibility is available or a more suitable arrangement is made. The school encourages all parents and carers to provide more than one emergency contact, providing the school with additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a child missing education is identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern;
- details of any persons authorised to collect the child from school (if different from above);

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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- any relevant court orders in place including those which affect any person's access to the child (Residence Order, Contact Order, Care Order, Injunctions, etc.);
- whether the child is or has been subject to a child protection plan;
- whether the child is or has been subject to an Early Help Assessment (EHA) or Child In Need (CIN) processes;
- whether the child is a Looked After Child (LAC) or was previously looked after;
- name and contact details of GP;
- any other factors which may impact on the safety and welfare of the child.

The school will collate, store and agree access to this information, ensuring all information held electronically is stored securely with due regard to meeting data protection and safeguarding requirements.

TRANSFER OF FILES

When a child leaves the school, the student record, including child protection file, which is separated from the main student record in a sealed envelope clearly marked as such, is transferred to the new school as soon as possible. If this is the case, the file is transferred with an accompanying list of the files, e.g. student file, child protection file, by Royal Mail signed for. The child protection file is clearly marked Child Protection, Confidential, for attention of Designated Safeguarding Lead, and a receipt of this transfer will be retained.

The receiving school should sign a copy of the list to say that they have received the files and return that to the sending school for tracking and auditing purposes.

This information should be added to a record of transfer which the sending school keep until the child reaches their 25th birthday and must contain:

- Name & DOB of child.
- Name & address of receiving school.
- Date file(s) transferred with name and role of person who received it.
- Date sending school received confirmation of receipt of files from receiving school.
- Summary of case at the time of transfer e.g. Child Protection Plan: Neglect.

In addition to the child protection file, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school in advance of a child leaving, for example, information that would allow the new school to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



The student record should not be weeded before transfer to the next school unless any records with a short retention period have been placed in the file. It is important to remember that the information, which may seem unnecessary to the person reading the file may be a vital piece of information required at a later stage.

Electronic documents that relate to the student file also need to be transferred, or, if duplicated in a master paper file, destroyed.

As a sending school, we do not need to keep copies of any records in the student record except if there is an ongoing legal action when the student leaves the school. Custody of and responsibility for the records passes to the school the student transfers to.

The school which the student attended until statutory school leaving age is responsible for retaining the student record until the student reaches the age of 25 years. This school retains a copy of the child's chronology and any documents that the school created e.g. risk assessment in an archive until the child reaches the age of 25 years, the receipt of the transferred file is kept alongside this archive. Any archived files are stored securely in the same way as an active file. If any records relating to child protection issues are placed on the student file, it should be in a sealed envelope and then retained for the same period of time as the student file. (DOB + 25 years).

Sources of further support:

- IRMS Information Management Toolkit for Schools June 2019
- Data Protection Toolkit for Schools August 2018
- DfE Data protection: a toolkit for Schools August 2018
- Lincolnshire County Council Data Protection Advice Service
- LCC Data Protection Advice Service for Schools
- Perspective Light/Safeguarding/Safeguarding Documents/IRMS Toolkit for schools 2019 + Data Protection Toolkit for Schools

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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



SECTION 3: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The role of Our Governing Body is so important in robust safeguarding practice. Our governors will ensure that:

- there is a named Safeguarding Governor;
- the school has effective Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures in place that are in accordance with local authority guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures, and the policy is available publicly via the school website or other means. The policy will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis;
- the school has a staff behaviour policy or code of conduct and that this is provided to all staff and volunteers on induction. The policy includes acceptable use of technology, staff/student relationships and communications including the use of social media;
- the school operates safer recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on staff and volunteers who work with children; and that any panel involved in the recruitment of staff has at least one member who has undertaken the Safer Recruitment Training;
- the school has procedures for dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers that comply with guidance from the local authority and locally agreed inter-agency procedures (as outlined in the Complaints Procedures published on our school website);
- online safety policy and procedures are in place and training and support is provided for staff and students to ensure that there is a good understanding of child protection issues related to electronic media;
- the school has appropriate electronic filtering and monitoring systems in place to ensure that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material; whilst recognising that “over blocking” should not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught;
- a senior member of the school’s leadership team is appointed to the role of DSL who will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection;
- the school has one or more deputy DSLs who are trained to the same standard as the lead DSL;
- children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This may include covering relevant issues through Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education, and/or where delivered, through Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education. The Government has made regulations which will make Relationships Education (for all primary students) and Relationships and Sex Education (for all secondary students) and Health Education (for all students in state-funded schools) mandatory from September 2020;

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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- staff including the Headteacher undertake appropriate safeguarding training which is updated annually;
- they remedy, without delay, any deficiencies or weaknesses regarding child protection arrangements;
- a Governor is nominated to be responsible for liaising with the LA and/or partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Headteacher;
- where services or activities are provided on the school premises by another body, the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection, and liaises with the school on these matters where appropriate;
- they review their policies and procedures annually;
- the school appoints an appropriately trained, designated teacher with responsibility for “promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales” in addition to Looked After Children (LAC);
- facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development;
- the Chair of Governors will act as a ‘case manager’ in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher;
- all governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 in its entirety.

A Safeguarding Governor is appointed by the Governors to regularly check the School Single Central Record to ensure that it is being completed accurately. They also have a monitoring role in the school’s handling of safeguarding and child protection situations – ensuring that any weaknesses or areas of concern are rectified without delay.

Governors are also required to have an enhanced criminal records certificate from the DBS. It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to apply for the certificate for any of their governors who do not already have one. The school will also carry out a section 128 check on school governors. An enhanced DBS check is not required for associate members.

3.2 Our Headteacher will ensure that:

- the policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body or Proprietor are fully implemented, and followed by all staff;
- sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other staff to discharge their responsibilities including taking part in strategy

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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



discussions and other inter-agency meetings and contributing to the assessments of children;

- there are arrangements in place for safeguarding supervision for the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s);
- all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistleblowing policies. The NSPCC's 'What you can do to report abuse' dedicated helpline is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally, or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8.00 am to 8.00 pm Mon-Fri and email: help@nspcc.org.uk;
- there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent;
- the Designated Safeguarding Lead is supported in providing a contact for the school to provide a report and attend Initial Child Protection Case Conferences, Reviews and Looked After Children Reviews out of school term time when needed;
- allegations regarding staff, or any other adults in the school, are referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), as set out in the Managing Allegations procedure;
- ensure that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:
 - are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction;
 - understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect;
- communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the school and via the school website;
- acting as a 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate
- individuals are referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service (cases where a person is **dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child**). **This is a legal duty placed upon the school.**

3.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead in School

All schools are required to appoint a '**Designated Safeguarding Lead**' to co-ordinate the child protection procedures in the school. The DSL is a member of the senior team.

The DSL holds a record (and the relevant case notes) of all students who are, or have been, on a child protection care plan.

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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly

The DSL will also keep the headteacher informed of any issues and liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate.

The full responsibilities of the DSL and [deputy] are set out in their job description.

The DSL and the Deputy Safeguarding Lead take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford and work with a team of senior and pastoral staff.

This team comprises: the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s), the Headteacher and the Safeguarding Governor (where appropriate). Whilst the activities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be delegated to trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, as set out in this policy, remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This responsibility will not be delegated, except in the case of long-term absence.

During term time, the DSL or a deputy will always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Cover arrangements will be put in place should they need to be released from other duties to fulfil this role.

Out of hours, term time, safeguarding concerns about a child should be raised with social care without delay. Please contact: Children's Services Customer Services Unit 01522 782 111 in office hours (8.00 am to 6.00 pm) and Emergency Duty Team 01522 782 333 outside office hours.

The appointment of a Designated Lead does not diminish the role of all staff members in being alert to signs of abuse and being aware of the procedures to be followed, including those cases where an accusation is made against a member of staff.

When the school places a student with an alternative provider, the DSL will be responsible for safeguarding that student and will ensure that the provider meets the appropriate standards. The school will obtain written confirmation from the alternative provider that all appropriate checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment.

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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as stated in KCSIE (2024) will ensure that they:

Manage referrals

- refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care (Customer Service Centre) and in conjunction with the Headteacher, the Lincolnshire Designated Officer (LADO) for child protection concerns (all cases which involve staff/volunteers);
- support staff who make referrals to Customer Service Centre;
- seek advice from Prevent Team regarding radicalisation concerns and refer cases to the Channel programme when necessary;
- support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme when advised by Prevent team;
- support the Headteacher to refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required;
- Disclosure and Barring service (cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child) and/or refer cases to the police where a crime may have been committed;
- liaise with the Headteacher and safeguarding team to inform them of issues of a safeguarding nature, especially ongoing enquires under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and to advise on whether to refer to relevant agencies;
- the Designated Safeguarding Lead and any deputies should liaise with the three safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children;
- NPCC- When to call the police should help Designated Safeguarding Leads understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do;

Work with others

- liaise with the Headteacher to inform them of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- liaise with the "case manager" and the designated officer (LADO) for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member or volunteer);
- liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding, and when deciding whether to make a referral, by liaising with relevant agencies. Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff;

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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children.

Supporting the child and partnership with parents

School recognises that the child's welfare is paramount, however good child protection and safeguarding practice and outcomes rely on a positive, open and honest working partnership with parents.

Whilst we may, on occasion, need to make referrals without consultation with parents, we will make every effort to maintain a positive working relationship with them whilst fulfilling our duties to protect any child.

We will provide a secure, caring, supportive and protective relationship for the child.

Children will be given a proper explanation (appropriate to age and understanding) of what action is being taken on their behalf and why.

We will endeavour always to preserve the privacy, dignity and right to confidentiality of the child and parents. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will determine which members of staff "need to know" personal information and what they "need to know" for the purpose of supporting and protecting the child.

Undertake training

The DSL (and any deputies) will undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training will be updated at least every two years. They will also undertake Prevent awareness training.

In addition to the formal training, their knowledge and skills will be refreshed at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role (this will be done by attending the termly LCC DSL Safeguarding Briefings and by attending appropriate Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership inter-agency training and other relevant training and/or conference opportunities) so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments;
- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- ensure all staff, especially new and part time staff, have access to and understand the school's child protection policy and procedures;

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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;
- are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;
- understand and support the school with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses;
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.

Raise Awareness

- ensure the school child protection and safeguarding policies are known, understood and used appropriately;
- ensure the school child protection and safeguarding policy is reviewed annually, the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this;
- ensure the child protection and safeguarding policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this;
- link with the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.

Availability

- during term time the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns;
- It is a matter for individual schools and the DSL to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities;
- If the DSL and Deputy DSL are not available then all safeguarding concerns are to be reported to the Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher. If this is out of hours / term time then Children's Services are to be contacted and the police, if appropriate.

3.4 All staff and volunteers will:

- read and sign to say that they understand and will fully comply with the school's policies and procedures;
- read and sign to say that they understand parts 1 and 5 and Annex A of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2024);

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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- be aware of the process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral including the role they may be expected to play;
- be aware of what to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with professionals;
- be aware of the signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child on child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM and radicalisation;
- be aware of the importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe;
- identify concerns as early as possible and provide help, to prevent concerns from escalating and identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm;
- attend annual whole school safeguarding training and other appropriate training identified;
- provide a safe environment in which children can learn;
- be aware that they may be asked to support a Social Worker to take decisions about individual children;
- inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead of any concerns about a child immediately;
- inform the Headteacher of any concerns regarding an adult within school at the earliest opportunity;
- inform the Chair of Governors of any concerns regarding the Headteacher at the earliest opportunity;
- act on the concern and make the referral themselves if they feel the concern is not being taken seriously.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



SECTION 4: CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

4.1 Definitions: ('Working Together' 2018 and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2024)

A child: any person under the age of 18 years.

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

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment whether that is within or outside the home including online;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child Protection: is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Harm: means ill-treatment or impairment of health and development, including, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;

Development: means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development;

Health: includes physical and mental health; maltreatment includes sexual abuse and other forms of ill-treatment which are not physical.

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. 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 (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or

Approved by: Full Governing Body
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Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Sharing of nudes or semi-nudes: Also known as sexting or youth produced imagery is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Bullying (physical, name calling, homophobic etc.)

Bullying is hurtful or unkind behaviour which is deliberate and repeated. Bullying can be carried out by an individual or a group of people towards another individual or group, where the bully or bullies hold more power than those being bullied.

In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of power: Young people who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours,

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



attacking someone physically or verbally or for a particular reason e.g. size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Cyber bullying: Cyberbullying is the use of phones, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, to harass, threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above. It is important to state that cyber bullying can very easily fall into criminal behaviour under the Malicious Communications Act 1988 under section 1 which states that electronic communications which are indecent or grossly offensive, convey a threat or false information or demonstrate that there is an intention to cause distress or anxiety to the victim would be deemed to be criminal. This is also supported by the Communications Act 2003, Section 127 which states that electronic communications which are grossly offensive or indecent, obscene or menacing, or false, used again for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another could also be deemed to be criminal behaviour. If the behaviour involves the use/taking/distribution of indecent images of young people under the age of 18, then this is also a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. While offering the necessary support young people may require in these instances, the school must ask the police to investigate any such situation.

Initiation/Hazing: Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a private school or sports team. There are a number of different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies. The idea behind this practice is that it welcomes newcomers by subjecting them to a series of trials which promote a bond between them. After the hazing is over, the newcomers also have something in common with older members of the organisation, because they all experienced it as part of a rite of passage. Many rituals involve humiliation, embarrassment, abuse, and harassment.

Prejudiced Behaviour: The term prejudice-related bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society – in particular, prejudices to do with disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, for example, in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class, or sexual identity.

Teenage relationship abuse: Teenage relationship abuse is defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and/or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abusive teen uses this pattern of violent and coercive behaviour, in order to gain power and maintain control over the partner.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



All staff follow the school's child protection procedures which are consistent with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018', Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) and the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance.

Teachers and other adults in school are well placed to observe any physical, emotional or behavioural signs which indicate that a child may be suffering significant harm. The relationships between staff, students, parents and the public which foster respect, confidence and trust can lead to disclosures of abuse, and/or school staff being alerted to concerns.

All staff will also have an awareness of specific safeguarding issues, in particular Domestic Abuse, Child Exploitation (CE), Radicalisation and the Prevent Duty, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Attendance and Children Missing from Education (CME) and Contextual Safeguarding. Staff will also be aware that behaviours linked to drug taking, alcohol abuse, truancy and sexting put children in danger.

All staff will also be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender-based violence/sexual assaults and sexting. Staff are clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse.

It is **not** the responsibility of the school staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All members of staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and maintain an open mind. Accordingly, all concerns regarding the welfare of students will be recorded and discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or the deputy DSL in the absence of the DSL) prior to any discussion with parents.

If children are placed in any form of Alternative Provision for any part of their school day, this school will seek reassurance that the same child protection procedures will be followed and that any concerns will likewise be reported to our Designated Safeguarding Lead and their counterpart within the Alternative Provision.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



4.2 Concerns that staff must act on immediately and report:

- any suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way which is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play;
- any explanation given which appears inconsistent or suspicious;
- any behaviours which give rise to suspicions that a child may have suffered harm (e.g. worrying drawings or play);
- any concerns that a child may be suffering from inadequate care, ill treatment, or emotional maltreatment;
- any concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect;
- any significant changes in a child's presentation, including non-attendance;
- any hint or disclosure of abuse from any person;
- any concerns regarding person(s) who may pose a risk to children (e.g. living in a household with children present);
- any potential indicators of child exploitation;
- any potential indicators of FGM;
- any potential indicators of radicalisation;
- any potential indicators of living in a household with domestic abuse and where they see, hear or experience its effects.

4.3 Responding to disclosure

Staff will not investigate but will, wherever possible, elicit enough information to pass on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in order that they can make an informed decision of what to do next.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that the child's wishes, and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Child Protection processes will operate with the best interests of the child at their core.

Staff will:

- listen to and take seriously any disclosure or information that a child may be at risk of harm;
- allow them to take time to talk and do not ask leading questions;
- try to ensure that the person disclosing does not have to speak to another member of school staff;

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner;
- explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass the information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret;
- clarify the information;
- try to keep questions to a minimum and of an 'open' nature e.g. using TED technique – 'Tell me, Explain to me, Describe to me....';
- stay calm and do not show signs of shock, horror or surprise;
- not express feelings or judgements regarding any person alleged to have harmed the child;
- explain sensitively to the person that they have a responsibility to refer the information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Children need to know that staff may not be able to uphold confidentiality where there are concerns about their safety or someone else's;
- reassure and support the person as far as possible;
- explain that only those who 'need to know' will be told;
- explain what will happen next and who will be involved as appropriate;
- record details including date, what the child has said, in the child's words on a 'Record of Concern'/'Cause for Concern' form and pass to DSL or on electronic system and record any visible signs, injuries or bruises on a Body Map;
- record the context and content of their involvement, and will distinguish between fact, opinion and hearsay.

4.4 Action by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy DSL in their absence)

Following any information raising concern, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider:

- any urgent medical needs of the child;
- whether the child is subject to a child protection plan;
- discussing the matter with other agencies involved with the family;
- consulting with appropriate persons e.g. Duty and Advice Team;
- the child's wishes.

Then decide:

- to talk to parents, unless to do so may place a child at risk of significant harm, impede any police investigation and/or place the member of staff or others at risk;

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- whether to make a child protection referral to Children's Social Care-Duty and Advice Team because a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm and if this needs to be undertaken immediately.

OR

- not to make a referral at this stage;
- if further monitoring is necessary;
- if it would be appropriate to undertake an assessment (e.g. Early Help Assessment - EHA) and/or make a referral to Children's Social Care- Customer Service Centre.

All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented. All referrals to Customer Service Centre will be followed up in writing and these referrals will always be kept on file irrespective of the outcome.

4.5 Action following a child protection referral

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or other appropriate member of staff will:

- make regular contact with the social worker involved to stay informed;
- wherever possible, contribute to the strategy discussion;
- provide a report for, attend and contribute to any subsequent child protection conference;
- if the child or children are made the subject of a child protection plan, contribute to the child protection plan and attend core group meetings and review conferences;
- where possible, share all reports with parents prior to meetings;
- where in disagreement with a decision and concerns still remain with the child firstly:
 - Talk in the first instance to the DSL.
 - Check the referral included all the relevant information and clearly documented the concerns about the child.
 - Finally, follow the professional resolution and escalation protocol shown on the LCSB website.
- where a child subject to a child protection plan moves from the school or goes missing, immediately inform Children's Social Care Customer Service Centre.

4.6 Recording and monitoring

Accurate records will be made as soon as practicable and will clearly distinguish between observation, fact, opinion and hypothesis. All records will state who is providing the information, the date and time, information will be recorded in the child's words where possible and a note made

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
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Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



of the location and description of any injuries seen, if this is a paper record than this should be signed. Photographs of injuries must not be taken.

The DSL ensures that the method for other members of staff or volunteers passing on concerns or information is always adhered to as consistency is paramount in ensuring that nothing gets missed. All records of concerns are followed up and clearly show what action is being taken as a result of the concern and the outcomes of this action.

All documents will be retained in a 'Child Protection file', separate from the child's school file. This will be locked away and only accessible to the Headteacher and the DSL if a paper file. If an electronic file e.g. using CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System), it will be stored securely with appropriate levels of limited access. See section 1.2. for details about record transfer & retention.

4.7 Equality Statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who:

- have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or health conditions;
- are young carers;
- may experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality;
- have English as an additional language;
- are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence;
- are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation;
- are asylum seekers;
- are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs;
- are looked after or previously looked after;
- are missing from education;
- whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025





SECTION 5 SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to behaviours such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger.

5.1 Children and the Court System

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts. There are two age-appropriate guides to support children 5-11 year olds and 12-17 year olds.

5.2 Children Missing from Education

A child going missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- are at risk of harm or neglect;
- are at risk of forced marriage or FGM;
- come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families;
- come from the families of service personnel;
- go missing or run away from home or care;
- are supervised by the youth justice system;
- cease to attend a school;
- come from new migrant families.

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



The Education and Inspectors Act 2006 places a duty on Local Authorities and schools to establish the identities of children who are missing from education in their area. If, after 2 or 3 days, a student or their parent cannot be contacted by the school, the Deputy DSL will visit the family. If this visit fails to provide any answers, the missing student will be reported to the Child Missing Education Officer via Social Care (01522 782 111) or by emailing cme@lincolnshire.gov.uk.

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse, neglect and exploitation, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in the future. Staff should be aware of their school's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

5.3 Children with Family Members in Prison

School understands that children with a parent(s) in prison are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. They may require specific services and support. Families and children of people in prison will be seen as families first and school will work to ensure their needs are appropriately met. This will include providing support to ensure the voice of the child is considered when seeking contact with a family member in prison. NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

5.4 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford is aware that Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the 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. (Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from Child Sexual Exploitation 2017)

Staff have been made aware of some of the key indicators of CSE by training provided by DSL and external agencies. In addition, Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford appreciates that it has a role to play in the prevention of CSE within its safeguarding curriculum e.g. Healthy Relationships, Sex and Relationships Education.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



CSE can include both physical contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity. It can also happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam. CSE may also occur without the victim's immediate knowledge, for example through others copying videos or images.

In addition to the CCE indicators above, indicators of CSE can include a child:

- having an older boyfriend or girlfriend;
- suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant'

If staff identify children for whom CSE may be a concern, they will apply the usual referral process and child protection procedures and pass this information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL can then refer cases where relevant to Lincolnshire Customer Services Team. Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford also appreciates that they have a role to play in sharing soft intelligence relevant to perpetrators of CSE, and therefore if such information should come to light within school, the DSL will share this appropriately with the police on Tel: 101.

Signs to look out for

- going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late;
- regularly missing school or education or not taking part in education;
- appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- associating with other young people involved in exploitation;
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- suffering from sexually transmitted infections;
- mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing;
- drug and alcohol misuse;
- displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

It is important to note that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit external signs of this abuse.

5.5 Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE): Country Lines

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence.

CCE is a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity, in exchange for something the

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Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by anyone, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs and alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education
- Not taking part in education

COUNTY LINES

School recognise that criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs. School will consider whether a referral to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) should be undertaken in order to safeguard that child and/or other children.

5.6 Domestic Abuse and Operation Encompass

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford understands that the cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

- any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality;
- the abuse can encompass, but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional;

Approved by: Full Governing Body
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Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour;
- coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

If staff identify children for whom Domestic Abuse may be a concern, they should apply the usual referral process and child protection procedures and pass this information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL can then refer cases where relevant to Lincolnshire Customer Services. Where DV Notifications are received from the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), this information will be added to a child's chronology and child protection record to ensure that appropriate support can be provided where necessary. A coding system will be in place. Domestic Abuse Resource Pack for Schools and Educational Settings in Lincolnshire Ending Domestic Abuse in Lincolnshire site; <https://edanlincs.org.uk/> email: info@edanlincs.org.uk Tel: 01522 510041

Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247.

OPERATION ENCOMPASS

Operation Encompass is a national police-led initiative to notify schools, prior to the start of the next school day, when a child or young person has experienced any domestic abuse. An officer attending a domestic abuse incident will record at the scene the names and school of any children in the household. This will result in an email notification to our school in readiness for the start of the next school day. This information sharing will enable us to take any appropriate action we see fit.

Further guidance on what to do and the resources we may require are located via <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/domestic-abuse>. If we are unsure whether our concerns need to be reported to Children's Services, we will contact 01522 782111 and request a consultation with a social worker, which will be arranged for the following working day. If we notify the parents that we wish to discuss the situation with Children's Services, the consultation can be recorded on the child's record and the social worker can review any relevant history beforehand. If we do not notify the parents, a hypothetical consultation can be held, though the social worker will only have the information available during the discussion.

If the child referred to in the email does not attend our school and we have been sent a notification in error, we will report this to OperationEncompass@lincs.pnn.police.uk.

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Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



5.7 Homelessness

Being homeless or at risk of homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL (and deputy) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Lincolnshire Housing Authority so they can raise /progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets summarise the new duties that focus on early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis. If homelessness occurs for 16 and 17 year olds and is not family based, the DSL will use the referrals process to children's services as outlined in this document.

5.8 'Honour-based' abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

So called honour-based abuse (HBA) is a term used to describe violence committed within the context of the extended family which are motivated by a perceived need to restore standing within the community, which is presumed to have been lost through the behaviour of the victim. Most victims of HBA are women or girls, although men may also be at risk. These crimes could be committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing. Women and girls may lose honour through expressions of autonomy, particularly if this autonomy occurs within the area of sexuality. Men may be targeted either by the family of a woman who they are believed to have 'dishonoured', in which case both parties may be at risk, or by their own family if they are believed to be homosexual.

There are several common triggers for HBA: refusing an arranged marriage; having a relationship outside the approved group; loss of virginity; pregnancy; spending time without the supervision of a family member. However, as some families may resolve to abuse or kill a member on what would appear to be very trivial grounds, it is important to take fears of HBA seriously, even when it seems unlikely. Victims of HBA are more likely to underestimate the risks to their safety than overstate them and even if the 'offence' seems trivial to you, this does not mean it is trivial to their family.

As HBA is a collective crime, the potential assailants and their networking capacity multiply the risk. It is not unknown for the family to pay a third party to deal with a fugitive from the family. Families that are widely spread across the country may make many areas unsafe for people at risk of HBA. Families may deploy their professional networks to locate an individual by, for example, circulating photographs within a taxi service, or finding a relative with access to official records to gain confidential information. Make the DSL aware immediately, if you suspect a young person may be at risk of HBA.

If staff are concerned regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



5.9 Female Genital Mutilation/FGM

Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford understands that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. Staff know that FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs".

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

Any teacher who either:

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

Must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a mandatory statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.

Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a **pupil under 18** must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine pupils.

Any member of staff who suspects a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

The DSL will make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to be alert to children affected by FGM or at risk of FGM.

Section 7.3 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- a pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place;
- a parent or guardian disclosing that FGM has been carried out;
- a family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- A girl:
 - having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable;
 - finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously);
 - spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating;
 - having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems;
 - avoiding physical exercise or missing PE;
 - being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period;
 - demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour;
 - being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations;
 - asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem;
 - talking about pain or discomfort between her legs.

Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM include:

- the girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider);
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin;
- a parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out;
- a family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues.
- A girl:
 - having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM;
 - having limited level of integration within UK society;
 - confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman";
 - talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents/carers stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period;
 - requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM;
 - talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion);
 - being unexpectedly absent from school;
 - having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



FGM MANDATORY REPORTING DUTY FOR TEACHERS

Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford is aware that Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers (and those employed or engaged to carry out teaching work) to report to the police where they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18 years of age. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining students or students. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information.

Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases. In these cases, teachers should follow usual safeguarding procedures reporting to DSL.

5.10 Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. It is an appalling and indefensible practice and is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. This applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the 'one chance' rule, i.e. we may only have one chance to speak to the potential victim and only one chance to save them.

If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the pupil about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:

- speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place;
- activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer.
- seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or fm@fco.gov.uk.

Refer the pupil to a Deputy DSL, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school counsellor, as appropriate.

Staff at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford understand that likewise this is a potential Safeguarding issue and thus they would pass on concerns by applying the usual referral process and child

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



protection procedures and pass this information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The Forced Marriage Unit may be contacted on Tel; 020 7008 0151 for advice or information and has published statutory guidance;

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322310/HMG_Statutory_Guidance_publication_180614_Final.pdf

5.11 Preventing Radicalisation, The Prevent Duty and Channel

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Terrorism is an action that:

- endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people;
- causes serious damage to property; or
- seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system.

The use or threat of terrorism must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Schools have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

We will assess the risk of children in our school being drawn into terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.

We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place and equip our pupils to stay safe online at school and at home.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period.

Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

The government website [Educate Against Hate](#) and charity [NSPCC](#) say that signs that a pupil is being radicalised can include:

- refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves;
- becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution;
- changes in friendship groups and appearance;

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- rejecting activities they used to enjoy;
- converting to a new religion;
- isolating themselves from family and friends;
- talking as if from a scripted speech;
- an unwillingness or inability to discuss their views;
- a sudden disrespectful attitude towards others;
- increased levels of anger;
- increased secretiveness, especially around internet use;
- expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions;
- accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter;
- possessing extremist literature;
- being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations;

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem or be victims of bullying or discrimination. It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour – staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong.

Staff should **always** take action if they are worried.

If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children's social care. Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' above). Inform the DSL or deputy as soon as practically possible after the referral.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include [Channel](#), the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- Think someone is in immediate danger
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- See or hear something that may be terrorist-related

Children are susceptible to extremist, terrorism, ideology and radicalisation. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection and report concerns to the DSL;

- Under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford is aware that we must have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, and that this is known as the Prevent Duty;
- In order to fulfil the Prevent Duty, staff have received information/training to help them to identify children who may be susceptible to radicalisation, and the school is committed to accessing further training to ensure that all staff are up to date and aware of this duty. If staff identify children for whom this may be a concern, they should apply the usual referral process and child protection procedures and pass this information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL);
- Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales which contains specific information for schools;
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact the Prevent Coordinator should there be concerns about a child or family linked to potential radicalisation or extremism. The Prevent Coordinator will then assist the DSL regarding whether a referral is appropriate and whether this child or family will need to be referred to the Channel Panel Channel guidance;
- Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford will also incorporate the promotion of fundamental British Values into the Safeguarding Curriculum and/or PSHE in order to help build students' resilience and enable them to challenge extremist views. School will provide a safe space in which children and staff can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments.
- Radicalisation will also be considered within current Online Safety policies, procedures and curriculum in terms of having suitable filtering and monitoring in place and also raising awareness with staff, parents and children about the increased risk of online radicalisation, through the use of the internet, social media and gaming;
- For more information about Prevent in Lincolnshire, including referral forms and project examples, please read the Prevent Duty Guidance for Lincolnshire for Schools and registered childcare providers September 2018, available within the Safeguarding folder on Perspective light and at Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Contact Lincolnshire Police, Prevent Officer 01522 558304 prevent@lincs.pnn.police.uk or LCC, Prevent Officer 01522 555367 prevent@lincolnshire.gov.uk

This school adheres to the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



5.12 Child-on-Child Abuse

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for pupils.

We also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school’s behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- is serious, and potentially a criminal offence;
- could put pupils in the school at risk;
- Is violent;
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol;
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes).

Child on child abuse is when children abuse other children. This type of abuse can take place inside and outside of school and online.

Child on child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers.
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse).
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence).
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery).
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it.
- The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence.
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed.
- The DSL will contact the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), if appropriate.

Where children abuse their peers online, this can take the form of, for example, abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages; the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups; and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don't want to receive such content.

If staff have any concerns about child-on-child abuse, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as appropriate.

We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, and of creating a supportive environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents.

To achieve this, we will:

- challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images;
- be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to peers;
- ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent;
- ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems;
- ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously;
- ensure staff are trained to understand:
 - how to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports;
 - that even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”;
 - that if they have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:
 - Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
 - A friend may make a report

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- A member of staff may overhear a conversation
- A child's behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
- that certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation;
- that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy;
- the important role they have to play in preventing child on child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it;
- that they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns.

At Queen Elizabeth's Grammar Alford, we continue to ensure that any form of abuse or harmful behaviour is dealt with immediately and consistently to reduce the extent of harm to the young person, with full consideration to impact on that individual child's emotional and mental health and well-being. Allegations of child-on-child abuse will be investigated and dealt with in accordance with this policy and all other relevant policies.

Children and young people may harm one another in a number of ways which would be classified as child-on-child abuse. The purpose of this policy is to explore the many forms of child-on-child abuse and include a planned and supportive response to the issues. At Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford, we have the following policies in place that should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Anti-bullying policy;
- Code of Conduct;
- Learning Policy.

All staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures to child-on-child abuse.

5.13 Serious Violence

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are 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 wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal network or gangs.

Indicators which may signal that a child is at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime may include:

- increased absence from school;
- change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups;
- significant decline in performance;
- signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing;

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- signs of assault or unexplained injuries;
- unexplained gifts or new possessions (this could indicate that the child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation (see above))

Risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include:

- being a peer;
- having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school;
- having experienced child maltreatment;
- having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Staff will be aware of these indicators and risk factors. If a member of staff has a concern about a pupil being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this to the DSL.

It is also important that we are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence in this policy, we do so in the context of sexual violence. For the purpose of this policy, when referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

Rape

A person (A) commits an offence of rape if he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Assault by Penetration

A person (A) commits an offence if s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Sexual Assault

A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

What is consent? Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs.

All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools is provided in the Home Office's guidance;

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youthviolence> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-andvulnerable-adults-county-lines> .

5.14 Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Victims and alleged perpetrators

There are many different ways to describe children who have been subjected to sexual violence and/or sexual harassment and many ways to describe those who are alleged to have carried out any form of abuse. It is important that we recognise that not everyone who has been subjected to sexual violence and/or sexual harassment considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way.

For the purpose of this policy, when referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as deliberating brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature;
- online sexual harassment, which might include non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos and sharing sexual images and videos (both often referred to as sexting); inappropriate sexual comments on social media; exploitation; coercion and threats. Online sexual harassment may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

It is important that we consider sexual harassment in broad terms. Sexual harassment (as set out above) creates an atmosphere that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

Staff are aware of sexual violence and sexual harassment and that children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. Sexual violence refers to Rape, Assault by Penetration and Sexual Assault as described in the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Neither is acceptable and will not be tolerated by the school. School take all such reports seriously and they will receive the same high standard of care that any other safeguarding concern receives.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



A multi-agency approach will be undertaken when responding to all such complaints; however, the school will always take immediate action to protect children regardless of the actions of any other agency. These actions may include an immediate risk assessment in respect of the needs of the child victim and will address any risks identified to any child in respect to an alleged perpetrator of sexual violence or sexual harassment to ensure children are protected from harm. Any risk assessment will be fluid and may change to reflect any developments during the management of the case. All such reports will be managed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. There are a number of options the school may consider in respect of the management of a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment between children and each case will receive an appropriate bespoke response once all the facts are known. Irrespective of any potential criminal outcome, the school has a duty to safeguard all children and may deal with any such report on a balance of probability basis when considering the outcomes for children involved. Should an outcome involve a move to an alternative school for any child then full information sharing of the case will be undertaken with the Designated Safeguarding Lead professional at that school.

Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEND being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying and harassment, without outwardly showing any signs; and communication barriers and difficulties overcoming these barriers;
- children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBT) can be targeted by their peers. In some cases, a child who is perceived by their peers to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.

HARMFUL SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS

Children's sexual behaviours exist on a wide continuum, from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviours are developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. A useful umbrella term is "harmful sexual behaviours". Advice on signs, indicators and effects of harmful sexual behaviours is available here: [NSPCC: Harmful sexual behaviour: signs-indicators-effects](#). The term has been widely adopted in child protection and is used in this policy. Harmful sexual behaviours can occur online and offline and can occur simultaneously between the two. Harmful sexual behaviours should be considered in a child protection context.

When considering harmful sexual behaviours, ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors to consider. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature.

Detailed advice on harmful sexual behaviours is available from the specialist sexual violence sector: contact Rape Crisis or the Survivors Trust for details of the nearest centre. Also, see NSPCC: Harmful sexual behaviour, and NICE guidance for advice on, amongst other things, developing interventions; working with families and carers and multi-agency working.

Children displaying harmful sexual behaviours have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important that they are offered appropriate support.

As a school we have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children at their school. As part of this duty, we are required to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

If at any time a member of staff has concerns regarding any such behaviours, they should report them to the DSL immediately (see section 5).

5.15 Upskirting

The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. 'Upskirting' typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim. Staff should always act in the best interests of a child.

5.16 Youth Produced Sexual Imagery

Where there is a disclosure or the school becomes aware that a child may have been involved in sending 'youth produced sexual imagery' which is sometimes referred to as 'sexting' it will refer to the guidance in the document 'Sexting in Schools , Responding to incidents and Safeguarding young people' published by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (2016). Staff understand that when an incident involving youth produced sexual imagery comes to their attention:

- the incident should be referred to the DSL as soon as possible;
- the DSL should hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff;
- there should be subsequent interviews with the young people involved (if appropriate);
- parents should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm;
- at any point in the process if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



We will also refer to:

The DfE guidance 2018 on Searching Screening and Confiscation Advice for Schools.

5.17 Contextual Safeguarding

School recognises that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside the school. All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. The school will provide as much information as possible to children's social care as part of any referral undertaken.

<https://www.contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/>

5.18 Carrying Knives/offensive weapons and gang culture

Bringing and carrying a knife/offensive weapon onto school premises is a criminal offence and immediate action will be taken by calling the police and informing the parents. The guidance on Searching, Screening and Confiscation for Headteachers, schools and Governors, January 2018 will be consulted, and the school will consider and may apply the disciplinary procedure. If a member of staff suspects a student/students being involved in gang culture, this is a safeguarding concern and will require a discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will seek advice from agencies and professionals including reference to the safeguarding procedures as outlined by the local authority. The student may be an exploited child and victim to which the school/college will offer support.

5.19 Children who may require Early Help

Early Help is the term used to describe arrangements and services that identify the need for help for children and families as soon as the problems start to emerge, or when there is a strong likelihood that problems will emerge in the future. Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) identifies the critical features of effective Early Help as:

A multi-disciplinary approach that brings a range of:

- practice that empowers families and helps them to develop the capacity to resolve their own professional skills and expertise through a "Team around the Child" approach;
- a relationship with a trusted lead professional who can engage with the child and their family, and coordinate the support needed from other agencies;
- a holistic approach that addresses the children's needs in the wider family context;
- simple, streamlined referral and assessment process;

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- Early Help in Lincolnshire includes both the TAC and ESCO process. Signs of Safety is embedded throughout. ESCO is similar to the TAC process but specifically supports the care coordination of Children with Disabilities (CWD) Further information can be seen at www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/ESCO All forms and guidance for Early Help including Signs of Safety, TAC Handbook, TAC Consultants contact details etc. are available at www.lincolnshirechildren.net.

Meeting the needs of children and families in Lincolnshire is Lincolnshire's safeguarding model based on Signs of Safety.

All Staff (Governors and volunteers) working within the School are aware safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm, neglect and failure to act. It relates to broader aspects of care and education, including:

- children's health and safety and well-being, including their mental health;
- meeting the needs of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities;
- the use of reasonable force;
- meeting the needs of children with medical conditions;
- providing first aid;
- educational visits;
- intimate care and emotional well-being;
- online safety and associated issues;
- appropriate arrangements to ensure children's security taking into account the local context;
- young carers;
- privately fostered children;
- children who have returned home to their family from care;
- children showing signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour;
- family circumstances presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health, domestic violence;
- early signs of abuse and/or neglect;
- signs of displaying behaviour or views that are considered to be extreme;
- children misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- not attending school or are at risk of exclusion from school;
- frequently going missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, exploitation, radicalised;
- not in education, training or employment after the age of 16 (NEET);
- unborn babies – LSCP pre-birth protocol.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/tac TACAdmin@lincolnshire.gov.uk

When using reasonable force, this is in line with national guidelines and takes into account individual student needs and risk management/care plans, and in particular with regard to SEND, Lincolnshire SEND offer.

Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

WHAT IS TEAM AROUND THE CHILD (TAC)?

TAC is a shared assessment and planning framework which is in use by a variety of agencies across the county and is employed in similar format throughout the country. It aims to help with the early identification of additional needs of children and young people and promote a coordinated multi-agency response to meet them. TAC can be used to support children and young people between 0–19 years, including unborn babies and can also be used with consent up to the age of 24 where a young person has a learning difficulty or disability. There are four main stages in setting up a TAC:

1. early identification of needs;
2. assessing strengths and needs in a consistent and methodical framework;
3. developing and delivering an integrated service;
4. reviewing and refining the support arrangements.

Support and Guidance Available: Please refer also to the LSCB Website and publications (Particularly 'Meeting the Needs of Children in Lincolnshire') at www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/lscb. In addition, the following staff are available to support professionals:

Early Help Advisors are available to support professionals. These advisors are based within Customer Service Centre (01522 782111). They offer consultations to professionals for new cases where practitioners need some advice or guidance. The advisors are qualified social workers who will advise on all levels of safeguarding and thresholds.

Early Help Consultants provide support, advice and guidance to lead professionals on existing TAC Cases. They will use Signs of Safety methodology to map and/or quality assure cases in order to secure improved outcomes for children, young people and their families. Contact via your local TAC Coordinator in your locality.

TAC Administrators provide administrative support, maintain records, monitor processes, and can signpost professionals to local services.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



Further Support for Schools and Academies In addition to the support outlined above, and academies can request case supervision for all TAC cases where the Lead Professional is employed in an educational setting. For these cases administrative support can also be requested in the form of arranging meetings and typing of assessments and plans. This support can be accessed via the Request Forms at www.lincolnshirechildren.net/tac

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead** acts as the focal point for all matters concerning child protection and safeguarding children and young people. One of the primary tasks is to act as the contact between school, the family and other agencies. Incidents of possible child abuse obviously need to be handled with sensitivity and confidentiality consistent with the multi-disciplinary approach. If there is any cause for concern whatsoever it is vital that information is passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. In the event, following statutory investigation, of concerns proving to be unfounded, staff should not reproach themselves for having raised the issue. In cases of this nature it is always better to be safe than sorry.

INFORMATION SHARING

Working with the latest available guidance (currently, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024), the school will share all necessary intelligence with other agencies in order to safeguard those missing or likely to go missing from educational settings, including other schools and other local authorities.

In cases where mid-year transfers involve students with a child protection background, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider whether it is appropriate to share information with the new school, thus providing continued support for all vulnerable students regardless of placement.

5.20 Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities

Lincolnshire SEND offer is available for every child and family in Lincolnshire. Special consideration should be given to safeguarding and protecting children who may have additional vulnerabilities:

- additional barriers can exist to the recognition of abuse, neglect and exploitation which can include assumptions that indicators of abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- vulnerable children can disproportionately be impacted by things like bullying and abuse, without outwardly showing any signs;
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers;
- seeing a disability first and abuse second.

These additional challenges are addressed through a high level of pastoral care and our communication and interaction with our young people. These communication tools may include Makaton, communication in print and Colourful Semantics to ensure the child's voice is heard despite their additional needs.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



5.21 Looked After Children

At Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford, the Head of Lower School is responsible for looked after children.

This group is extremely vulnerable. The most common reason for children to become looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect and the school is aware of the need to monitor the welfare and ensure the support of children in this category.

The Head of Lower School has details of the legal status of each individual looked after child's care arrangements and the nature of the contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. The Head of Lower School will also know the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child.

All staff recognise that looked after children and care leavers are more vulnerable than other children, often having poorer educational outcomes; therefore, ensuring their wellbeing, safety and welfare, helping them to reach their potential which includes the looked after child who is moving on. The school will also ensure that care leavers are supported with pathways including liaison with the local authority where a personal advisor will be appointed and a full working relationship is maintained with the Lincolnshire Virtual School Headteacher Kieran Barnes, Head of Virtual School LAC Lincolnshire, email Kieran.barnes@lincolnshire.gov.uk in respect of all students at the school who are subject of 'looked after' status.

Andrew Morris is Lincolnshire County Council's Corporate Parenting Manager, M: 07770 648 087, T: 01522 553916 Andrew.Morris@lincolnshire.gov.uk Care leavers queries should be addressed with the social worker until 17 years 6 months and to Andrew for broader queries and once they are 18. In Lincolnshire, all 16 year old looked after children (LAC) have a social worker until they are 17 years 6 months. At that point, they will be allocated a leaving care worker, transferring to Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service at 18 years old. We would expect schools to be working closely with the young person and their social worker.

5.22 Online Safety

IT POLICIES

Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford will ensure that children are safe from online terrorist and extremist material, typically via appropriate levels of filtering.

Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford require students and staff to abide by acceptable user policies which make clear that accessing such sites is unacceptable. Using school equipment to send terrorist publications to others would be a criminal offence.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



ONLINE SAFETY AND SAFEGUARDING EDUCATION

The school ensures that appropriate filters are put in place to secure our students' safety whilst they are in school or using our facilities. As increasingly students work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. Our Governing Body ensures appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place and are advised on this by our network manager and his SLT line manager. Additional information on this area is provided in Annex C of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024).

Through our published curriculum, the Governing Body ensures that online safety is included in relevant lessons. Students are taught about safeguarding: online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This includes covering relevant issues through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), tutorials and sex and relationship education.

Although appropriate blocking and filtering is essential, it relies on school staff to ensure that "over blocking" does not lead to unreasonable restrictions.

5.23 Pre-Birth Protocol

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 requires agencies to have in place mechanisms to ensure that they are able to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. All practitioners whether adult or children services, have a responsibility to protect and safeguard children and work collaboratively with Children's Services and other childcare professionals in contributing to assessments and interventions. Therefore, the professional who is first made aware of the pregnancy should initiate the prebirth protocol and complete an Early Help Assessment or make a referral for unborn to Social Care. A young person of statutory education age is entitled to 18 weeks of maternity leave. Either side of this period there is an expectation that the young person continues to attend school or alternative provision. The educational establishment is required to make all reasonable adjustments to allow the young person to have appropriate access to the curriculum whilst they attend the establishment including timetable and learning environment adjustments. It is important that the provision participate in the Team Around the Child (see Team Around the Child Supporting Documentation) in order for them to fully support the continued education of the young parent. Education establishments should have a clear strategy for engaging with the young person while they are away from the provision so as to limit the disruption to their education and make appropriate arrangements that work for the young person and educational establishment. Where there is robust medical evidence that indicates that the young person is unfit to attend, the educational establishment can make a referral to the pupil reintegration team on 01522 554525 who will assess and consider alternative arrangements, if appropriate. The Lincolnshire Pre-Birth Protocol link to the full document:

[https://lincolnshirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_pre_birth_protocol.html?zoom_highlight=pre+birth+ protocol](https://lincolnshirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_pre_birth_protocol.html?zoom_highlight=pre+birth+protocol) https://lincolnshirescb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/pre_birth_flow_chart.pdf

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



WIDER ISSUES TO CONSIDER

These are some further areas to consider in implementing the prevent agenda:

- settings are required to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs;
- curriculum including a balanced Religious Education, Personal Social and Health Education etc.

EMTET is the Ethnic Minority and Traveller Education Team who can support settings by working with individuals who are victims of racism or are perpetrators of racism or have racist views. In addition, they can signpost settings to other organisations which will be able to support with other similar issues. EMTET contact details are 01427 787190, www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/emtet

Staff are aware of, and follow, the DfE guidance Teaching online safety in school 2019 to ensure our students understand how to stay safe and behave online as part of existing curriculum requirements. We also make use of UKCIS Education for a connected world framework. Staff are aware that safeguarding also relates to broader aspects of care and education including children's health and safety and well-being, including their mental health.

5.24 Mental Health

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

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

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

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy.

5.25 Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur:

- between 2 children of any age and sex;

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children;
- online and face to face (both physically and verbally).

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school.

If a victim reports an incident, it is essential that staff make sure they are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows that girls, children with SEN and/or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- challenging inappropriate behaviours;
- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

If staff have any concerns about sexual violence or sexual harassment, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as appropriate. In particular, Section 7 sets out more detail about our school's approach to this type of abuse.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



SECTION 6: PROVIDING A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

6.1 Safer Recruitment and Selection (please download guidance on DBS, Vetting and Barring – see links in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024)

The school pays full regard to DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024'.

We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the school who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult including volunteers and staff employed by contractors. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity academic and vocational qualifications, obtaining professional references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. Shortlisted candidates are informed that the school might conduct an online search as part of due diligence checks in the recruitment process. It also includes undertaking interviews and all relevant safer recruitment checks, e.g. Disclosure and Barring Service and right to work in the UK checks etc.

In line with statutory changes, underpinned by regulations, the school will maintain a Single Central Record (SCR). This document will cover all staff (including supply staff, and teacher trainees on salaried routes) who work at the school.

The information that must be recorded in respect of all staff members mentioned above is whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed/certificate obtained apply:

- an identity check;
- a barred list check;
- an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check;
- a prohibition from teaching check;
- a section 128 check (for management positions as set out in paragraph 99 for independent schools, including free schools and academies);
- further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK: this would include recording checks for those European Economic Area (EEA) teacher sanctions and restrictions;
- a check of professional qualifications;
- a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.

For supply staff, the school will include whether written confirmation that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, whether any enhanced DBS check certificate has been provided in respect of the member of supply staff and the date that confirmation was received. Where checks are

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



carried out on volunteers, the school will record this on the single central record. Under no circumstances will a volunteer in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity with a child.

- G Thompson 5 June 2023
- A Duff 23 January 2023
- S Hood 24 April 2022
- B Allen 22 April 2022
- E Kemp 12 September 2024

The above named have undertaken Safer Recruitment in Education Training. One of the above will be involved in all staff and volunteer appointments and arrangements (including, where appropriate, contracted services).

6.2 Home-stays (Exchange Visits)

Where children from overseas are staying with UK parents as part of an exchange organised by the school, those parents will be deemed to be in 'Regulated Activity' for the duration of the stay and as such will require to submit an enhanced DBS check including barring check. As a volunteer, all checks will be processed free of charge by the DBS. Where additional people in the host family are aged over 16 (i.e. elder siblings), the school will consider on a case by case risk assessment basis whether such checks are necessary.

6.3 Safe Working Practice

Our school will comply with the current Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with children and young people in education settings.

The school pays full regard to DfE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 and with reference to the 'Position of Trust' offence (Sexual Offences Act 2003). We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the school who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult, which includes Governors in maintained schools who are required to have an enhanced criminal records certificate. We do this by means of the following:

1. Operating safer recruitment practices including appropriate Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and reference checks, verifying identity academic and vocational qualifications, obtaining professional references, checking previous employment history (including any additional checks thought appropriate for staff who have lived or worked outside the UK) and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and checking the Children's List and the existence of any teacher prohibition orders (checked via the 'Teacher Services' system) and the right to work in England checks in accordance with DBS and Department for Education

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



procedures. Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK must undergo the same checks as all other staff in school.

In February 2015, the DfE issued additional guidance about disqualification by association 'Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006' which applies to those staff employed and/or provide childcare in either the early years (birth until end of reception age) or later years (children under the age of 8). Schools will need to ask those staff in scope to complete a disqualification declaration. Upon return schools should contact their HR adviser and LADO where a positive declaration has been made.

2. Ensuring that staff and volunteers adhere to a published code of conduct and other professional standards at all times, including after school activities. Staff are aware of social media/ on-line conduct.
3. Ensuring any disciplinary proceedings against staff related to child protection matters are concluded in full in accordance with Government guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, LADO and HR Policy, procedures and guidance.
4. Ensuring that all staff and other adults on site are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationship with students and parents, following the Code of Conduct.
5. Establishing adequate risk assessments are in place including for extended school, volunteer and holiday activities.
6. Supporting staff confidence to report misconduct.

At least one member of every recruitment panel has completed Safer Recruitment training within the last 5 years.

Safe working practice ensures that students are safe and that all staff:

- are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions;
- work in an open and transparent way;
- work with other colleagues where possible in situations open to question;
- discuss and/or take advice from school management over any incident which may give rise to concern;
- record any incidents or decisions made;
- apply the same professional standards regardless of gender, sexuality or disability;
- comply and are aware of the confidentiality policy;

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- are aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them. School staff having concerns about another member of staff;
- staff members having concerns about another member of staff will report these to the Headteacher;
- where staff members have concerns about the Headteacher, these will be reported to the chair of governors.

School staff having concerns about safeguarding practices:

- All staff and volunteers should feel able to challenge and raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime or concerns about other agencies by using the LSCP Professional Resolution and Escalation Protocol. Any such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team and others involved.

WHISTLEBLOWING PROCEDURES

Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford will follow the Lincolnshire County Council whistleblowing arrangements. The school has tailored the LCC's Whistleblowing arrangements to fit the school's circumstances. The LCC policy and process for schools can be found at <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/111773.article>.

There should be at least one member of staff and at least one Governor who other members of staff can contact if they wish to report concerns. School staff can also contact the local authority on 0800 0853716 or whistleblowing@lincolnshire.gov.uk in case a staff member feels they should report to someone outside the school.

Academies are responsible for agreeing and establishing their own whistleblowing procedures.

The Governing Body minutes should include a record of:

- the school's whistleblowing arrangements;
- the people in and outside the school to whom staff members should report concerns.

Every member of staff must be informed of the school's whistleblowing arrangements.

Every staff member, including temporary staff and contractors, should know:

- what protection is available to them if they decide to report another member of staff;
- what areas of malpractice or wrongdoing are covered in the school's whistleblowing procedure;

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- the different routes available to them for reporting a concern, including who they can approach both in and outside the school.

All staff and contractors should be aware of the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line for Professionals (0800 028 0285) and the online helpline with is: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/dedicatedhelplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/> and be aware that they can use this line if:

- the school doesn't have clear safeguarding procedures to follow;
- they believe their concerns won't be dealt with properly or may be covered-up;
- they have raised a concern, but it hasn't been acted upon;
- they are worried about being treated unfairly.

They should be aware that they can call about an incident that happened in the past, is happening now or they believe may happen in the future.

6.4 Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are taken seriously and used to good effect to promote safety. Risk assessments are available for all aspects of the school's work, (such as premises and equipment, on-site activities, off-site activities, venues used, transport). Where relevant, risk assessments are carried out for individual students, and supported by action plans identifying how potential risks would be managed.

Individual risk assessments are also used when deciding a response to a child demonstrating potentially harmful behaviour such as sexually harmful behaviour or when identifying whether a child who may be particularly vulnerable, such as a child at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation.

6.5 Safeguarding Information for students

All students in our school are reminded regularly that they can approach any member of staff. The school is committed to ensuring that students are aware of behaviour towards them that is not acceptable and how they can keep themselves safe. All students know that we have a senior member of staff (DSL) with responsibility for child protection and safeguarding and know who this is. We inform students of whom they might talk to, both in and out of school, their right to be listened to and heard and what steps can be taken to protect them from harm. PSHME and online safety awareness materials we use to help students learn how to keep safe are ChildLine, NSPCC Speak Out Stay Safe, Police, Stranger Danger, and Anti-bullying.

Our school will ensure that students are made aware that information can be found at the following helplines such as NSPCC and CEOP.

School's arrangements for consulting with and listening to students are through their pastoral support, DSL and Deputy DSL as well as referrals for counselling, Healthy Minds and other relevant

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



agencies. We make students aware of these arrangements by communicating this in school via tutor time, posters, leaflets, tutor meetings as well as other forms of media.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

6.6 Partnership with Parents

The school shares a purpose with parents to educate and keep children safe from harm.

The school takes steps to ensure all parents/carers understand the child protection and safeguarding policy. The policy is available through the school public website and parents receive updates on reviews and changes through home school communication. Parents can raise a concern about their child's safety or about general safeguarding concerns in the school by informing the school immediately where there is risk of harm to a child or raising the concern through the school's complaints procedure.

Parents are regularly informed of information that they may need to be aware of to help them to protect their children from harm inside and outside the school environment.

Where the school has concerns for the safety of a child, parents are made aware of these concerns and their consent is sought in line with local safeguarding procedures unless doing so would increase the risk of harm to the child.

The Head of Lower School will have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship, child arrangement orders or children that were adopted from state care outside England and Wales. This will be achieved by working with the child in question, the family, relevant outside agencies and the appropriate staff in school. Furthermore, the Head of Lower School will contact the local authority/personal advisor as necessary (Headteacher at the Lincoln Virtual School. 01522 550247).

Parents are alerted to this information at www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/lscb; www.nspcc.org.uk; www.ceop.gov.uk or Lincolnshire Customer Service Centre 01522 782111.

We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission, or it is necessary to do so in order to protect a child. We make safeguarding information available in a variety of formats, e.g. for families with English as an additional language (EAL) etc.

Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford will share with parents any concerns we may have about their child unless to do so might place a child at risk of harm.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



We encourage parents to discuss any concerns they may have with the school's pastoral team, DSL and Deputy DSL.

The school's Child Protection Policy is available by accessing the school website or a written copy will be provided on request to the school office.

Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford is committed to ensuring the welfare and safety of all children in school. All Lincolnshire schools, including Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford, follow the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures. The school will, in most circumstances, endeavour to discuss all concerns with parents about their children. However, there may be exceptional circumstances when the school will discuss concerns with the Children's Services Customer Service Centre and/or the Police without parental knowledge (in accordance with Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures). The school will, of course, always aim to maintain a positive relationship with all parents.

6.7 Partnerships with others

Our school recognises that it is essential to establish positive and effective working relationships with other agencies who are partners in Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board. – e.g. LA, Barnardo's, Police, Health, NSPCC Speak out Stay Safe Project, National Youth Advocacy Service, etc. There is a joint responsibility on all these agencies to share information to ensure the safeguarding of all children.

6.8 School Training and Staff Induction

The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with responsibility for child protection, undertakes appropriate child safeguarding training and inter-agency working training (provided by the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership)

The DSL and any deputies will undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. The training should be updated every **two years**.

In addition to their formal training, their knowledge and skills will be updated (for example, via the weekly safeguarding bulletin uploaded on Perspective Light, meeting other DSL's, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments), at regular intervals, but at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role. DSL's or their deputy from maintained schools will attend at least 2 out of the 3 safeguarding briefings per academic year.

The Headteacher and all other school staff, including non-teaching staff, will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, which is regularly updated and follow the LSCP 6 year training pathway In addition, all staff members will receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via e-mail, ebulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

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Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



Our school accesses training from LCC Safeguarding in School's Training Package, LSCP training directory. All staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) are provided with the school's child safeguarding policy and informed of school's child protection arrangements on induction.

6.9 Support, Advice and Guidance for Staff

Staff will be supported by the school, the Local Authority and professional associations. The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection will be supported by Headteacher, Deputy DSL and Designated Safeguarding Governor.

Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford seek advice about safeguarding concerns from Lincolnshire Customer Services on 01522 782111 and for non-urgent early help queries from our Early Help Consultant, The LCC Safeguarding and Education Welfare Supervisor for Education Settings Ruth Fox is available on 01522 554695 or safeguardingschool@lincolnshire.gov.uk for non-urgent safeguarding advice about training, policy, audit etc.

6.10 Alternative Provision

This school is committed to safeguarding our children even if they are placed in alternative provision for a period of time within the school day/week. We therefore seek written reassurance that any Alternative Provision provider has acceptable safeguarding practices in place including their response to concerns about a child; safer recruitment processes; attendance and child missing education procedures and appropriate information sharing procedures. The school will also obtain a written statement from the provider that they have completed all the vetting and barring checks that are necessary on their staff.

When organising work placements, the school will ensure that the placement provider has policies and procedures in place to safeguard students.

6.11 Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff.

If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification.

Visitors are expected to sign the visitors' book and wear a visitor's badge.

Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and:

- Will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or
- The organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an appropriate level of DBS check has been carried out

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff.

6.12 Pupils with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues

We recognise that pupils with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in this group, including:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration;
- pupils being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other pupils;
- the potential for pupils with SEN, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs;
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

We offer extra pastoral support for these pupils.

6.13 Pupils with a social worker

Pupils may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

Where we are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:

- Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks
- The provision of pastoral and/or academic support

6.14 Looked-after and previously looked-after children

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. In particular, we will ensure that:

- appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements;
- the DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
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Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



We have appointed a designated teacher, who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with [statutory guidance](#).

The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.

As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

- work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to;
- work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how pupil premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans.

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Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



SECTION 7: ALLEGATIONS REGARDING PERSON(S) WORKING IN OR ON BEHALF OF SCHOOL (INCLUDING VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPLY TEACHERS)

7.1 Allegation against a member of staff or someone working at the school

Where an allegation is made against any person working in or on behalf of the school that they have:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they would pose a risk of harm to children;
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. This is to take account of situations where a person's behaviour outside school may suggest 'transferable risk'. For example, where a member of staff or volunteer is involved in an incident outside of school which did not involve children but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children'.

We will apply the same principles as in the rest of this document and we will always follow the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures that can be accessed at Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership. Detailed records will be made to include decisions, actions taken, and reasons for these. All records will be retained securely in the safe room in school.

Whilst we acknowledge such allegations, (as all others), may be false, malicious or misplaced, we also acknowledge they may be founded. It is, therefore, essential that all allegations are investigated properly and in line with agreed procedures.

Initial action to be taken:

- the person who has received an allegation or witnessed an event will immediately inform the Headteacher and make a record;
- in the event that an allegation is made against the Headteacher the matter will be reported to the Chair of Governors who will proceed as the 'Headteacher';
- the Headteacher will take steps, where necessary, to secure the immediate safety of children and any urgent medical needs;
- the member of staff will not be approached at this stage unless it is necessary to address the immediate safety of children;
- the Headteacher may need to clarify any information regarding the allegation. No person will be interviewed at this stage;
- the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors if the allegation is about the Headteacher) will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer via the LADO referral form

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



immediately, in order to determine if it is appropriate for the allegation to be dealt with by school or whether there needs to be a multi-agency response to the matter;

- the needs of the child/children will remain at the centre of all action taken. With this in mind, any referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer should also be accompanied by consultation with Lincolnshire Customer Service Centre when appropriate. This is to establish from the outset whether the concerns identified meet the threshold for a Section 47 child protection investigation and/or the police in respect of any criminal investigation;
- consideration will be given throughout to the support and information needs of students, parents, staff and the employee the subject of the allegation;
- the Headteacher will inform the Chair of Governors of any allegation against a member of school staff.

If consideration needs to be given to the individual's employment and immediate management of risk, advice will be sought from either Lincolnshire County Council HR or the HR advisor employed by the school/college.

ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE MADE AGAINST SUPPLY TEACHERS

Where there is an allegation about a supply teacher, whilst schools are not the employer of supply teachers, they should ensure allegations are dealt with properly. In no circumstances should a school decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with the local authority designated officer (LADO) to determine a suitable outcome. The school will usually take the lead in any investigation because agencies do not have direct access to children or other school staff, so they will not be able to collect the facts when an allegation is made nor do they have all the relevant information required by the LADO as part of the referral process.

Agencies should be fully involved and co-operate in any enquiries from the LADO, police and/or children's social services. They should be advised to contact their trade union representative, if they have one, or a colleague for support. The allegations management meeting which is often arranged by the LADO should address issues such as information sharing, to ensure that any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account by the school during the investigation.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



7.2 Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff (see Appendix 2).

7.3 Record-keeping

We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records will include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child.

Any non-confidential records will be readily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the school.

Safeguarding records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse will be retained for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry.

If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded promptly and securely, and separately from the main pupil file. In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

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Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



APPENDIX 1: SAFER RECRUITMENT AND DBS CHECKS – POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Recruitment and selection process

The recruitment steps outlined below are based on Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Advertising

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- our school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- that safeguarding checks will be undertaken;
- the safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with children;
- whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account.

Application forms

Our application forms will:

- include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity);
- include a copy of, or link to, our Child Protection Policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders.

Shortlisting

Our shortlisting process will involve at least 2 people and will:

- consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them;
- explore all potential concerns.

Once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask shortlisted candidates to:

- Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we will ask for includes:
 - if they have a criminal history;
 - whether they are included on the barred list;

Approved by: Full Governing Body

Date Approved: October 2024

Last reviewed: September 2024

Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- whether they are prohibited from teaching;
- information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales;
- any relevant overseas information.
- Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true

Seeking references and checking employment history

We will obtain references before interview. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview.

When seeking references we will:

- not accept open references;
- liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees;
- ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations;
- obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed;
- secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children;
- compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate;
- resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed.

Interview and selection

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this;
- explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children;
- record all information considered and decisions made.

Pre-appointment vetting checks

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



New staff

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, we will:

- verify their identity;
- obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service of Online Direct. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken;
- obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available;
- verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities;
- verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards;
- verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate;
- ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher;
- carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. Where available, these will include:
 - For all staff, including teaching positions: [criminal records checks for overseas applicants](#).
 - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked.
 - Check that candidates taking up a management position* are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state.

* Management positions are most likely to include, but are not limited to, headteachers, principals and deputy/assistant headteachers.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not.

Existing staff

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Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:

- there are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or
- an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- there has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more.

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- we believe the individual has engaged in [relevant conduct](#); or
- we believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#); or
- we believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- the individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left.

Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:

- an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity;
- an enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children.

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

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Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

Volunteers

We will:

- never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity;
- obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity;
- carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment.

Governors and Members

All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.

They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

All governors will also have a section 128 check (as a section 128 direction disqualifies an individual from being a maintained school governor).

The chair of the board will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.

All proprietors, trustees, local governors and members will also have the following checks:

- a section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under [section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008](#));
- identity;
- right to work in the UK;
- other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

Staff working in alternative provision settings

Where we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we obtain written confirmation from the provider that they have carried out the appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working there that we would otherwise perform.

Adults who supervise pupils on work experience

Approved by: Full Governing Body
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Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

Pupils staying with host families

Where the school makes arrangements for pupils to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit), we will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information on those people.

Where the school is organising such hosting arrangements overseas and host families cannot be checked in the same way, we will work with our partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.

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APPENDIX 2: ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE MADE AGAINST STAFF

Section 1: Allegations that may meet the harms threshold

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place both inside and outside of school

We will deal with any allegation of abuse quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be nominated by the chair of governors where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation. The case manager will be identified at the earliest opportunity.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved

Suspension of the accused will not be the default position, and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that there might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children
- Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents/carers have been consulted

If in doubt, the case manager will seek views from the school's personnel adviser and the designated officer at the local authority, as well as the police and children's social care where they have been involved.

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation

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Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive, or to cause harm to the subject of the allegation
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)
- **Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the case manager will take the following steps:

- Conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below
- Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate
- Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to children's social care
- **If immediate suspension is considered necessary**, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
Last reviewed: September 2024
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- **If it is decided that no further action is to be taken** in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation
- **If it is decided that further action is needed**, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate.
- Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice
- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child – no information will be shared regarding the staff member)
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the school will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

Additional considerations for supply teachers and all contracted staff

If there are concerns or an allegation is made against someone not directly employed by the school, such as a supply teacher or contracted staff member provided by an agency, we will take the actions below in addition to our standard procedures.

- We will not decide to stop using an individual due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our LADO to determine a suitable outcome
- The governing board will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual, or redeploy them to another part of the school, while the school carries out the investigation

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
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Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



- We will involve the agency fully, but the school will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the LADO as required
- We will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary)

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

Timescales

We will deal with all allegations as quickly and effectively as possible and will endeavour to comply with the following timescales, where reasonably practicable:

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious should be resolved within 1 week
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action should be taken within 3 working days
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, this should be held within 15 working days

However, these are objectives only and where they are not met, we will endeavour to take the required action as soon as possible thereafter.

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

The case manager will discuss with the local authority's designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the school will make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the school will consider whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
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Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors – October 2025



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports

If a report is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations

If an allegation is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the LADO and case manager will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

Confidentiality and information sharing

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

The case manager will take advice from the LADO, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

Record-keeping

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case.

Approved by: Full Governing Body
Date Approved: October 2024
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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



The records of any allegation that, following an investigation, is found to be malicious or false will be deleted from the individual's personnel file (unless the individual consents for the records to be retained on the file).

For all other allegations (which are not found to be malicious or false), the following information will be kept on the file of the individual concerned:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference

In these cases, the school will provide a copy to the individual, in agreement with children's social care or the police as appropriate.

Where records contain information about allegations of sexual abuse, we will preserve these for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry. We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

References

When providing employer references, we will:

- Not refer to any allegation that has been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any repeated allegations which have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious
- Include substantiated allegations, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, the case manager will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
- The duration of the suspension
- Whether or not the suspension was justified
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual

Approved by: Full Governing Body
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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



For all other cases, the case manager will consider the facts and determine whether any improvements can be made.

Non-recent allegations

Abuse can be reported, no matter how long ago it happened.

We will report any non-recent allegations made by a child to the LADO in line with our local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations.

Where an adult makes an allegation to the school that they were abused as a child, we will advise the individual to report the allegation to the police.

Section 2: concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

This section applies to all concerns (including allegations) about members of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, which do not meet the harm threshold set out in section 1 above.

Concerns may arise through, for example:

- Suspicion
- Complaint
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school
- Pre-employment vetting checks

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner to safeguard the welfare of children.

Definition of low-level concerns

The term 'low-level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – 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,
and
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority

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

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language

Approved by: Full Governing Body
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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



Sharing low-level concerns

We recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately.

We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns
- Empowering staff to self-refer
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system

Responding to low-level concerns

If the concern is raised via a third party, the headteacher will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

- Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously
- To the individual involved and any witnesses

The headteacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the school's Code of Conduct.

Record keeping

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any action taken and the rationale for decisions and action taken.

Records will be:

- Kept confidential, held securely and comply with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR
- Reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold as described in section 1 of this appendix, we will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority
- Retained at least until the individual leaves employment at the school

Where a low-level concern relates to a supply teacher or contractor, we will notify the individual's employer, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

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Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

A Selective Academy



References

We will not include low-level concerns in references unless:

- The concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the designated officer at the local authority and is found to be substantiated; and/or
- The concern (or group of concerns) relates to issues which would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance.

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