The Polygon School
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POLICY DOCUMENT
023a: Safeguarding

Publish to: All staff, school website
Status: Statutory
Approval: Governing Body

Review Responsibility	Valid From	Signed off	Valid to	Frequency Of review
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The Polygon School Safeguarding Policy
This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Child Protection Policy (023b) and Retention and Transfer of Records Policy (023c)

Part one of this policy outlines a while school approach to safeguarding.
Part two outlines support for pupils who are potentially at greater risk of harm.
Appendix A provides additional information about more specific types of abuse.

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Key documentation used to develop this guidance include:

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, and best practice for special schools supporting pupils with EHCPs and SEMH needs. Data Protection Act 2018/UK GDPR, Children Missing Education guidance, Prevent Duty guidance, Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment guidance (DfE), Crime and Policing Act 2026, Operation Encompass, DfE guidance on Filtering and Monitoring, DfE Generative AI Product Safety Expectations

It is aligned with the school's vision of being a trauma-informed, relationship-centred school that prioritises pupil well-being and safety. This policy should be read alongside the school's: Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Attendance Policy, SEND Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Whistleblowing Policy, Safer Recruitment Policy, Online Safety Policy, and Health & Safety Policy. We comply with the guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our three local safeguarding partners

Southampton City Council
Southampton City Integrated Care board (ICB)
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary
Scope: The policy relates to all staff, governors and volunteers and provides them with the framework they need in order to keep pupils safe and secure in our school and to inform parents, carers and guardians how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care. We will work in partnership with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies to protect pupils and promote early help where appropriate. We will adopt a trauma-informed approach that seeks to understand and respond to behaviour as a communication of need.

Local Context: We are a state special school in Southampton for boys aged from 11 to 16. Our school community includes pupils with SEMH needs, Autism, ADHD (Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), SLCN (Speech, language and communication difficulties and SpLD (Specific learning difficulties).
The index of Multiple Deprivation illustrates how Southampton continues to be a relatively deprived city. Southampton is now ranked 76th (where 1 is considered most deprived) out of 296 local authorities. Deprivation and inequalities between residents and neighbourhoods in Southampton are significant and continue to be a driver for crime and poor health outcomes in Southampton. 1.7% of Southampton's population live in the 10% most deprived areas nationally, this rises to 15.3% for under 16s, suggesting deprivation has a disproportionate impact on young people in the city.

The Data Observatory has also recorded Southampton's relative rank shows the highest level of deprivation for the Crime domain where it ranks the 5th worse across all Local Authority's. The data indicates a concerning trend in violent crime and sexual offences, which continue to rise.

According to the Southampton Strategic Assessment (Deprivation and Poverty) 2026, Deprivation and inequalities between residents and neighbourhoods in Southampton are significant and continue to be a driver for crime and poor health outcomes in Southampton. In addition, key outcomes for children and young people in Southampton continue to be poorer than the England average, with outcomes significantly poorer (and starting earlier in life) for those residents living in the most deprived areas of the city

Policy Statement. The School aims to:

Provide an environment in which pupils feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident to approach adults if they are in difficulties.
Raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard pupils and of their responsibility to be pro-active in raising or logging concerns.
Provide a systematic means of monitoring pupils known or thought to be at risk of harm. This includes how to manage online concerns that may begin outside of school, or patterns of absence that are present, change, prolonged or unusual for that pupil.
Develop a structured procedure within the school that will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
Ensure that where required, action is taken in line with the best interests of the pupil, having taken their wishes into account, in line with KCSIE.
Plan an effective Personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum that embraces safeguarding issues using the national and local context relevant to our pupils and families. This programme encompasses age and developmentally appropriate content to enable pupils to build skills and confidence to help them to manage the challenges of growing up in today's society. This includes knowing how to keep themselves and others safe within the community and online and where to get help from if they, or others, need it.
Ensure that all adults who have access to pupils have been checked as to their suitability and have clarity around expectations and conduct when working with pupils in school or off site.
We acknowledge that working in partnership with other agencies protects pupils and reduces risk and so we will engage in partnership working throughout the child protection process to safeguard pupils. Whilst the school will work openly with parents as far as possible, the school reserves the right to contact Southampton's Childrens' Resource Service (in line with current safeguarding procedures) or the Police, without notifying parents if this is in the pupil's best interests. It is important for our staff to be aware that pupils 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. For example, they may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or are being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers.
The staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with the pupils to facilitate communication. They need to exercise professional curiosity and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they have concerns about a pupil. In addition, we provide pupils with information of who they can talk to outside of school both within the community and with local or national organisations who can provide support or help.
The School's Safeguarding Team review this policy at least annually in line with DfE, SCC and any other relevant guidance and update mid-review where key changes are made to national safeguarding policy or procedure.

The Pupil's Wishes: Where there is a safeguarding concern, the senior leaders, school staff and governing body ensure the pupil's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.
We ensure the pupil's wishes are heard within the EHCP Annual Review process, during the PEP Meetings for our pupils who are Looked After and at our School Council Meetings. Our aim is for all our systems and processes to operate with the best interests of pupils at their heart, so that they feel confident to raise any concerns. The school will listen to the Pupil Voice (PV).

At the Polygon School the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Sarah Kinder, Deputy Headteacher.

The DSL is supported on a daily basis by the Safeguarding Team which includes:
Ben Penfold (Headteacher and DDSL)
Matt Harvey (Alternative Provision Lead and DDSL)
Gemma Griffiths (SENDCO and DDSL)
In the event Sarah Kinder (DSL) is unavailable the acting DSL would be Gemma Griffiths.

Part One – A Whole School Approach

Health and Safety: The school has a Health and Safety Policy (019), which is available on the school's website and which outlines the actions that we take in more detail.

Site Security: We aim to provide a secure site, but recognise that the site is only as secure as the people who use it. Therefore, all people on the site have to adhere to the rules which govern it. These are:
All gates are locked except at the start and end of the school day.
Doors are kept closed to prevent intrusion.
Pupils are only allowed home during the school day with adults/carers with parental responsibility or permission being given.
All pupils leaving or returning during the school day must sign out and in.
Arrangements for before and after school meetings and activities are clear and followed at all times.
Empty classrooms have windows closed.
Staff know the expectations for challenging unrecognised adults or young people on site.

Visitors: All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff and to leave their belongings, including their mobile phone(s), in a safe place during their visit. 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 entry sign system 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 local authority or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an appropriate level of DBS check has been carried out (if this is provided, we will not ask to see the DBS certificate) 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.

Safety in an emergency situation – planned drill or unforeseen occurrence:
Pupils understand what to do in an emergency such as fire or lock down (Code Yellow) situation. Emergency procedures, including use of staff emergency email and paper copies of registers, are practised regularly and known by all staff and a record of practice and learning is retained by the Senior Leadership Team.
Parents have received information clearly outlining lines of communication during emergency procedures and are expected to follow these to support the effectiveness of any multi-agency response required: when Code Yellow situation/drill is put into operation, parents receive a text (previously saved for use in an emergency) from the school office, requiring them to stay off the phone lines and social media. They are then updated further via text.

Use of School Premises for Non-school Activities: When another organisation is providing services or activities on the school site, the senior management team and governing body ensure that appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are in place. If there is an allegation relating to incidents occurring when an individual or organization used the school site, the school will follow its safeguarding policies and procedures including informing the LADO.

First Aid and Medication: The school has a separate Medication Policy (007) which can be found on the school's website. All staff have been trained in paediatric first aid.

Use of Reasonable Force: Staff have received training to understand their responsibilities around the use of reasonable force and this provides them with the knowledge and skills to physically intervene safely where this is required, using only the force required in the specific situation. Our Restrictive Intervention (009) outlines how we will use physical intervention and can be found on the school's website.

Taking, Using and Storing of Images: The school has a separate CCTV Policy (002) which can be found on the school website. School staff take screenshots of work or pupils completing work for assessment. As a school we seek consent from the parent of a pupil and from teachers and other adults before taking and publishing photographs or videos that contain images that are sufficiently detailed to identify the individual in school publications, printed media or on electronic publications. We will not seek consent for photos where you would not be able to identify the individual. We will seek consent for the period the pupil remains registered with us and, unless we have specific written permission, we will remove photographs after a child (or teacher) appearing in them leaves the school or if consent is withdrawn. Photographs will only be taken on school owned equipment and stored on the school network. No images of pupils will be taken or stored on privately owned equipment by staff members.
Staff are very clear that they should never take photos of marks or bruising seen or reported. These are recorded sensitively, liaising with the DSL, using a paper body map.

Transporting Pupils: The school gives consideration to the transport needs of our pupils including in an emergency situation and out of hours. Safeguarding the needs of our pupils when travelling in school owned/private hire minibus or coaches/ taxis with staff or parents as drivers in cars. On occasions parents and volunteers support with the task of transporting children to visits and off-site activities arranged by the school. (This is in addition to any informal arrangements made directly between parents for after school clubs etc.) In managing these arrangements, the school will put in place measures to ensure the safety and welfare of young people carried in parents' and volunteers' cars. This is based on guidance from the local authority and follows similar procedures for school staff using their cars on school business. Where parents'/volunteers/staff cars are used on school activities the school will notify parents/ volunteers/ staff of their responsibilities for the safety of pupils, to maintain suitable insurance cover and to ensure their vehicle is roadworthy.

Off site visits: Some activities, especially those happening away from the school and residential visits, can involve higher levels of risk. All offsite activities are required to have a completed risk assessment process through the EVOLVE system. If it is a new activity, a visit involving adventure activities, residential, overseas or an 'Open Country' visit, a specific assessment of significant risks must be carried out, including a review of any medical needs. The school has an Educational Visits Co-ordinator who helps colleagues in school to manage

risks and support with off site visits and provides training in the management of groups during off site visits. The EVC completes training or refresher training every three years. The EVC will also provide in house training within school for those who run regular off-site visits as well as staff new to off site visits. Consideration will always be given to alternative arrangements, for example, if a trip arrives back later than planned.
Our Educational Visits Co-ordinator is Peter Rooke

Alternative Provision: Sometimes we need to arrange temporary or ongoing alternative provision offsite for a pupil, whilst ensuring that we are still responsible for the safeguarding of the pupil. This might be bespoke provision around specific needs that may be SEND related that the school cannot itself provide. Our school follows the guidance provided by SCC and staff quality assure each provision regularly so we are confident the settings are working in partnership for the best interests of the pupil. We ensure we have written information from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working there. This includes written confirmation that the alternative provider will inform us of any arrangements that may put the pupil at risk (i.e. staff changes), so that clear communication is established between ourselves and them with our DSL and attendance leads. These arrangements include first day absence processes and are always agreed at the planning stage relevant. Students are often, although not always, transported and accompanied to their sessions by members of staff. A risk assessment covers any travel arrangements, setting out any changes to usual school day times. The local reduced timetable process is followed if this is applicable.

Online Safety: Please see the school's Online Safety Policy (029)
There is a whole school approach to online safety, including filtering and monitoring which is reflected in all relevant policies, the curriculum, teacher training, the role of the DSL and parental engagement.
With the current speed of online change, some parents and carers have only a limited understanding of online risks and issues. Parents may underestimate how often their children come across potentially harmful and inappropriate material on the internet and may be unsure about how to respond.
The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual of physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this; 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: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, including those generated by AI and online bullying.
- commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

The school will therefore seek to provide information and awareness to both pupils and their parents through:

acceptable use agreements for children, teachers, parents/carers and governors
curriculum activities involving raising awareness around staying safe online
information included in letters, newsletters, web site, VLE
building awareness around information that is held on relevant web sites and or publications

In developing any future home learning policy, we will follow the most recent DfE guidance regarding remote learning. We will also ensure that appropriate process is set out to protect pupils whilst on-line and provide clear protocols for staff to follow that also protect teachers from allegations. Home learning will not be used in lieu of a pupil coming into school unless there is a reason supported in national guidance to do so. This is because it reduces the ability of professionals to safeguard, may increase risks to a pupil and may make it more difficult for a pupil to engage with others in education, work or social settings longer term.

Filtering and Monitoring: In line with KCSiE, our DSL has overall responsibility for ensuring that we have the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place in order to safeguard systems, staff and pupils. A review of the filtering and monitoring systems on all internet -connected devices will take place at least once every academic year. This is carried out by the SLT and findings are reported back to the governing board.

The DSL receives daily reports detailing content that has been blocked in line with her safeguarding and Prevent duty and works with our online safety officer to review the effectiveness of our monitoring, filtering and all associated processes.

Online safety is considered whilst designing the curriculum and all staff are made aware of their own responsibilities linked to monitoring and filtering in ongoing CPD.
Our governing body also receive annual reports to the effectiveness of the monitoring and filtering systems in line with the Prevent duty. Any known breeches in filtering and monitoring are also reported to Governors in head teacher reports.

Our Online Safety and filtering and monitoring Officer is Christopher Morley, he will be using the DfE's 'Plan technology for your school service' with the school's IT provider to self-assess against the filtering and monitoring standards and receive individualised recommendations for the school. He works with the IT provider to ensure that the filtering and monitoring systems mean that only staff have access to generative AI in accordance with the DfE's Generative AI Product Safety Expectations. The school recognises that generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are increasingly used by children and young people for learning, communication and creativity, but that they may also present safeguarding risks. These risks include exposure to inaccurate or inappropriate content, the creation or sharing of harmful, abusive or indecent material, cyberbullying, exploitation, manipulation, privacy breaches and the misuse of personal information. The school will educate pupils about the safe, ethical and responsible use of AI technologies through the curriculum and online safety education. Staff will remain alert to safeguarding concerns arising from the use of AI and will respond in accordance with the school's child protection procedures, behaviour policy and online safety policy.

The school's cyber resilience is reviewed regularly to ensure that the security protection procedures in place to safeguard our systems, staff and learners can keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies. We look to the National Education Network for guidance with this.

Mobile Phones: The school is a mobile phone free environment, the pupils do not have access to their mobile phone throughout the day, including lessons, the time between lessons,

breaktime and lunchtime. Pupils are required to keep phones locked in tutor room cupboards or handed in to reception.

Safer Recruitment: The school follows the safer recruitment processes outlined in KCSIE. On all recruitment panels there is at least one member who has undertaken safer recruitment training. The process, which is overseen by Davina Yates, the Business Manager, verifies the identity, (using their birth certificate), criminal record (enhanced DBS), mental and physical capacity, right to work in the U.K., professional qualification and seeks confirmation of the applicant's experience and history through references. All shortlisted candidates are informed during interview that online searches may be done as part of pre recruitment checks. It must include barred list checks and prohibition checks for teachers. All non-UK applicants must provide a certificate of good conduct from their country of residence. Our school has robust recruitment and volunteer checking processes in place to ensure that no one who is unsuitable can work with the pupils. This enables the governing body to make decisions about prospective employees and volunteers using evidence gathered through the checking process.
Single Central Register: The Single Central Register is fully compliant with current guidance in line with Ofsted's guidance and is audited internally every six weeks.

Teacher Status Checks: This includes prohibition from teaching checks. These are carried out via the DfE secure access portal. This information must be recorded and dated on the school's Single Central Register. We check all qualified teachers that are appointed to positions in our school. Certificates of Good Conduct are sought from teachers from overseas.
We can also check if a person we propose to recruit as a governor is barred as a result of being subject to a Section 128 direction using GOV.UK, although there is no requirement for us to record this information on the Single Central Register.

Volunteers: The school will obtain an enhanced DBS check for any person volunteering in school in a role that involves teaching, training or supervising children (on more than 3 days in a 30-day period or overnight) in line with the Crime and Policing act 2026 and the changes made to regulated activity. This will also apply to volunteers working in multiple settings. Under no circumstances will a volunteer on whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised. 'Data protection legislation does not prevent proportionate information sharing where necessary to safeguard a child; decisions and reasons will be recorded where this happens.

Data Protection: Our governing body and senior leadership team are aware that among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) place duties on the school and its staff to process personal information fairly and lawfully, (keeping the information held safe and secure), whilst providing access to official information. We adhere to the DfE Data Protection guidance for schools, which has enabled school staff and governors to develop data policies and processes and follow good practices for preventing personal data breaches.

Staff Induction: The Safeguarding Team provides all new staff with training to enable them to fulfil their role and to understand the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies. All staff are provided with a link and are given access to read part 1 KCSIE in full. This induction may be covered within the annual training if this falls at the same time; otherwise, it will be carried out separately during the initial starting period.

Training: Our Designated Safeguarding Lead maintains an overview of new developments, and members of the Safeguarding Team attend Network Meetings arranged by Southampton City Council SSCP to update them on current issues within the Local Authority.
Staff training is carried out annually in line with the latest updates from KCSIE guidance. All records of this training are kept, identifying that staff have attended, read and understood the information shared.

Staff Responsibilities: Staff have a key role to play in identifying concerns early and provide help for children. Further information around record keeping, confidentiality and reporting can be found in our Child Protection Policy.

Part Two - Pupils Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm

All staff are encouraged to be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect (see Appendix 1 of the school's Child Protection Policy), understanding that pupils can be at risk of harm in school, in their home, out in the community and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of pupils who may be in need of help or protection.

Whilst all pupils should be protected, the school recognises that some groups of pupils are potentially at greater risk of harm than others:

Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND): can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. We recognise that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in this group of children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration
- these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children,
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs,
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges risks that they do not understand that what is happening to them is abuse,
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges risks that they do not understand that what is happening to them is abuse,
- the need for intimate care or that these children are isolated from others,
- that these children are more likely to be dependent on adults for care, and
- these children may have issues over cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.

Pupils who are gay, bi, trans or gender questioning (LGBTQIA+):
The fact that a young person may be LGBT+ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, pupils who are LGBT+ can be targeted by other pupils. In some cases, a pupil who is perceived by others to be LGBT+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as pupils who identify as LGBT+. Risks can be compounded where pupils who are LGBT+ lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that our 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. LGBT+ inclusion is directly covered in the statutory Relationships, Sex and Relationships and Health Education curriculum. At The Polygon we have fully implemented the statutory guidance and take a very careful approach when responding or accommodating requests related to social transition, we encourage all parents and pupils to discuss any queries or concerns relating to this aspect of education with a member of staff, and to make an appointment to discuss where needed.
However, the Cass review identified that caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there remain many unknowns about the impact of social transition and children may well have wider vulnerabilities, including having complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases additional diagnoses of autism and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. The report recommended that when families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning children, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. As such, when supporting a gender questioning pupil, school staff understand they should take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with the pupil's parents (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the pupil), including any clinical advice that is available.

Risks outside the home (ROTH): Pupils who have previously experienced trauma, or who may have concerns raised linked to a risk from outside the home (ROTH), rather than a person, should also be considered as additionally vulnerable and may need any concerns raised considered in their own individual context. This may require discussion between DSLs from different schools, advice sought from CRS/ other professionals depending on the context. Decision making as to the need to consult are recorded in addition to any outcomes.

Pupils absent, as well as missing, from education, particularly persistently, can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation- particularly County Lines. It is important the school's response to pupils missing or absent from education supports identifying such abuse and helps prevent the risk of them going missing or absent in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where pupils are already known to children's social care and need a social worker and when going missing from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community (Please see the school's Attendance Policy (013)). In line with the statutory guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance, the school works closely with Children's Services whenever school absence indicates safeguarding concerns. We also follow the Children Missing Education statutory guidance regarding removing a pupil from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points. We ensure that any removal from roll is lawful and that steps have been taken that will highlight any safeguarding concerns.
Senior lead for attendance is Matthew Harvey

Pupils with poor mental health: All staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. If staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they must speak immediately to the DSL, as outlined in our Child Protection Policy.

If you have a concern about mental health: 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.
Mental health problems can also, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns (for example, self-harm).
Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. However, staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be

experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. If a child is struggling with their mental health, self-harming, has an eating disorder or is experiencing suicidal ideation and making plans to end their life, there are likely to be potential warning signs which education staff are well placed to recognise, including:

- Significant changes in behaviour,
- Ongoing difficulty sleeping
- Withdrawing from social situations
- Not wanting to do things they usually like
- Physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves

We are able to access a range of advice from external agencies to help us identify pupils in need of extra mental health support.
A number of our pupils are impacted by the poor mental health of their parents and require additional support. Mental health concerns about a pupil should be reported to the DSL and welfare team. If the child needs help urgently, staff can get help from professional or emergency services.

Pupils who might be experiencing domestic abuse: Domestic abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Pupils can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of these can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn. Operation Encompass ensures that when the police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police informs the DSL in school before the pupils arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the pupils's circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to their needs

Pupils who are looked after or have previously been looked after: The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. It is vital that our staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe. In particular, they should ensure that appropriate staff have access to the information they need in relation to a pupil's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order.) It is important to have a good grasp of pupil's contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility and information about the pupil's care arrangements. The DSL has details of the pupil's social worker and the name of the Virtual School Head in the authority that looks after the child. The DSL liaises closely with the Designated Teacher, who has responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of looked after and previously looked after pupils, attending regular training to ensure she fully understands their needs. The designated teacher works with the Virtual School Head to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan. The designated teacher should also work with the Virtual School Head to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after pupils and those in kinship care arrangements. Pupils who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders remain vulnerable and it is very important that school staff work closely with outside agencies, taking prompt action to safeguard them when necessary.
Our Designated Teacher is Gemma Griffiths
The Virtual School Head Teacher in Southampton is Maria Anderson:
Maria.anderson@southampton.gov.uk

Pupils who are privately fostered: Private fostering is an arrangement where a child (under 16 or 18 if disabled) is cared for, for 28 days or more by another adult who is not closely related and is not a legal guardian with parental responsibility. It is not a private fostering arrangement if the carer is a close relative to the child such as grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt.
The law requires that the carers and parents must notify Children's Services of any private fostering arrangement. If the school becomes aware that a pupil is being privately fostered, we will inform the Children's Services department and inform both the parents and carers that we have done so.

Pupils who have, or have ever had, a social worker: School staff review pupil records upon transfer to check if a pupil has, or has ever had, a social worker, particularly noting the timeframe for recent or early childhood involvement. We are committed to monitoring these pupils' attendance, well-being, progress and attainment to ensure that they make the best progress during their time in our school and we will continue to work with multi-agency colleagues where they are engaged with the pupil and their wider family. Our DSL is able to seek advice from the Virtual School about this cohort of pupils, following the statutory extension of the Virtual School's responsibilities.
Pupils with family members in prison: Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The National Information Centre on the Children of Offenders provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children. If this occurs at The Polygon we will work together with the relevant agencies including NICCO to ensure that the pupil is fully supported and all communication and access to information is fully adhered to. If we become aware of a family member being in prison without having had contact with external agencies, the DSL will establish contact through taking advice from CRS professionals line advisors.

Pupils who are homeless: Being homeless or at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a pupil's welfare. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.
The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live.
In some cases, 16- and 17-year-olds may be living independently from their family home and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the DSL ensures appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

Pupils with medical conditions: As a school we will ensure that staff are trained to support and prioritise inclusion for any pupil with a medical condition or allergies. And recognize an incident relating to the management of a child's medical condition (including allergies) does not in itself warrant a referral to local safeguarding partners. However, a referral may be necessary if the incident itself highlights that a child may be at increased risk of neglect, abuse or exploitation due to their medical condition. An individual healthcare plan may be put in place to support the pupil and their medical needs. There will be occasions when pupils are

temporarily unable to attend our school on a full-time basis because of their medical needs. These pupils are likely to be:

- suffering from long-term illnesses
- have long-term post-operative or post-injury recovery periods
- have long-term mental health problems (emotionally vulnerable)

Allergy Awareness: The school lead for Allergy Awareness is Davina Yates. The school will follow statuary guidance as set out in Allergy safety in schools (July 2026) and will adhere to whole school Allergy policy

Pupils at risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE): CSE is a form of sexual abuse and can be a one-off occurrence or might happen over time. All children and young people, including 16- and 17-year-olds, can experience child sexual exploitation. CSE involves children being in situations, contexts or relationships where they (or a third person) receive 'something' as a result of them performing sexual activities. The something can include food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, or money. CSE can happen via technology without the child being aware; for example, being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears to be consensual.
CSE can happen to a child of any age, gender, ability or social status. Often the victim of CSE is not aware that they are being exploited and do not see themselves as a victim. As a school we educate all staff in the signs and indicators of sexual exploitation. We use the sexual exploitation risk assessment form (SERAF) and associated guidance to identify pupils who are at risk and the DSL will share this information as appropriate with Children's Social Care. The PSHE curriculum covers the aspect of consent and respect and highlights the possibility of child-on-child abuse.

Pupils at risk of child criminal exploitation (CCE) and county lines: The vulnerability of children involved in criminal exploitation is not always recognised by adults and professionals and the indicators of exploitation are different for boys and girls.
We recognise that CCE 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 and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism 98 should be considered.
Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. They can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.
Any person in our school who has concerns that may include criminal exploitation of a pupil should report their concern to the DSL without delay. The DSL will contact the Childrens' Resource Service for advice.

Pupils who might be missing, exploited and/or trafficked: Within the local area, the acronym MET is used to identify all children who are missing, believed to be at risk of or are being

sexually exploited or who are at risk of or are being trafficked. Given the close links between all of these issues, there has been a considered response to join all three issues so that cross over of risk is not missed.

Pupils who might be trafficked or experience modern slavery: Any child transported for exploitative reasons is considered to be a trafficking victim. There is significant evidence that children (both of UK and other citizenship) are being trafficked internally within the UK and this is regarded as a more common form of trafficking in the UK.

Unaccompanied migrant children and child victims of modern slavery, including trafficking, can be some of the most vulnerable children in the country as they are alone, in an unfamiliar country and may be surrounded by people unable to speak their first language. Modern slavery includes human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation takes a number of forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, forced criminality, begging, organ harvesting, and domestic servitude.

If staff are concerned that a pupil is being trafficked or modern slavery is suspected, they will report these concerns to the DSL who will take advice from the CRS and the police. This might lead to a referral to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM),which is a framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support.

Fabricated or induced illness (perplexing presentations) by parents or pupils: There are three main ways that a carer could fabricate or induce illness in a child. These are not mutually exclusive and include:

- fabrication of signs and symptoms. This may include fabrication of past medical history;
- fabrication of signs and symptoms and falsification of hospital charts and records, and specimens of bodily fluids. This may also include falsification of letters and documents;
- induction of illness by a variety of means.

If we are concerned that a pupil may be suffering from fabricated or induced illness our DSL will contact the Childrens' Resource Service.

Parenting: Some pupils in The Polygon School have medical conditions and/or needs (e.g. Tourette's, some autistic linked conditions, ADHD) that have a direct impact on behaviour and can cause challenges for parents.
Parenting becomes a safeguarding concern when the repeated lack of supervision, boundaries, basic care or medical treatment places the child(ren) in situations of risk or harm. In situations where parents struggle with tasks such as setting boundaries and providing appropriate supervision, timely interventions can make drastic changes to the wellbeing and life experiences of the child(ren) without the requirement for a social work assessment or plan being in place.
As a school we will support parents in understanding the parenting role and provide them with strategies to make a difference by:

- providing details of community-based parenting courses
- linking to web-based parenting resources
- discussing the issue with the parent and supporting them in making their own plans of how to respond differently (using evidence-based parenting programmes)

Pupils at risk of substance misuse: Substance misuse applies to the misuse of alcohol as well as 'problem drug use', defined by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs as drug use which has: 'serious negative consequences of a physical, psychological, social and interpersonal, financial or legal nature for users and those around them.

Pupils experiencing child-on-child abuse: School staff are aware that children can abuse other children and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. There is a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse at the Polygon and all staff understand this and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a pupil may be at risk.
All staff understand that even if there are no reports in the school, 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 the DSL.
Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to: bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying) abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse') 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.)
Staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between pupils 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 misogyny/misandry, an unsafe environment for pupils and a culture that normalises abuse leading to pupils accepting it and not coming forward to report it.
The SCC child-on-child toolkit has helpful resources we will consider to support, including a risk assessment template to consider the impact of both parties at each decision stage.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) Sexual harassment and Sexual Violence: HSB can occur between two or more children of any age, it can occur also through a group of children towards a single child or towards another group of children. HSB exists on a continuum and may escalate into sexual harassment or sexual violence. We recognise it can occur face to face (both physically and verbally) and online.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence.

Staff must be alert to:

- 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 nude and semi-nude 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, and
- 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).

Staff are expected to:

- Not tolerate or dismiss sexual violence or sexual harassment as 'banter', 'part of growing up', or 'boys being boys'. We recognise that failure to do so can lead to a culture of misogyny, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse.
- challenge behaviour (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia and flicking bras and lifting up skirts.
- understand that all of the above can be driven by wider societal factors beyond the school and college, such as everyday sexist stereotypes and everyday sexist language.
- Recognise the escalatory nature of misogyny and the benefits of early identification to support their approach to minimising the risk of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence.
- Undertake all expected training and discuss with DSL if they are concerned about a pupil being exposed to misogynistic or misandrist content
- recognise that pupils with SEN are three times more likely to be abused and ensure they have awareness of pupil behaviours that may be inappropriate towards pupils with SEN.
- Recognising, acknowledging and understanding the scale of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence and that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may just be the case that it is just not being reported.
- Recognise that early intervention inappropriate behaviour such as mysogny can help to prevent escalation
- Recognise that Children who display HSB have often experience their own abuse and trauma and it is vital they are offered appropriate support.
- Understand that when assessing HSB, the ages and developmental stage of the children involved is critical.
- recognise that allegations of sexual violence or sexual harassment are likely to be complex and will require difficult professional decisions to be made. The DSL must be notified without delay and decisions made on a case-by-case basis. As with other disclosures the person disclosing must be able to disclose the information in a supportive environment with a clear record of factual information made as soon after the disclosure as possible. The same procedures should be followed as set out in the Child Protection Policy.

Creating a supportive environment in school and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse

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, making or sending sexual images
- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards pupils, and initiation or hazing-type violence.
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent

- Ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our school reporting systems, key staff members and reporting button on school website
- Recognise the intersection of misogyny/misandry and harmful sexual behaviour. We will actively identify, challenge and address how misogynistic/misandrist attitudes contribute to the normalisation of inappropriate behaviour and increases the risk of leading to child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence, within our school environment
- Be alert to the prevalence of harmful online material and extreme misogynistic/misandrist ideologies, including misogynistic influencers, and recognise the impact this content could have on shaping pupils' attitudes
- Recognise that for some forms of child on child abuse it is more likely for girls to be victims and boys' perpetrators but that all child on child abuse is unacceptable and taken seriously
- Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed
- Consider intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment
- 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 social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side
- That exposure to misogynistic/misandrist content online can indicate a safeguarding concern and requires early discussion with the DSL

Incidents of child-on-child abuse are reported through the school behaviour tracking system overseen by SLT. Incidents are discussed within staff briefings and SLT meetings. Pupils can report any incidents directs to key staff or anonymously through the school website.

Appropriate sanctions may be applied by school while other investigations are going on, (such as by the police). The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident doesn't (in itself) prevent our school from coming to its own conclusion about what happened and imposing sanctions accordingly. We will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis

Where information includes an online element staff including the DSL must be aware of the searching, screening and confiscation advice for schools and UKCCIS sexting advice for schools and college. Staff should never view or forward illegal images of a child. A risk assessment must be made following the disclosure by the DSL on a case-by-case basis which may need to be amended once other agencies become involved
The DSL will report to children's social care through the Childrens' Resource Service and this will be in conjunction with the police. Parents/carers will be informed unless there is a compelling reason not to, such as safety of the pupil. The police will advise what information can or should be shared.
There may need to be a temporary revision of education arrangements including class moves, arrangements for arriving and leaving school and at break times to ensure that both pupils are supported in continuing their education whilst any investigation is carried out.
Pupils who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will most 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 or college. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.
It is essential that all victims 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 they ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
The Lucy Faithfull Foundation has developed a Harmful Sexual Behaviour toolkit, which amongst other things, provides support, advice and information on how to prevent it, links to organisations and helplines, resources about HSB by children, internet safety, sexual development and preventing child sexual abuse. The Foundation, in collaboration with the Home Office, has developed 'Shore Space', an online resource which works to prevent harmful sexual behaviour. We now have a link to this confidential chat service, which supports young people who are concerned about their own or someone else's sexual thoughts and behaviour, on our website

Pupils experiencing teenage relationship abuse: Research has shown that teenagers don't necessarily understand what constitutes abusive behaviours such as controlling behaviours, which can escalate to physical abuse, e.g. checking someone's phone, telling them what to wear, who they can/can't see or speak to and that this abuse is prevalent within teen relationships. Further research indicates that teenagers don't understand the meaning of 'consent 'within their relationships. They often hold the common misconception that rape can only be committed by a stranger down a dark alley and don't understand that it can happen within their own relationships. This has led to these abusive behaviours feeling 'normal' and therefore left unchallenged as they have not been recognised as being abusive.
In response to this the school will provide education in PSHE, SEAL lessons and Breakfast Club to prevent boys from becoming victims and perpetrators of abusive relationships. They are encouraged to rethink their views of violence, abuse and controlling behaviours, and understand the meaning of 'consent' within their relationships.

Pupils experiencing mate crime: Mate crime is a rapidly increasing problem across the country and is defined as, 'the exploitation, abuse or theft from any vulnerable person by those they consider to be their friends. Those that commit such abuse or theft are often referred to as 'fake friends'.'
As a school we will aim to manage these incidents as carefully as possible so that the victim feels able to speak out and feels empowered by the resolution.
Pupils will receive guidance around this type of crime during SEAL and PSHE lessons and Breakfast Club.

Serious Violence: Serious violence is a continuing safeguarding concern. It may involve physical assault, carrying, threatening with, or using weapons, often in the context of peer conflict or bullying, and it can also be associated with criminal exploitation. Staff should report any concerns about a child carrying or using a weapon (or expressing the intent to do so) to the DSL or Deputy DSLs. The school is committed to protecting the pupils from violence and staff are trained in early identification and supporting any pupils at risk. Depending on the risk actions could include the implementation of safety and support plans and if relevant any actions to de-escalate peer conflict.

Pupils at risk of gang and youth violence: The vast majority of young people will not be affected by serious violence or gangs. However, where these problems do occur, even at low levels there will almost certainly be a significant impact.

As a school we have a duty and a responsibility to protect our pupils. It is also well established that success in learning is one of the most powerful indicators in the prevention of youth crime. Dealing with violence also helps attainment. While pupils generally view schools as safe places, even low levels of youth violence can have a disproportionate impact on any education.

As a school we:

- develop skills and knowledge to resolve conflict as part of the curriculum
- challenge aggressive behaviour in ways that prevent the recurrence of such behavior
- understand risks for specific groups, including those that are gender-based, and target interventions
- make referrals to appropriate external agencies
- work with local partners to prevent anti-social behaviour or crime

Pupils experiencing prejudice-based abuse: Prejudice based abuse or hate crime is any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a person's real or perceived:

- Disability
- Race
- Religion
- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation

Although this type of crime is collectively known as 'Hate Crime' the offender doesn't have to go as far as being motivated by 'hate', they only have to exhibit 'hostility'. This can be evidenced by:

- threatened or actual physical assault
- derogatory name calling, insults, for example racist jokes or homophobic language
- hate graffiti (e.g. on school furniture, walls or books)
- provocative behaviour e.g. wearing of badges or symbols belonging to known right wing, or extremist organisations
- distributing literature that may be offensive in relation to a protected characteristic e.g. sexuality, language, religion or cultural background
- verbal abuse
- inciting hatred or bullying against pupils who share a protected characteristic
- prejudiced or hostile comments in the course of discussions within lessons
- teasing in relation to any protected characteristic e.g. sexuality, language, religion or cultural background
- refusal to co-operate with others because of their protected characteristic, whether real or perceived
- expressions of prejudice calculated to offend or influence the behaviour of others
- attempts to recruit other pupils to organisations and groups that sanction violence, terrorism or hatred.

As a school we will respond by

- clearly identifying prejudice based incidents and hate crimes and monitor the frequency and nature of them within the school
- taking preventative action to reduce the likelihood of such incidents occurring

- recognising the wider implications of such incidents for the school and local community
- providing regular reports of these incidents to the Governing Body
- ensuring that staff are familiar with formal procedures for recording and dealing with prejudice based incidents and hate crimes
- dealing with perpetrators of prejudice based abuse effectively
- supporting victims of prejudice based incidents and hate crimes

Preventing radicalisation and extremism:
The school is aware of its statutory duty to prevent radicalisation and extremism under 'The Prevent Duty' which requires all staff to be aware of the signs that a child may be vulnerable to radicalisation. This could include political, environmental, animal rights or faith-based extremism.

Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance that aims to:

1) negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
2) undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights or
3) intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (1) or (2).

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

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 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.

All staff have undertaken Home Office Prevent awareness training. This has ensured that staff who make referrals have undertaken the Home Office Referrals training annually and additionally those who would attend a Chanel Panel if requested have undertaken the specific Chanel Panel (Home Office) training.
The person to contact in our school regarding Prevent is Sarah Kinder.

Pupils at risk of serious violence: There are a number of indicators, which may signal pupils 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 networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

The likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors such as:
being male

- having been frequently suspended or permanently excluded from school
- having experienced child maltreatment
- having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.
- Having used drugs or alcohol in early adolescence
- Having previously been a victim or previously perpetrated violence

Staff need to be aware that violence can often peak in the hours just before or just after school, when pupils are travelling to and from school and can concentrate in particular places. These times can be particularly risky for young people involved in serious violence.
Home Office funded Violence Reduction Units (VRU) operate in the 20 police force areas across England and Wales that have the highest volumes of serious violence, as measured by hospital admissions for injury with a sharp object. Hampshire VRU is the strategic co-ordinator for local violence prevention and is working to tackle serious violence across local areas and ensure a joined-up approach for young people.

Pupils at risk of cyberbullying: Central to the school's Behaviour Policy (014) is the principle that 'bullying is always unacceptable' and that 'all pupils have a right not to be bullied'.
The school also recognise that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into the school and so we will respond to any cyber-bullying we become aware of carried out by pupils when they are away from the site.
We consider each case individually as to any criminal act that may have been committed. The school will pass on information to the police if it feels that it is appropriate or are required to do so.

Making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes : All incidents involving the sharing of nude or semi-nude images, regardless of whether they are consensual or non-consensual, require a safeguarding response. If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual making or sharing of nude or semi-nudes, including where generated by AI, you must report it to the DSL immediately

Consensual image sharing, especially between older pupils might not be abusive – but pupils still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive. The school will use age appropriate educational material to raise awareness, to promote safety and deal with pressure. We try to encourage parents to approach school staff for advice.

Upskirting: At The Polygon we recognise that 'upskirting' is a criminal offence. Any incidents will be reported to the DSL and the Police and possibly to childrens' services. We recognise that incidents are likely to be upsetting, and that support and sensitivity are required when dealing with both victim and perpetrator. The DSL will determine how the school approaches any incident on a case by case basis, ensuring that everything is clearly recorded.

Pupils experiencing gaming: Online gaming is an activity that the majority of children and many adults get involved in. The school will raise awareness:
by talking to parents and carers about the games their children play and help them identify whether they are appropriate
by supporting parents in identifying the most effective way of safeguarding their children by using parental controls and child safety mode
by talking to parents about setting boundaries and time limits when games are played
by highlighting relevant resources

Online reputation: This is the opinion others get of a person when they encounter them online. It is formed by posts, photos that have been uploaded and comments made by others.

It is important that pupils and staff are aware that anything that is posted could influence their current or future professional reputation. Most organisations and work establishments now check digital footprint before considering applications for positions or places on courses and employees are encouraged to follow any code of conduct their employer or professional body provides regarding professional reputation. We aim to educate our pupils about this through our career's education provision as well as our PSHE curriculum.
Our staff are made aware of their own responsibilities around reputation and the possible consequences if this affects the school's reputation in line with the Teachers' standards and the Nolan Principles of Public Life.

Pupils experiencing grooming: Online grooming is the process by which one person with an inappropriate sexual interest in children will approach a child online, with the intention of developing a relationship with that child, to be able to meet them in person and intentionally cause harm.
The school will build awareness amongst pupils and parents about ensuring that the pupil:
only has friends online that they know in real life
is aware that if they communicate with somebody that they have met online, that relationship should stay online

Pupil experiencing the court system: Pupils who themselves are going through either the out of court system or the court process for offences they have committed will have YOS involvement whether that be a court officer supporting in court or a YOS officer writing a report for the court. As a school we will work together with relevant agencies as required.
Once a decision has been made in the joint decision-making panel (in the out of court system) or a pupil has pleaded or been found guilty in court, they will be allocated to the YOS. Our headteacher will be notified of any pupils who are open to YOS regardless of the type of order, so we can work together to support them.
Sometimes pupils are arrested or interviewed as part of a criminal investigation and they may have to attend court for cases where they are a defendant or to give evidence in a prosecution. Pupils are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age-appropriate guides to support children 5-11-year-olds and 12–17-year-olds. The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained
Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. If this situation arises for a pupil at we will work with the relevant agencies and families to ensure that he feels supported through the process and after through assessment on a case-by-case basis. This would include working with relevant agencies if a pupil were alleged to have committed a criminal offence.
The Service Manager for the YOS team in Southampton is Anna Harbridge: **anna.harbridge@southampton.gov.uk**

Pupils who are young carers: The school recognises that caring responsibilities can impact on a child's attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing, and early identification is essential to ensure young carers receive support at the right time and by the appropriate services including additional support from external partners, or local authority and health service.

Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements: Where the school is made aware of a pupil who has a conviction that is subject to MAPPA or a parent with a similar conviction who might visit the school, we will proactively seek a confidential discussion with the individual or agencies to ensure that any necessary adjustments can be put into place with immediate

effect so as to ensure the safety of all. We will liaise with all agencies to ensure all recommendations are followed. If the pupil transfers school/setting our DSL will liaise with the new school prior to transfer to mitigate any risk. A record of the discussion will be held by the sending school, as well as the receiving school and (as per other transfers) a record of the transfer of information will be retained by both schools.

Appendix A contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse:

Gender Based violence/Violence Against Women and Girls: The government has a strategy looking at specific issues that women and girls face. Within the context of this safeguarding policy the following sections are how we respond to violence against girls. Female genital mutilation, forced marriage, honour-based violence, breast ironing and teenage relationship abuse all fall under this strategy.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is illegal in the UK and form of child abuse with long lasting harmful consequences. It has no health benefits and harms girls and women in many ways. It involves removing and damaging healthy and normal female genital tissue, and hence interferes with the natural function of girls' and women's bodies.
The age at which girls undergo FGM varies enormously according to the community. The procedure may be carried out when the girl is new-born, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during the first pregnancy. However, the majority of cases of FGM are thought to take place between the ages of 5 and 8 and therefore girls within that age bracket are at a higher risk.
On the 31 October 2015, it became mandatory for teachers to report known cases of FGM to the police. In these situations, the DSL and/or head will be informed and that the member of teaching staff has called the police to report suspicion that FGM has happened.

So-called Honour Based Abuse (HBA): Honour based abuse is a violent crime or incident which may have been committed to protect or defend the 'honour 'of the family or community. It is often linked to family or community members who believe someone has brought shame to their family or community by doing something that is not in keeping with their unwritten rule of conduct. For example, HBA might be committed against people who:

- become involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend from a different culture or religion
- want to get out of an arranged marriage
- want to get out of a forced marriage
- wear clothes or take part in activities that might not be considered traditional within a particular culture
- convert to a different faith from the family

Women and girls are the most common victims of HBA, although it can also affect men and boys. Crimes of 'honour' do not always include violence. Crimes committed in the name of 'honour' might include:

- domestic abuse
- threats of violence
- sexual or psychological abuse
- forced marriage
- being held against your will or taken somewhere you don't want to go

- assault

If staff believe that a pupil is at risk from HBA, the DSL will follow the usual safeguarding referral process. However, if it is clear that a crime has been committed or the pupil is at immediate risk the police will be contacted in the first place. It is important that if HBA is known or suspected that communities and family members are NOT spoken to prior to referral to the police or social care as this could increase risk to the pupil.

Faith Abuse: The number of known cases of child abuse linked to accusations of 'possession' or 'witchcraft' is small, but children involved can suffer damage to their physical and mental health, their capacity to learn, their ability to form relationships and to their self-esteem. Such abuse generally occurs when a carer views a pupil as being 'different', attributes this difference to the child being 'possessed' or involved in 'witchcraft' and attempts to exorcise him or her.
A pupil could be viewed as 'different' for a variety of reasons such as disobedience, independence, bed-wetting, nightmares, illness or disability. There is often a weak bond of attachment between the carer and the child. There are various social reasons that make a child more vulnerable to an accusation of 'possession' or 'witchcraft'. These include family stress and/or a change in the family structure. The attempt to 'exorcise' may involve severe beating, burning, starvation, cutting or stabbing and isolation, and usually occurs in the household where the child lives.
If the school become aware of a pupil who is being abused in this context, the DSL will follow the normal referral route in to children's social care.

Forced Marriage: The school acknowledges that forced marriage is different to arranged marriage. In developing nations 11% of girls are married before the age of 15. One in 3 victims of forced marriage in the U.K. are under 18. It is important that all members of staff recognise the presenting symptoms, how to respond if there are concerns and where to turn for advice. Advice and help can be obtained nationally through the Forced Marriage Unit and locally through the local police safeguarding team or children's social care. Policies and practices in this school reflect the fact that while all members of staff, including teachers, have important responsibilities with regard to pupils who may be at risk of forced marriage, teachers and school leaders should not undertake roles in this regard that are most appropriately discharged by other children's services professionals such as police officers or social workers. While individual cases of forced marriage, and attempted forced marriage, are often very particular, they are likely to share a number of common and important characteristics, including:

- an extended absence from school, including truancy
- a drop in performance or sudden signs of low motivation
- excessive parental restriction and control of movements
- a history of siblings leaving education to marry early
- parental control of income and students being allowed only limited career choices
- evidence of self-harm, treatment for depression, attempted suicide, social isolation, eating disorders or substance abuse
- evidence of family disputes/conflict, domestic violence/abuse or running away from home.

On their own, these characteristics may not indicate forced marriage. However, it is important to be satisfied that where these behaviours occur, they are not linked to forced marriage. It is also important to avoid making assumptions about an individual pupil's circumstances or act on the basis of stereotyping. For example, an extended holiday may be taken for entirely legitimate reasons and may not necessarily represent a pretext for forced marriage.