Weald of Kent Grammar School

Safeguarding Policy – September 2023

This policy is updated annually.

Safeguarding Trustee:
Liz Kinnersley

Designated Safeguarding Lead
Ken MacSporran, Deputy Headteacher

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads
Karen Reed, Family Liaison Manager (Tonbridge)
David Hall, Family Liaison Manager (Sevenoaks)

Contact:
email: AASafeguarding@wealdgs.org
Phone: 01732 373500 – ask for a safeguarding lead

Kent Children's Services
Front door: 03000 411111
Out of Hours Number: 03000 419191

Kent Police
101 or 999 if there is an immediate risk of harm

LADO Service
Telephone: 03000 410888
Email: kentchildrenslado@kent.gov.uk

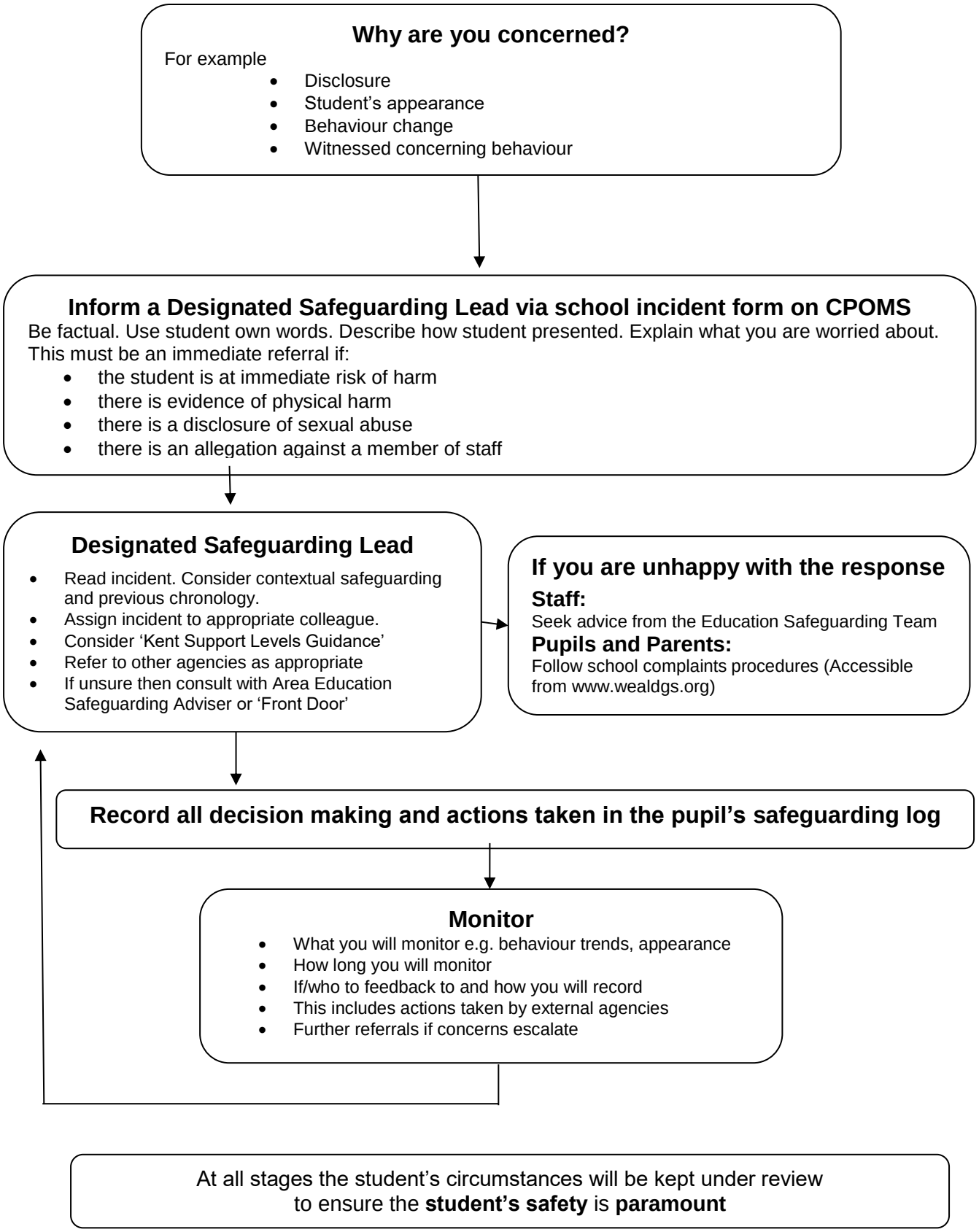
NSPCC 'Report Abuse in Education' Helpline
0800 136 663 or
help@nspcc.org.uk

NSPCC Helpline 0800 028 0285
https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) KCSIE 2023

Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership https://www.kscmp.org.uk/

Actions where there are concerns about a student in Weald



1. Introduction and Ethos

1. Weald of Kent Grammar School (Weald) is a community and its members – staff, trustees, volunteers, students and their families - have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure. The school has a moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students in our care.
2. Weald has an ethos and environment within school that will help students to feel safe, secure and respected; encourage them to talk openly; and enable them to feel confident that they will be listened to. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that students receive effective support, protection and justice.
3. Weald is a large organisation of almost two thousand students across two campuses. Each campus sits within a different district for children's services and the local authority services. One campus is shared with two other schools. The student body are predominantly teenage girls. Students come from a wide range of communities and localities, and from different counties and London boroughs. This forms a complex safeguarding context.
4. This is a core policy that forms part of the induction for all staff. It is a requirement that all staff have access to this policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education: Part 1.
5. This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures.
6. Our school core safeguarding principles are:
    a) It is a whole school responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of students.
    b) All students (defined as those up to the age of 18) regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.
    c) All students have a right to be heard and to have their wishes and feelings taken into account.
    d) All staff understand safe professional practice and adhere to our code of conduct and other associated policies.
    e) All staff have a responsibility to recognise vulnerability in students and act on any concern in accordance with this guidance.
7. There are four main elements to our safeguarding policy:
    a) Prevention (e.g. positive, supportive, safe school culture, curriculum and pastoral opportunities for students, safer recruitment procedures);
    b) Protection (by following the agreed procedures, ensuring all staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to safeguarding concerns);
    c) Support (for all pupils, parents and staff, and where appropriate specific intervention for those who may be at risk of harm);
    d) Working with parents and other agencies (to ensure appropriate communications and actions are undertaken).
8. This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children's Acts 1989 and 2004 and related guidance. This includes:
    a) DfE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) KCSIE 2023
    b) Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (WTSC)
    c) Ofsted: Education Inspection Framework 2023
    d) Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Procedures KSCMP
    e) The Education Act 2002
9. Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires school governing bodies, local education authorities and further education institutions to make arrangements **to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students** who are pupils at a school, or who are students under 18 years of age. Such arrangements will have to have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State. This policy must follow the latest publication of *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.
10. According to KCSIE, staff must have an 'it can happen here' ethos and be prepared to respond to a full range of safeguarding issues. We prefer to describe this as 'it *does* happen here', in order to retain vigilance and guard from complacency.

2. Definition of safeguarding

1. "Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:
    a) protecting students from maltreatment;
    b) preventing impairment of students' health or development;
    c) ensuring that students grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
    d) taking action to enable all students to have the best outcomes."
    Keeping Children Safe in Education.
2. "Safeguarding is not just about protecting students from deliberate harm. It includes a wide range of issues relating to pupil's welfare, health and safety."
    Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills, Ofsted, October 2018, p6
3. The school acknowledges that this policy will incorporate a range of safeguarding issues, many of which are explained in greater detail in Annex B of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.
4. Every member of staff at Weald recognises that students experiencing specific safeguarding issues are no different to safeguarding against any other vulnerability or concern and will be approached and responded to in the same way as protecting students from any other risks.
5. Weald staff must consider the context of safeguarding of their students. We are aware that safeguarding is fundamental to the welfare of all students in our care. Safeguarding sits within a wider context, and as such, this policy should be read in conjunction with the policies as listed below.
    a) Positive Behaviour Policy
    b) SEN and Inclusion Policy
    c) Positive Handling Policy
    d) Online Safety Policy
    e) Anti-Bullying Policy
    f) GDPR Policy
    g) Attendance Policy
    h) Safer Recruitment
    i) Supporting Students with Medical Needs Policy

3. Key responsibilities

All Staff

Staff's responsibilities are set out clearly on p6-8 of KCSIE (2023) KCSIE 2023**.**

1. **"Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play**. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child." *Keeping children safe in education.*
2. All staff must understand the school's safeguarding policy and procedures.
3. All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
4. All staff must be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect so that they can identify cases of children who may need help or protection.
5. All staff must be able to identify and act upon indicators that children are, or at risk of developing mental health issues.
6. All staff must understand the early help process and their role in it. Moreover, all staff should be aware of the local process of making referrals to children's social care and statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.
7. All staff will undertake annual safeguarding training, and other updates to knowledge as appropriate.

8. All staff at Weald know what to do if a student tells them they are being abused or neglected. Staff know to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality, to reassure the student they are being taken seriously, whilst at the same time liaising with relevant professionals such as the DSL and other agencies as appropriate.
9. Staff know they must never promise a student that they will not tell anyone about a concern or allegation as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the student.
10. All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. As such staff should maintain professional curiosity and contact the DSL if they have concerns about a child.

Board of Trustees

1. The Board of Trustees have read and will follow KCSIE. Trustees will complete annual safeguarding training.
2. The school has a nominated trustee for safeguarding named on the front of this document. The nominated trustee will take the lead role in ensuring that the school has an effective policy which interlinks with other related policies; that locally agreed procedures are in place and being followed; and that the policy and structures supporting safeguarding students are reviewed at least annually.
3. Monitoring visits to the school are recorded in minutes of full trust board meetings. Safeguarding is a standing item at full trust board meetings.
4. The Board must ensure that there is a named Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who is a member of the senior leadership team who has undertaken advanced training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training.
5. The Board of Trustees, Headteacher and Senior Leaders will ensure that the DSL is properly supported in this role at a time and resource level.
6. The school has an up-to-date child protection policy which is consistent with KCSIE and local safeguarding requirements, reviewed annually and made available to parents.
7. Procedures are in place for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff including allegations made against the Headteacher. The Chair of the Board must understand their role in managing such allegations, including liaison with the LADO.
8. Safer recruitment procedures, which include the requirement for appropriate checks in line with national guidance are in place.
9. There is an up-to-date and appropriate training strategy which ensures all staff, including the managers, teaching and non-teaching staff, receive safeguarding training.
10. That all temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for safeguarding.
11. That appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems for school systems and internet enabled devices are in place whilst being mindful to ensure that over blocking" does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what students can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding.
12. That the Board nominates a member (normally the chair) to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the Headteacher.
13. That students are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

The Headteacher

1. That the safeguarding policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff.
2. That sufficient time and resources are allocated to enable the DSL (and any appropriately trained deputies) to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and the attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings.

3. That all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the school's whistle blowing procedures.
4. That student's safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

1. The school has appointed a senior leader as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL has the overall responsibility for the day-to-day oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems in school.
2. The DSL will undergo appropriate and specific training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role. This training will be approved by and meet the standards as required by the Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership. The DSL's training will be updated formally every two years but their knowledge and skills will be updated through a variety of methods (online training, local authority bulletins, area safeguarding meetings) at regular intervals, at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.
3. The school has appointed additional staff to deputise for the DSL. Deputy DSLs have attended appropriate training which enables them to fulfil this role. Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead may be delegated to the deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the designated safeguarding lead and this responsibility will not be delegated.
4. It is the role of the DSL to:
    - Act as the central contact point for all staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
    - Maintain a confidential recording system for safeguarding and child protection concerns.
    - Coordinate safeguarding action for individual students.
    - Liaise with other agencies and professionals in line with *Working together to safeguard students*.
    - Ensure that locally established procedures are followed and making referrals to other agencies, including Children's Services (CS) as necessary.
    - Represent, or ensure the school is appropriately represented at inter-agency safeguarding meetings (including Child Protection conferences).
    - Manage and monitor the school's part in Child in Need / Child Protection plans.
    - Be available during term time (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
    - Ensure all staff access appropriate safeguarding training and relevant updates in line with the recommendations within KCSIE.
5. The Designated Safeguarding Lead / Headteacher will ensure regular reporting on safeguarding activity and systems in school to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees will not receive details of individual pupil situations or identifying features of families as part of their oversight responsibility.
6. Further details about the role of the DSL can be found in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' Part Two and Annex B.

Students and young people

1. Students and young people have a responsibility to:
    - Feel safe, be listened to, and have their wishes and feelings taken into account.
    - Confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.
    - Contribute to the development of schools safeguarding policies.
    - Receive help from a trusted adult.
    - Learn how to keep themselves safe, including online.

Parents and Carers

1. Parents/carers have a responsibility to:
    - read the relevant school/policies and procedures, encouraging their students to adhere to them, and adhering to them themselves where appropriate.

- discuss safeguarding issues with their students, support the school in their safeguarding approaches, and reinforce appropriate safe behaviours at home.
- identify changes in behaviour which could indicate that their student is at risk of harm, both in general and online.
- seek help and support from the school, or other appropriate agencies, if they or their student encounters any safeguarding concern.

2. Parents can obtain a copy of the school Safeguarding Policy and other related policies on request and can view them via the school website, under 'About Us' / 'Policies'. (www.wealdgs.org).

Local support

All staff at Weald are made aware of local support available. Contact details are in the Staff SharePoint Safeguarding folder and on the Safeguarding staffroom noticeboards for:

- Area Safeguarding Adviser (Education Safeguarding Team)
- LADO
- Children's Specialist Services Central Duty Team (the 'front door')
- Kent Police
- NSPCC

4. Recognition and categories of harm and abuse

1. All staff at school should be aware of the definitions and indicators of abuse and neglect as identified by Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and Keeping Children safe in Education. The Weald recognise that when assessing whether a child may be suffering actual or potential harm there are four categories of abuse:
   - Physical abuse
   - Sexual abuse
   - Emotional abuse
   - Neglect

See KCSIE Part One pages 10-11 for further detail: KCSIE 2023.

2. Weald recognises that concerns may arise in many different contexts and can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness. The indicators of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Children develop and mature at different rates, so what appears to be worrying behaviour for a younger child might be normal for an older child. It is important to recognise that indicators of abuse and neglect do not automatically mean a child is being abused however all concerns should be taken seriously and will be explored by the DSL on a case-by-case basis.
3. Weald recognises abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot always be covered by one definition or one label alone. In many cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, therefore staff will always be vigilant and always raise concerns with a DSL.
4. Parental behaviours can indicate child abuse or neglect, so staff will be alert to parent-child interactions or concerning parental behaviours; this could include parents who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or if there is a sudden change in their mental health.
5. Children may report abuse happening to themselves, their peers or their family members. All reports made by children to staff will be taken seriously and will be responded to in line with this policy.
6. Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors and risks outside the School. Children can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families; extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, sexual abuse, serious youth violence and county lines.

7. Staff must consider contextual safeguarding – the wider influences, risks and protective factors in a child's life.
8. Technology can be a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face and in many cases, abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse their peers online.
9. By understanding the indicators or abuse and neglect, we can respond to problems as early as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family.

5. Specific Safeguarding Issues

Weald is aware of a range of specific safeguarding issues and situations that can put children at greater risk of harm. In addition to Part One, DSLs, school leaders and staff who work directly with children will read annex B of KCSIE which contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues.

1. Child-on-child abuse

- All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online.
- All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).
- It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children, that are abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.
- Staff must record any suspected incident of child-on-child abuse using the school's CPOMS reporting system.
- Examples of such abuse are set out in KCSIE pages 12-13.
- Weald want children to feel able to confidently report abuse and know their concerns will be treated seriously. All allegations of child-on-child abuse will be reported to the DSL and will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with in line with associated school policies, including safeguarding, anti-bullying and behaviour. Students who experience abuse will be offered appropriate support, regardless of where the abuse takes place.
- Alleged victims, perpetrators and any other child affected by peer on peer abuse will be supported by:
  - Making it clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable and will not be tolerated
  - Not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as 'banter' 'part of growing up'
  - Challenging behaviours potentially criminal in nature (bottom, breast and genitalia grabbing, flicking bras and lifting up skirts)
  - Awareness that by dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
  - Where necessary and appropriate inform the police and or Children's Social Care.

2. Child on Child Sexual Violence or Harassment

- When responding to concerns relating to child on child sexual violence or harassment, Weald will follow the guidance outlined in **Part Five** of KCSIE and the DfE 'Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges' guidance.

- Weald recognises sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children and can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally). Sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable.
- All victims of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment or be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- When there has been a report of sexual violence or harassment, the DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment which will be considered on a case-by-case basis which explores how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator (and any other children involved/impacted).
- The risk and needs assessment will be recorded and kept under review and will consider the victim (especially their protection and support), the alleged perpetrator, and all other children, adult students (if appropriate) and staff and any actions that are required to protect them. Immediate consideration will be given as to
- Reports will initially be managed internally by the school and where necessary will be referred to Integrated Children's Services and/or the Police.
- The decision making and required action taken will vary on a case by case basis, but will be informed by the wishes of the victim, the nature of the alleged incident (including whether a crime may have been committed), the ages and developmental stages of the children involved, any power imbalance, if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse, if there are any ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school staff, and, any other related issues or wider context.
- If at any stage the DSL is unsure how to proceed, advice will be sought from the Area Education Safeguarding Service.

3. Nude and/or Semi-Nude Image Sharing by Children

- Weald recognises that consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as youth produced/involved sexual imagery or "sexting") can be a safeguarding issue; all concerns will be reported to and dealt with by the DSL (or deputy).
- When made aware of concerns involving consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos by children, staff are advised to:
    - Report any concerns to the DSL immediately.
    - Never view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery, or ask a child to share or download it – this may be illegal. If staff have already viewed the imagery by accident, this will be immediately reported to the DSL.
    - Not say or do anything to blame or shame any children involved.
    - Explain to child(ren) involved that they will report the issue to the DSL and reassure them that they will receive appropriate support and help.
    - Not ask the child or children involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery and not share information about the incident with other members of staff, the child(ren) involved or their, or other, parents and/or carers. This is the responsibility of the DSL.
- DSLs will respond to concerns as set out in the non-statutory UKCIS guidance: Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people' and the local KSCMP guidance. When made aware of a concern involving consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos:
    - the DSL will hold an initial review meeting to explore the context and ensure appropriate and proportionate safeguarding action is taken in the best interests of any child involved. This may mean speaking with relevant staff and the children involved as appropriate.
    - parents and carers will be informed at an early stage and be involved in the process to best support children, unless there is good reason to believe that involving them would put a child at risk of harm.

- All decisions and action taken will be recorded in line with our child protection procedures.
- a referral will be made to ICS and/or the police immediately if:
  - the incident involves an adult (over 18).
  - there is reason to believe that a child has been coerced, blackmailed, or groomed, or there are concerns about their capacity to consent, for example, age of the child or they have special educational needs.
  - the image/videos involve sexual acts and a child under the age of 13, depict sexual acts which are unusual for the child's developmental stage, or are violent.
  - a child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.
- The DSL may choose to involve other agencies at any time if further information/concerns are disclosed at a later date.
- If DSLs are unsure how to proceed, advice will be sought from the Education Safeguarding Service.

4. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

- Weald recognises that CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.
- If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of CSE or CCE, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

5. Serious Violence

- All staff are made aware of the indicators which may signal children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include unexplained gifts or new possessions, 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.
- Any concerns regarding serious violence will be reported and responded to in line with other child protection concerns.
  - The initial response to child victims is important and staff will take any allegations seriously and work in ways that support children and keep them safe.

6. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

There is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police. Teachers must personally report cases to the police where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.

7. Preventing radicalisation

- Weald is aware of our duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism", also known as the Prevent duty and the specific obligations placed upon us as an education provider regarding risk assessments, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

- Weald recognises that children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation and staff will be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.
- Staff will report any concerns to the DSL (or a deputy), who is aware of the local procedures to follow.

6. Supporting Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm

Whilst all children should be protected, some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm.

Safeguarding Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)

1. Weald acknowledges that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and barriers for recognising abuse and neglect.
2. Weald recognises that children with SEND may face additional communication barriers and experience difficulties in managing or reporting abuse or challenges. Children with SEND will be appropriately supported to communicate and ensure that their voice is heard and acted upon.
3. All members of staff will be encouraged to appropriately explore possible indicators of abuse such as behaviour, mood changes or injuries and not to assume that they are related to the child's disability. Staff will be mindful that children with SEND or certain medical conditions may be disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
4. Members of staff are encouraged to be aware that children with SEND can be disproportionally impacted by safeguarding concerns, such as exploitation, peer group isolation or bullying including prejudice-based bullying.
5. To address these additional challenges, our school will always consider implementing extra pastoral support and attention for children with SEND. The DSL will work closely with the SENCo's to plan support as required.

Children Requiring Mental Health Support

1. All staff will be made 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.
2. Staff are aware that children's experiences, for example where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.
3. Staff 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.
4. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.
5. The school has school nurses and family liaison managers available on both sites who are able to identify and triage any health needs as they arise.

Children Missing from Education

- Children missing from education, particularly persistently, can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse, and child sexual and criminal exploitation.
- Where the school/college have concerns that a child is missing from education, we will respond in line with our statutory duties and local policies. Local support is available via the PRU, Inclusion and Attendance Service (PIAS).
- A senior member of staff will register a CME concern with PIAS using the Kelsi portal.

Children who are absent from education

- All staff should be aware that children being absent from school or college, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities.
- This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage.
- Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future.
- See Attendance Policy: senior leaders and pastoral leaders must monitor severe absence and refer young people and their families to PIAS for support if there is a concern.

Children who need a Social Worker

1. The DSL will hold details of social workers working with children in the school so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes.
2. Where children have a social worker, this will inform school decisions about their safety and promoting their welfare, for example, responding to unauthorised absence and provision of pastoral and/or academic support.

Looked after children, previously looked after children and care leavers

1. Weald recognises the common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect and a previously looked after child also potentially remains vulnerable.
2. The DSL will ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after them.
3. Where a child is looked after, the DSL will hold details of the social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.
4. Where the school believe a child is being cared for as part of a private fostering arrangement (occurs when a child under 16 or 18 if the child is disabled is cared for and lives with an adult who is not a relative for 28 days or more) there is a duty to recognise these arrangements and inform the Local Authority via the front door.
5. Where a child is leaving care, the DSL will hold details of the local authority Personal Advisor appointed to guide and support them and will liaise with them as necessary regarding any issues of concern.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBT)

1. The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.
2. Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced, and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

7.Staff induction, awareness and training

1. All staff have been provided access to **Part One** of the "*Keeping Children Safe in Education"* which covers Safeguarding information.

2. A condensed version of safeguarding responsibilities is in Annex A of Keeping children safe in education and can be used with staff who do not directly work with children.
3. The DSL will ensure that all new staff are appropriately inducted as regards the school's internal safeguarding procedures and communication lines. A summary information sheet is available to be given to staff and volunteers to support this process.
4. All staff members will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (organised by the DSL) which will enable them to:
    - Recognise potential safeguarding and child protection concerns involving pupils and adults
        - (colleagues, other professionals and parents/carers)
    - Respond appropriately to safeguarding issues and take action in line with this policy
    - Record concerns in line with the school policies
    - Refer concerns to the DSL and be able to seek support external to the school if required.
5. Staff will receive appropriate training to ensure they are aware of a range of safeguarding issues (see definition of safeguarding) and are aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and child on child abuse such as bullying and sexting can put students in danger. The staff training will also include school responsibilities, the school child protection procedures, online safety, safe working practice, staff code of conduct and external reporting mechanisms.
6. All staff members will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (via e-Bulletins, staff meetings, briefings and training) as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard students effectively.
7. All staff will be made aware of the school's expectations regarding safe and professional practice via Safeguarding training and the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) which is provided and discussed as part of the induction process.
8. The DSL and Headteacher will provide an annual report to the Governing Body detailing safeguarding training undertaken by all staff and will maintain up to date registers of who has been trained.
9. Although the school has a nominated lead for the Board of Trustees, all members of the Board will access appropriate safeguarding training which covers their specific strategic responsibilities on a regular basis.

9. Safe working practice

1. All staff are required to work within clear guidelines as set out in Safeguarding training.
2. Students may make allegations against staff in situations where they feel vulnerable or where they perceive there to be a possible risk to their welfare. As such, all staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position regarding child protection or potential allegations. For example, it is always advisable for interviews or work with individual students or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.
3. Positive Handling should only be used when the student is endangering him/herself or others and such events should be recorded and signed by a witness. This should be recorded on the day that it happens. Staff should be aware of the school's Positive Behaviour Management and Use of Reasonable Force Policy*,* and any physical interventions must be in line with agreed policy and procedure in which appropriate training should be provided.
4. Full advice and guidance can be found in Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People in Education Settings (2015) which can be found in the staff drive Safeguarding folder.
5. Staff should be particularly aware of the professional risks associated with the use of social media and electronic communication (email, mobile phones, texting, social network sites etc.) and should familiarise themselves with advice and professional expectations. These are outlined in annual training, the school's Online Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Policy.

10. Staff supervision and support

1. Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for students' welfare or safety can seek support from the DSL.
2. All new staff including early career teachers and support staff will receive induction training and have a mentor or co-ordinator with whom they can discuss concerns including safeguarding concerns.
3. The induction process will include familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and procedures to be followed if staff have any concerns about a student's safety or welfare.
4. The school will provide appropriate supervision and support for staff to ensure that:
    - All staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students
    - Staff are able to creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role
    a. All staff have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time.
5. The DSL will also put staff in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish.

11. Safer recruitment

1. Weald is committed to ensuring that all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with our pupils/students and have their welfare and protection as the highest priority. The Board of Trustees and senior leadership are responsible for ensuring that the school follows safe recruitment processes outlined within guidance, including accurate maintenance of the Single Central Record (SCR); and an application, vetting and recruitment process which places safeguarding at its centre, regardless of employee or voluntary role.
2. This includes notification to candidates that the school may conduct an online search as part of due diligence checks.
3. The Board of Trustees will ensure that the Headteacher, other senior staff responsible for recruitment and one member of the Board will complete accredited Safer Recruitment Training in line with government requirements.
4. Weald will operate all recruitment in line with the requirements of **Part Three** of Keeping Children Safe in Education: KCSIE 2023.
5. In addition to Part Three, Weald will obtain an enhanced DBS certificate for all new staff.
6. In addition to Part Three, Weald will renew all enhanced DBS certificates within three years.

12. Safeguarding and child protection procedures

1. Weald adheres to the Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership (KSCMP) Safeguarding Children Procedures. The full KSCMP procedures and additional guidance relating to specific safeguarding issues can be found on the KSCMP website: https://www.kscmp.org.uk/
2. 'What to do if you are worried about a child being abused' (DfE 2015) p.12 identifies that there are four key steps for professionals to follow to help identify and respond appropriately to possible abuse and/or neglect.
3. The role of the school in situations where there are child protection concerns is NOT to investigate but to recognise and refer.
4. It is the responsibility of the DSL to receive and collate information regarding individual students, to make immediate and on-going assessments of potential risk and to decide actions necessary (with parents / carers in most cases). This includes the need to make referrals to partner agencies and services.
5. To help with this decision they may choose to consult with the Area Education Safeguarding Adviser from the Education Safeguarding Team and/or the Education Safeguarding Adviser (Online Protection) for online safety concerns.
6. Issues discussed during consultations may include the urgency and gravity of the concerns for a student or young person and the extent to which parents/carers are made aware of these.

7. If Level 3 or 4 on the Kent Support Levels is assessed to be appropriate then the DSL will support staff members involved with the family in liaising with other agencies. The DSL will keep all cases under constant review and will give consideration to making a re-referral to CS if the situation doesn't appear to be improving for the student.
8. New referrals to services will be made using the agreed Kent process. These will be made with reference to the Kent Support Levels (KSCMP). In situations where there are felt to be urgent or grave concerns, a telephone referral will be made prior to the form being completed and sent to the Central Duty Team. Concerns for students who are already known to services will be passed to the allocated worker / Team.
9. All staff are aware of the process for making referrals to CS for statutory assessments under the Children's Act 1989 that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.
10. In all but the most exceptional circumstances, parents /carers will be made aware of the concerns felt for a student or young person at the earliest possible stage. In the event of a referral to SCS being necessary, parents/carers will be informed and 'agreement to engage' to this will be sought unless there is a valid reason not to do so.
11. In the absence of the availability of the DSL to discuss an immediate and urgent concern, staff can seek advice from the Area Safeguarding Team. If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral to external services, then they will inform the DSL as soon as possible.
12. On occasion, staff may pass information about a student to the DSL, but remain anxious about action subsequently taken. Staff should feel able to clarify with the DSL further progress, so that they can reassure themselves the student is safe and their welfare is being considered.
13. If following this process, the staff member remains concerned that appropriate action is not being taken then the member of staff should seek further direct consultation from a member of the Area Safeguarding Team who will be able to discuss the concern and provide further advice on appropriate action to be taken.
14. If after a referral a student's situation does not appear to be improving then the DSL (or the person that made the referral) will press for reconsideration to ensure that the school's concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the student's situation improves. Professional disagreements (escalation) will be responded to in line with the KSCMP procedures and DSLs may request support via the Education Safeguarding Team.

13. Record keeping

1. Staff will record any safeguarding concern that they have about a student on the school's safeguarding incident form (with a body map where injuries have been observed) and send this without delay to the DSL via CPOMS.
2. Safeguarding incidents and actions are kept in CPOMS with access restricted to staff with Advanced Safeguarding training.
3. All safeguarding concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions will be recorded in writing. If staff are in any doubt about recording requirements staff then they will discuss their concerns with DSL.
4. Safeguarding records are kept for individual students and separate from all other records relating to the student in school. They are retained centrally and securely by the DSL and are shared with staff on a 'need to know' basis only.
5. The Headteacher will be kept informed of any significant issues by the DSL.
6. All safeguarding records will be forwarded in accordance with data protection legislation to a student's subsequent school/setting, and a receipt of delivery will be obtained.
7. Detailed guidance on Record Keeping is found in a separate document "Guidelines for Safeguarding Record Keeping in Schools".

14. Working with other agencies

1. Weald recognises and is committed to its responsibility to work with other professionals and agencies both to ensure students' needs are met and to protect them from harm. We will endeavour

to identify those students and families who may benefit from the intervention and support of external professionals and will seek to enable referrals, in discussion with parents/carers as appropriate.
2. Schools are not the investigating agency when there are child protection concerns and the school will therefore pass all relevant cases to the statutory agencies. We will however contribute to the investigation and assessment processes as required, and recognise that a crucial part of this may be in supporting the student while these take place.
3. Weald recognises the importance of multi-agency working and will ensure that staff are enabled to attend relevant safeguarding meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Strategy Meetings, and Child in Need meetings.
4. The Senior Leadership Team and DSL will work to establish strong and co-operative relationships with relevant professionals in other agencies.

15. Confidentiality and information sharing

1. Weald recognises that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. The Headteacher or DSL will only disclose information about a pupil to other staff on a need to know basis.
2. All staff must be aware that whilst they have duties to keep any information about students, families and colleagues which have access to as a result of their role confidential, they also have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard students. All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a student to keep secrets which might compromise the student's safety or wellbeing.
3. If the school is made aware of any safeguarding concerns which they feel need to be shared with the wider community (including other local schools) then advice can be sought from the Education Safeguarding team to ensure that the integrity of any subsequent investigations is maintained and that all members of the community are safeguarded.

16. Complaints

1. The school has a Complaints Procedure available to parents, pupils/students and staff who wish to report concerns. This can be found on the school website.
2. All reported concerns will be taken seriously and considered within the relevant and appropriate process. Anything that constitutes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with under the specific "Procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff" and the Whistle Blowing Policy which can be found on the school website.

17. Allegations against staff and volunteers

The process for managing allegations against staff is set out in detail in **Part Four** of KCSIE KCSIE 2023.

This has two sections which covers the two levels of allegation/concern:

- Allegations that **may** meet the harm threshold.
- Allegations/concerns that **do not** meet the harm threshold – referred to for the purposes of this guidance as 'low-level concerns'.

1. Weald recognises that it is possible for staff and volunteers to behave in a way that might cause harm to students and takes seriously any allegation received. Such allegations should be referred immediately to the Headteacher who will consider if the concern may meet the harm threshold. If so, once sufficient information has been collected, the Headteacher will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to agree further action to be taken in respect of the student and/or staff member. In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the headteacher then staff are advised that allegations should be reported directly to the LADO.
2. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practice and such concerns should be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher.

3. In instances of serious concern or where the complaint involves the Headteacher, complaints may be raised with the Chair of Trustees chair@wealdgs.org
4. All staff are made aware of the school's whistle-blowing procedure and that it is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a student at risk. The Whistleblowing Policy can be found on the school's website: School Policies
5. Staff can also access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk

18. Allegations against pupils

1. Weald recognises that students are capable of abusing their peers. See Section 5 of this policy.
2. Weald believes that abuse is abuse; it will never be tolerated, dismissed or minimised. The school will ensure that appropriate curriculum time is dedicated to enable students to develop an awareness and understanding of abusive behaviour and to ensure that students recognise warning signs and put in place support both within the school and externally wherever it is deemed necessary (such as Kent Police, ChildLine etc.).
3. Pupils who have experienced such abuse will be supported by:
    - Offering them an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice;
    - Being advised to keep a record of concerns as evidence and discussions regarding how to respond to concerns and build resilience, if appropriate;
    - Providing reassurance and continuous support;
    - Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.
4. Pupils who have abused other pupils will be helped by:
    - Discussing what happened, establishing the specific concern and the need for behaviour to change;
    - Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the student; o Providing appropriate education and support;
    - Sanctioning them in line with school behaviour/discipline policy. This may include official warnings, detentions, removal of privileges (including denial of online access), fixed-term and permanent exclusions;
    - Speaking with police or other local services (such as early help or children's specialist services) as appropriate.
5. Further information about the school's response to allegations of abuse against pupils can be located in our anti-bullying and online safety policies.
6. Please also refer to the updated **Part 5** 'child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment' in KCSIE .

19. Curriculum and staying safe

1. We recognise that schools play an essential role in helping students to understand and identify the parameters of what is appropriate student and adult behaviour; what is 'safe'; to recognise when they and others close to them are not safe; and how to seek advice and support when they are concerned.
2. Weald will use the curriculum to provide opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, social and emotional understanding, assertiveness and decision making so that students have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others, including how to keep themselves and others safe on line.
3. Pupils will be educated at a level appropriate to their age and ability about a range of safeguarding concerns through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), tutorials (if appropriate) and through relationship and sex education (RSE). This will include, but is not limited to, bullying (including cyber bullying), radicalisation, child sexual exploitation (CSE), stranger danger, road

safety, sexual abuse, neglect, gender-based violence/sexual assaults and youth produced sexual imagery.

4. Systems have been established to support the empowerment of students to talk to a range of staff. Students at Weald will be listened to and heard and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate.
5. Specific systems outside of expected day to day classroom interaction and support will include:
    - School and Year Councils
    - Worry boxes
    - peer-mentoring
    - Peer mediation
    - PSHE
    - Anti-Bullying Policy
    - Safer Internet Week resources.

20. Online safety

1. It is recognised by Weald that the use of technology presents particular challenges and risks to students and adults both inside and outside of school.
2. Weald ensures that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems, are in place when pupils and staff access school systems and internet provision. The school uses a filtering system that monitors 'live typing', saved documents and web searches. Alerts are sent to the DSLs for assessment on a daily basis. The school will be careful to ensure that these systems do not place unreasonable restrictions on internet access or limit what students can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding. The filtering system will be reviewed at least annually. This responsibility sits with the DSL.
3. Weald acknowledges that whilst filtering and monitoring is an important part of schools online safety responsibilities, it is only one part of our role. Students and adults may have access to systems external to the school control such as mobile phones and other internet enabled devices and technology. This is covered in more depth within the school online safety policy which can be found on the school website.
4. Weald has a comprehensive whole school curriculum response in place to enable all pupils to learn about and manage online risks effectively and will support parents and the wider school community (including all staff) to become aware and alert to the need to keep students safe online.
5. It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate material or behaviours online. Weald will adopt a whole school approach to online safety which will empower, protect, and educate our learners and staff in their use of technology, and establish mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.
6. Weald will ensure online safety is safety is reflected as required in all relevant policies. Online safety is considered as a running and interrelated theme when devising and implementing our policies and procedures and when planning our curriculum, staff training, the role and responsibilities of the DSL and parental engagement.
7. Weald identifies that the breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:
    - Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content. For example pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
    - Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users. For example peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
    - Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm. For example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying.

- Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

8. Weald recognises that technology, and the risks and harms related to it, evolve and change rapidly. The school will carry out an annual review of our approaches to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment which considers and reflects the risks our children face.

21. The use of school premises by other organisations

1. Where services or activities are provided separately by another body using the school premises, the Headteacher and Board of Trustees will seek written assurance that the organisation concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place with regard to safeguarding students and child protection and that relevant safeguarding checks have been made in respect of staff and volunteers.
2. If this is assurance is not achieved, then an application to use premises will be refused.
3. If the school receives an allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organization is using its school premises for an activity with children, then the school will follow its safeguarding policies, including a possible referral to the LADO or Children Services.

22. Security

1. All staff have a responsibility for maintaining awareness of buildings and grounds security and for reporting concerns that may come to light. We operate within a whole-school community ethos and welcome comments from pupils/students, parents and others about areas that may need improvement as well as what we are doing well.
2. Appropriate checks will be undertaken in respect of visitors and volunteers coming into school as outlined within guidance. Visitors will be expected to sign in and out via reception and to display a visitor's badge and lanyard whilst on school site. Any individual who is not known or identifiable should be challenged for clarification and reassurance.
3. The school will not accept the behaviour of any individual (parent or other) that threatens school security or leads others (student or adult) to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the school site.

Author:	Ken MacSporran	**Date:**	August 2023
Next Review Date:	August 2024	**Link Trustees:**	Liz Kinnersley
Ratified:	Ratified September 2023 FTB		

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