



## Child Protection Policy

### Version control

| Scope: Applicable to all Trust Schools |                                               |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Last reviewed:                         | July 2025<br>Implementation from 01.09.2025   |
| Date of next review:                   | Summer term 2026                              |
| Union Status:                          | N/A                                           |
| Statutory or non-statutory:            | Statutory                                     |
| Author/Reviewer:                       | Tara Cook – Head of HR<br>Lisa Williams - SBM |

## Review

This Child Protection Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it remains current and incorporates all revisions made to local or national safeguarding guidance. This policy will, as a minimum, be fully reviewed once a year upon the update of Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance.

## Contacts

| Role                                                          | Name                                | Contact Details                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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| LA Child Protection Contact/LADO                              | Eva Callaghan<br>or covering LADO.  | 0115 8041272                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                                               |                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

|                                                                         |                                             |                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| MASH (Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub)                                    |                                             | 0300 500 80 90                                                                   |
| MASH Consultation Line                                                  | Office hours                                | 0115 977 4247                                                                    |
| Emergency Duty Team                                                     | Outside of office hours                     | 0300 456 4546                                                                    |
| Police (to report a crime and immediate risk of harm or abuse to child) | Non-emergency 101                           | Emergency only 999                                                               |
| NSPCC help/whistleblowing line                                          | Available 8.00am to 8.00pm Monday to Friday | 0800 028 0285<br>email: <a href="mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk">help@nspcc.org.uk</a> |

## Introduction

Our policy applies to all staff (including agency and supply staff), governors, and volunteers working in our school and trust and takes into account statutory guidance provided by the Department for Education and local guidance issued by the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

We will ensure that all parents/carers are made aware of our responsibilities regarding child protection procedures and how we will safeguard and promote the welfare of their children through the publication of this Child Protection policy, and the duties and responsibilities.

### Legal Framework and Guidance

- This policy is grounded in the Education Act 2002/2005, Children Act 1989/2004, and compliance with KCSIE 2025 (statutory guidance from 1 September 2025)
- We also align with Working Together to Safeguard Children, SEND Code of Practice, the Online Safety statutory guidance, and local safeguarding arrangements.

## Child Protection and Safeguarding Statement

Every child deserves to be protected from harm. We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We adopt a whole-school approach, fostering a culture of vigilance, trust, and transparency – where children are respected and valued. We will be alert to the signs of abuse, neglect, and exploitation and will follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection, and justice.

Children's physical, emotional, and mental health are central to everything we do.

## Maintaining a Child-Centred and Coordinated Approach to Safeguarding

Everyone who works in our school understands they are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children and accepts that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. To fulfil this responsibility effectively, our staff, including supply staff and volunteers, will ensure their approach is child-centred and will be supported to consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

We recognise no single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information, and taking prompt action.

The actions we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm are everyone's responsibility.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Making sure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

**Note:** 'Children' includes everyone under the age of 18.

## Whole-School Approach to Safeguarding

- Every member of our staff plays an important role in safeguarding. The role and relationships they have place them in a position to identify concerns early, provide help, promote children's welfare, and help prevent concerns from escalating
- We have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. We will regularly review our safeguarding arrangements to ensure these remain effective and that all children are safe
- We will make every effort to identify children who may benefit from early help and put in place support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life
- Any staff member who has any concerns about a child's welfare must follow the processes set out in this child protection policy and must raise concerns with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy without delay

- All staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following a referral, especially if they were involved in being alert to or receiving a disclosure of risk, harm, or abuse or harassment from a child
- Our senior DSL will provide support to staff to carry out their safeguarding duties and will liaise with other services such as children's social care, police, health, and NCC Early Help Service where required. The DSL (and deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and to be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns

**Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. It also relates to the broader aspects of care and education, including:**

- Pupils' health and safety, emotional well-being, and their mental and physical health or development
- Meeting the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
- Ensuring reasonable adjustments are provided for disabled children and young people with SEND
- Where a child receives elective home education and has an Education and Healthcare Plan (EHCP). Elective home education can mean that some children are not in receipt of suitable education, but many home-educated children have a positive learning experience. We will ensure the LA is provided with details of the plan and letter of decision from the child's parents/carers
- The use of 'reasonable force' and inclusive behaviour management strategies
- Meeting the needs of children with medical conditions
- Providing first aid
- Educational visits and off-site education
- Intimate care
- Online safety and associated issues, including filtering and monitoring, and artificial intelligence
- Appropriate arrangements to ensure school security, considering the local context
- Keeping children safe from risks, harm, exploitation, sexual violence, and sexual harassment between children

**Safeguarding can involve a range of potential issues such as:**

- Neglect, physical abuse, exploitation, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse
- Contextualised abuse, also known as extra-familial abuse
- Bullying, including online bullying
- The approach to online safety, including appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and networks, including home use
- Children with unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education or who may be going missing from education, care, or home, and the risks this poses on repeat occasions and for prolonged periods
- Domestic abuse, including teenage relationship abuse
- Racist, disablist, sexist, homophobic, bi-phobic, or transphobic abuse
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls
- Risk of extremist behaviour and/or radicalisation and susceptibility to being at risk of being drawn into terrorism
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE), human trafficking, modern slavery, sexual or child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- Young carers
- Mental health needs
- Special educational needs (whether or not a child has a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP))

- Privately fostered
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending
- Child-on-Child abuse (to include children abusing other children, other varying forms of bullying, including online and sexually harmful behaviour, sexual violence, and sexual harassment)
- Harm outside the home - extra-familial harm
- The impact of new technologies, including 'sexting' and accessing pornography
- Issues which may be specific to a local area or population, showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang activity or involvement, and associations with organised crime groups or county lines
- Involvement in knife crime, youth violence, and criminal child exploitation (CCE)
- Family circumstances that present challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues, and domestic abuse/harm
- Risk of or from serious violence and violent crime
- Persistent absence from education, including persistent absence for part of the school day
- At risk of suspension or permanent exclusion
- Female genital mutilation and so-called honour-based abuse
- Being subject to any conduct where the purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats, or another form of coercion is not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages
- Upskirting. Upskirting is a criminal offence and is reportable by all teachers.

## Technology, Online Safety, Artificial Intelligence, and Filtering and Monitoring

Our staff are aware that technology offers many opportunities, but is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face-to-face. Children can also abuse their peers online. This can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography. There is also a risk online of accessing misinformation (including conspiracy theories), fake news, and emerging threats from generative artificial intelligence.

All our staff have an understanding of the expectations applicable to their roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring of ICT systems, and we have in place regular monitoring of school equipment and networks.

Our school's approach to online safety, including appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and school networks, is reflected in this Child Protection Policy. Our DSL and the DSL team have the lead responsibility in this area, which is overseen and regularly reviewed by the trust and our ICT provider. We consider the number and age range of the children, those who are potentially at greater risk of harm, and how often they access the IT system, along with the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks.

The trust will maintain oversight of the online safety systems and the arrangements in place to ensure appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and the school network. The appropriateness of any filtering and monitoring systems will be advised by our ICT provider and will be reviewed against the standards regularly.

With our IT Service Provider, we will:

- Identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems
- Review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually
- Block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning
- Have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet the school's safeguarding needs
- Review and discuss the standards with the leadership team, staff using IT, and service providers to ensure the school meets the standard published by the Department for Education filtering and monitoring standards
- Self-audit our online security using the DfE's ['Plan Technology for Your School'](#) tool
- Ensure robust filtering and monitoring, and cyber resistance

The trust will ensure regular review to ensure the standards are adhered to. We will consider if more needs to be done to support our school in meeting and maintaining this standard and communicating these to staff, our pupils, to parents/carers, and to visitors to the school who provide teaching to children as part of the learning and educational opportunities we provide.

We will support understanding of harmful online challenges, hoaxes, misinformation, and fake news, and share information with parents and carers, and signpost them to where they can get help and support.

### **Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

We recognise AI tools as both an opportunity and a risk. The EQT AI Policy references DfE guidance on AI safety and we are committed to ensuring ethical, age-appropriate use of such technologies in school.

**All forms of abuse or harassment will be reported following national safeguarding guidance, and we will take a zero-tolerance approach to harassment and abuse.**

Should an incident or disclosure be made by a child, our staff will always reassure the child (victim) that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe, but we recognise that not every victim will view themselves as such. We will also be mindful of the use of other terminology such as **'alleged perpetrator(s)'** or **'perpetrator(s)'** as in some cases, the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well.

We will do our best to ensure children understand that the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them rather than criminalise them. In doing this, we will communicate with relevant statutory safeguarding agencies to ensure all concerns or incidents are addressed and, where required, different types of assessment and services are put in place following the Nottinghamshire County Council and the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Pathway to Provision.

## **Identifying Concerns**

All staff, volunteers, and governors know how to identify pupils who may be being harmed and how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse. Our staff are familiar with the procedures to be followed.

Staff who regularly come into contact with children are aware of the DfE guidance, [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#)

Staff, volunteers and governors have received safeguarding training to ensure they can recognise the indicators of child abuse, harm, exploitation, or neglect and will always speak to the DSL or deputy should they become aware of an incident or concern.

## Recognising the Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse, neglect, or exploit a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical, as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, about the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear, or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or an institution, or a community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or by another child or children.

**The four categories of child abuse are as follows:**

1. **Physical Abuse**
2. **Emotional Abuse**
3. **Sexual Abuse**
4. **Neglect**

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

**Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

**Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbations, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities such as involving children to look at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. The sexual abuse of children

by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as child-on-child abuse) in education, and all staff should be aware of it and of our policy and procedures for dealing with it.

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

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) may involve an exchange for something the victim wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. R

Preventing Radicalisation: KCSIE guidance on this is currently under review. Radicalisation is defined as 'the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.'. The Prevent Duty refers to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. For further guidance, please see the [DfE Managing the risk of radicalisation in your education setting](#).

## Concerns About a Child

Where staff or volunteers have concerns about a child, they will decide what action to take in conjunction with the DSL. Although any staff member can make a referral to children's social care or MASH, especially where a child is identified as being in immediate danger, they should, however, ensure that the DSL or a member of the senior leadership team is informed as soon as possible. Where a child is in immediate danger, the police must be called.

Although staff should always discuss and agree on any actions to be taken with the DSL, they are able to escalate their concerns and contact the MASH, MASH Consultation Line, or social care to seek support for the child if, despite the discussion with the DSL, their concerns remain. The EQT whistleblowing procedure is available on the school and trust website, from the school office, and the trust central office. Contact details for the Local Authority LADO and NSPCC helpline are at the start of this policy document.

## Alternative Provision

Where a pupil is in alternative provision, we are still responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs.

Children who attend alternative education often have complex needs, and it is important that we ensure they are fully supported at all times and that the alternative setting is aware of any additional risks of harm that pupils may be vulnerable to. Information sharing for pupils who receive education provision outside of a mainstream setting is vital to support the child and ensure their learning environment has all the necessary information for the child before they access the provision. The working together principles are key to keeping the child safe and to understanding the vulnerabilities that need to be supported. We will ensure up-to-date contact details for the professionals working with the child and family are provided to the DSLs as required.

It is EQT policy that written confirmation is provided by alternative provision providers to confirm that all relevant safeguarding and safer recruitment checks have been carried out for staff working in their setting.

## Organisations Using our Premises

Any individual or organisation using our premises for the purposes of running activities for children (even where the children are not pupils at our school), such as community groups, sports clubs, etc, are bound by our safeguarding policies and all hires are made on this basis. When an allegation is made or an incident occurs, the individual or organisation must make the school aware. The school DSL will inform the LADO as appropriate. If the individual or organisation does not inform the school about any allegation or incident, but we become aware of it we will follow our child protection and managing allegations policies and will inform the LADO as appropriate. Failure to adhere to informing school of any allegations or incidents or by not following safeguarding and health and safety policies appropriately may mean that any hire agreements are ended immediately.

## Safeguarding Induction and Training

All staff, supply staff, agency staff, and volunteers will receive a safeguarding induction and will complete the safeguarding induction checklist. They will be informed about our child protection and safeguarding procedures, who the DSLs are, and how to report concerns. All will be given appropriate training and regular updates. Information is displayed around the school to remind everyone what to do if they are concerned about a child.

We will ensure that staff are aware of the systems and resources available within our school, and these are explained to them as part of staff induction, including our child protection policy, the employee code of conduct and the role of the DSLs as well as the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training, which is updated at least every three years. In addition to this training, all staff members receive child protection and safeguarding updates when required, but at least annually.

## Safe Staff and Safer Recruitment

The trust recruitment policy (which includes safer recruitment) will be followed at all times for all staff. All appropriate safer recruitment checks will be carried out and recorded on the single central record (SCR).

- The leadership team and trust will ensure that all safer working practices and recruitment procedures are followed, following the guidance set out in the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), and HR advice, policy, and practice will be followed
- School leaders, staff, and members of the governing body/trust will be appropriately trained in safer working practices and will have access to safer recruitment training

- Statutory pre-employment checks and references from previous employers are an essential part of the recruitment process. We will ensure we adopt the appropriate necessary procedures to carry out the checks required and, where any concerns arise, we will seek advice and act following national guidance
- We have, in place, recruitment, selection, and vetting procedures following KCSIE and maintain a Single Central Record (SCR) which is reviewed regularly and updated appropriately
- Staff have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and are made aware of the trust's Employee Code of Conduct, which includes contact between staff and pupils outside the work context. Advice about low-level concerns are included in our Code of Conduct and in our managing allegations policy. Staff can access a copy of this through the school office and from the central trust office
- Newly appointed staff and volunteers will be informed of our arrangements for safer working practices as part of their induction before beginning work and contact with pupils
- In the event of any complaint or allegation against a member of staff, the Head Teacher (or the DSL if the Head Teacher is not present) will be notified immediately. If it relates to the Head Teacher, the CEO or Head of HR will be informed without delay. We will respond to all allegations robustly and appropriately in collaboration with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Staff may find some of the issues relating to child protection and the broader areas of safeguarding upsetting and may need support, which is available through our Employee Assistance Programme.

The DSL team has a key role in raising awareness amongst staff about the needs of children who have or who have had a social worker and the barriers that those children might experience in respect of attendance, engagement, and achievement at school.

## Looked After Children

The DSL team, along with the Designated Teacher, will ensure that appropriate information is shared with teachers and staff about individual children's circumstances. The Designated Teacher and DSL maintain data for children who have looked after status and for children who have been involved in the care system.

The Designated Teacher maintains working links with the Virtual School Head to promote the educational achievement of looked-after children and those who have been previously looked after. The virtual school Head collaborates with us to identify and engage other key professionals such as social workers, Headteachers, Governors, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENDCo), mental health leads, and other local authority officers to help improve outcomes for children. We affirm our collaboration with Virtual School Heads, who also oversee the educational progress of children with a social worker and those in kinship care

# Our Child Protection Policy

## There are eight main elements to our policy:

- Creating and providing a safe culture and environment in which children can learn and develop
- Ensuring we practice safer recruitment in checking the suitability of staff, volunteers, and agency/supply staff to work with children
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases of abuse in and outside of school
- Supporting pupils who have social care involvement following his/her child in need plan, child protection plan, or who are subject to Local Authority Care
- Raising awareness of safeguarding children, child protection processes, and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe in and outside of our learning environment
- Recognising early help is the best way to support children, and by providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life
- Working in partnership with agencies and safeguarding partners in the best interests of the child
- Ensuring we have appropriate policies and procedures to deal with child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment and maintain the required filtering and monitoring arrangements for online safety and harms

We recognise that because of the day-to-day contact we have with children, we are well-placed to observe the outward signs of abuse and report concerns promptly to seek help or interventions and support the child.

## We will:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to and heard
- Ensure children know that there are trusted adults in school whom they can approach if they are worried
- Ensure that every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers, and colleagues from other agencies
- Include opportunities in the RSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse. We will incorporate DfE updated RSHE guidance.
- Recognise and manage risks including online safety, radicalisation and extremism, sexual exploitation, child-on-child sexual violence, and sexual harassment, the sharing of nude and semi-nude images (sometimes known as sexting)
- Support the development of healthy relationships and awareness of domestic violence and abuse, recognising that domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may involve a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional harm, and children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse. All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn
- Recognise how pressure from others and safeguarding vulnerabilities can affect their behaviour
- Recognise the link between mental health, school attendance, and children absent from education and the impact on learning, progress, and educational attainment
- Act swiftly to address any concerns related to serious violence, gang and knife crime, or child-on-child sexual violence or sexual harassment incidents
- Ensure our behaviour policy includes measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, harmful online challenges, hoaxes, fake news and conspiracy theories, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, and use of social media platforms and networks

- Maintain online safety that addresses statutory filtering and monitoring standards and that takes into account remote learning and the use of mobile and smart technology, and AI. This will be reviewed regularly to take into account any new threats
- Work in partnership with safeguarding agencies to address any harm outside the home, also known as 'extra familial harm', and we will ensure we create a culture where children can share concerns and seek support in a safe place, and where children can form safe and trusted relationships. Where children can feel assured they will be listened to, heard, and offered support to enable them to share sensitive information
- Acknowledge the importance of working together with parents, carers, and external services to form strong and trusted partnerships that can advocate trauma-informed and trauma-aware responses
- Help create and maintain safe places and spaces within the community so children know how to access a place of safety outside of the school environment if needed
- Take all reasonable measures to ensure any risk of harm to children's welfare is minimised inside and outside of our school environment
- Take all appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of a child working to local policies and procedures in full working partnership with agencies
- Ensure robust child protection arrangements are in place and embedded in the daily life and practice of the school
- Promote pupil health and safety
- Promote safe practice and challenge unsafe practice
- Ensure that procedures are in place to deal with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff, including volunteers, supply staff, and contractors
- Provide first aid and meet the health needs of children with medical conditions
- Ensure school site security
- Address any drug and substance misuse issues
- Work with all agencies regarding missing children, anti-social behaviour/gang activity and violence in the community/knife crime, and children at risk of sexual exploitation
- Promote that everyone has a duty to safeguard children inside/outside the school environment, including school trips, extended school activities, vocational placements and alternative education packages

## Children's Mental and Physical Health

We recognise that negative experiences and distressing life events can affect the mental health of children and their parents/carers. We will ensure that appropriate support is in place to support them.

Guidance is available here: [mental health and behaviour in schools](#)

Mental health challenges can bring about changes in a child's behaviour or emotional state, which can be displayed in a range of different ways, all of which could be an indication of an underlying problem. This can include, for example, being fearful or withdrawn, aggressive or oppositional, or excessively clingy. Staff in our school will seek to identify these possible indicators and implement a programme of support as necessary. Our school has a health and safety policy, risk assessments, and a range of other policies in place to look after the physical health of children.

## Gender Questioning Children

For now, this section **remains under review** until the response to the gender questioning children consultation and final guidance has been published.

If and when guidance on gender questioning children is published, we will refer to that guidance in this policy.

In the meantime, school must, of course, continue to fulfil our legal duty to protect and support trans pupils and staff.

The Cass review:

- Identified that caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there are still unknowns around the impact of social transition, and that children may have wider vulnerability, such as complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases, autism and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
- Recommended that when families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning children, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. This should be done as early as possible when supporting pre-pubertal children

Our school will take a cautious approach to support a gender questioning child and:

- Consider the broad range of the individual's needs
- Do this in partnership with their parents (except in rare circumstances where involving parents would bring a significant risk of harm to the child)
- Include any clinical advice that is available
- Consider how to address wider vulnerabilities, such as the risk of bullying

It's also important for staff to 'create a culture' where pupils can speak out or share any concerns with staff.

## Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members, by people known to but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends, and acquaintances), and by strangers.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation. School will remain vigilant to all such incidents and will provide lessons in safety.

## Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) procedures and guidance

We will follow the procedures set out by the NSCP and take account of guidance issued by the DfE in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 to:

- Ensure we have a Senior DSL who is a member of the leadership team and a Deputy DSL for child protection/safeguarding who has received appropriate training and support for this role
- The DSL role is written into their job description and clarifies the role and responsibilities
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection/safeguarding
- Ensure that we have a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children (LAC)
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary, supply staff, and volunteers) and the governing body know the name of the DSLs responsible for child protection and their role
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the DSL or children's social care or police if a child is in immediate danger
- Ensure that there is a whistleblowing policy and culture where staff can raise concerns about unsafe practice and that these concerns will be taken seriously
- Ensure that there is a complaints system in place for children and families
- Ensure that parents understand the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection and safeguarding by setting out their obligations on the school's website
- Notify Children's Social Care if there is an unexplained absence for a child who is subject to a child protection plan and where no contact can be established with the child or a parent or appropriate adult linked to the child
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at child protection conferences
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately, documenting and collating information on individual children to support early identification, referral and actions to safeguard
- Ensure all records are kept securely in the CPOMS system
- Ensure that we follow robust processes to respond when children are missing from education, home or care
- Develop and follow procedures for when an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed
- Apply confidentiality appropriately following DfE guidance around data protection and GDPR
- Apply the NSCP escalation procedures if there are any concerns about the actions or inaction of social care staff or staff from other agencies

## Supporting Children

We recognise 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. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, and/or sexual orientation, or language barriers. We recognise that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a positive sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation, and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure, and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school, they may show distress behaviours, be defiant, or they may be withdrawn. This must not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children, which facilitate good communication.

We are aware that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, and so staff should always be vigilant and raise any concerns.

All staff, including volunteers, must maintain the attitude of **‘it could happen here’** and when concerned about the welfare of the child, should always act in the best interests of the child.

### **We aim to support pupils by:**

- Developing the content of our curriculum
- Creating a culture that promotes a positive, supportive, and secure environment and which gives pupils a sense of being valued
- Ensuring that the school behaviour policy, anti-bullying policy, and child-on-child abuse policy are aimed at supporting all pupils
- Proactively ensuring that all children know that some behaviours are unacceptable and will need to be addressed but as part of our school that they are valued and will be supported to deal with any abuse or harm that has occurred
- Liaising with support agencies as required
- Ensuring that, where a pupil leaves and is subject to a child protection plan, child in need plan, or where there have been wider safeguarding concerns, that information is transferred to the new school immediately or within 5 working days, and that the child's social worker is informed
- Ensuring that the vulnerability of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is recognised and supported
- Ensure that a child who reports an incident involving sexual violence and/or sexual harassment is taken seriously, kept safe and will never be made to feel like they are creating a problem for reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment

## **Roles and Responsibilities for all Staff and Volunteers**

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 safeguarding children. Our staff will always consider what is in the best interests of children.

All staff have received appropriate safeguarding training to enable them to identify concerns early and provide help to children to prevent concerns from escalating. We recognise that early help is the best way to support children. We may decide that the children do not require referral to statutory services, but may benefit from early help.

Staff must be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and understand the role they may have in these assessments and working in partnership with safeguarding agencies.

Staff must know what to do if they are concerned about a child, if a child raises a concern or makes a disclosure of abuse and/or neglect.

Staff will maintain a level of confidentiality whilst consulting with the DSL and children's social care. Our staff will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a disclosure or allegation, recognising that this may not be in the best interest of the child.

## Early Help

Early help is **support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes, or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse.** We recognise that providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Staff should be aware of the early help process and understand their role in this. This includes being able to identify emerging problems to recognise children who may benefit from early help. Staff should, in the first instance, discuss their concerns with the DSL and understand they they may be required to support other agencies and professionals in assessments for early help.

Any child may benefit from early help, but all school staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines.
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home, or care (including when they are subsequently found in areas away from their own, which could be an indicator of county lines or other exploitation).
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from school, and is in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues, and domestic abuse
- are misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child.

## Staff responsibilities

All staff and volunteers have a key role to play in identifying concerns and recognising risk factors.

### To achieve this, they will:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and be listened to
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or have concerns
- Plan opportunities within the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to assess and manage risk appropriately and keep themselves safe
- Ensure they follow the procedures in place to manage online risks on school devices and networks
- Attend training to be aware of and alert to the signs of abuse
- Maintain an attitude of “it could happen here” about safeguarding
- Record their concerns when they are worried that a child is being abused and report these to the DSL as soon as practical that day. If the DSL is not contactable immediately, a Deputy DSL should be informed
- Be prepared to refer directly to social care and the police, if appropriate, if there is a risk of significant harm and the DSL or their Deputy is not available
- Follow the allegations procedures if the disclosure is an allegation against a member of staff/adult
- Support pupils in line with their child protection plan, child in need plan or LAC Care Plan
- Treat information with confidentiality but never promise to keep a secret
- Notify the DSL or their Deputy of any child on a child protection plan or child in need plan who has unexplained absence
- Be prepared to identify and support children who may benefit from early help, support, and interventions
- Ensure they know who the DSL and Deputy DSLs are and know how to contact them
- Have an awareness of the child protection policy, the behaviour policy, the staff code of conduct, procedures relating to the safeguarding response for children who go missing from education, and the role of the DSL.

## Senior Leadership Team Responsibilities

- Contribute to inter-agency working in line with HM Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (as updated) guidance
- Provide a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified
- Ensure all staff, supply staff, and volunteers are alert to the definitions of abuse and indicators and through access to regular training opportunities and updates
- Work with Children’s Social Care, support their assessment and planning processes, including the attendance at conferences and core group meetings, and providing reports as required
- Provide support and advice on all matters about safeguarding and child protection to all staff and volunteers, regardless of their position within the school
- Treat any information shared by staff or pupils with respect and follow agreed policies and procedures
- Ensure that allegations or concerns against staff, including low-level concerns, are dealt with in accordance with trust policy

## Teachers Professional Duty

This duty applies to all teachers, including Head Teachers and Early Career Teachers. The Teachers Standards 2012 (as updated) remind us that teachers, early career teachers, and Head Teachers should safeguard children and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of our professional duties.

A Designated Teacher has responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship, or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.

## Designated Safeguarding Lead

The senior DSL takes lead responsibility for safeguarding children and child protection. The senior DSL is a member of the school leadership team, and their responsibilities are explicit in their job description.

The deputy DSL provides cover for the senior DSL when they are not available. The deputy DSL has received the same training as the senior DSL. They will provide additional support to ensure the responsibilities for child protection and safeguarding children are fully embedded within the school ethos and that specific duties are discharged. They will assist the senior DSL in managing referrals, attending child protection conferences, reviews, core group meetings, and other meetings of a safeguarding and protection nature to support the child/children.

We acknowledge the need for effective and appropriate communication between all members of staff in relation to safeguarding pupils. Our DSL will ensure there is a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all the members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.

### **The Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to:**

#### **Manage Referrals**

- Refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies
- Support staff who make referrals to children's social care and other referral pathways
- In conjunction with the trust HR department, refer cases where a person is dismissed or has left due to risk/harm to a child, and DBS as required
- Ensure arrangements are in place year-round for all staff and volunteers to seek advice, support, and to enable them to report safeguarding concerns or incidents and disclosures that inform children are at risk of harm or abuse, or where harm, bullying or sexual harm, or harassment has occurred
- Ensure appropriate systems are in place to manage and address online safety and access to mobile phone networks, especially for those children who are potentially at greater risk of harm, abuse, and exploitation, and refer concerns where required, linked to the PREVENT duty

## **Work with others**

- Consult with the Head Teacher to inform them of any issues and ongoing investigations
- As required, consult with the case manager and the LADO where there are child protection concerns/allegations that relate to a member of staff
- Consult with the case manager and the LADO where there are concerns about a staff member
- Consult with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding, and decide when to make a referral by consulting with other agencies, and act as a source of support, advice, and expertise for other staff
- Take part in strategy discussions or attend inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so, and contribute to the assessment of children, including providing and writing reports for conferences and reviews
- Consult with the local authority and other agencies in line with HM Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (Updated February 2024) and the local NSCP procedures and practice guidance
- The Head Teacher, DSLs, and trust are aware of the local arrangements put in place by NSCP and know how to access the NSCP website and training.

## **Undertake training**

- Formal DSL training will be undertaken every two years. Informal training and updating of knowledge and skills will be at regular intervals, undertaken at least annually
- The senior DSL is responsible for their training and should obtain access to resources or any relevant refresher training
- The senior DSL is also responsible for ensuring all other staff with DSL responsibilities have access to up-to-date and timely safeguarding training and will maintain a register to evidence the training

### **The training undertaken should enable the DSL to:**

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention through NCC & NSCP's Pathway to Provision, the Early Help Service, and Family Hubs
- Have a working knowledge of how the NSCP operates, the conduct of a child protection conference, and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
- Ensure that each member of staff has access to the child protection policy and procedures, and any revisions/updates
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, including those with SEND and young carers
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of concerns and referrals using the CPOMS system
- Understand the Prevent Duty and provide advice and support to staff on protecting and preventing children from the risk of radicalisation and being groomed into extremist behaviours and attitudes
- Understand the reporting requirements for FGM and PREVENT
- Encourage a culture of protecting children and listening to children, and their wishes and feelings

## **Raise awareness**

- Ensure that the child protection policies are known, understood, and used appropriately
- Ensure that the child protection policy is reviewed annually in consultation with staff members, and procedures are updated and reviewed regularly
- Work strategically to ensure policies and procedures are up to date and drive and support development work within the school

- Ensure that the child protection policy is available to parents and carers and uploaded to the school website and make parents/carers aware that referrals may be made about suspected abuse or neglect
- Ensure all staff receive induction training covering child protection before working with children and that staff can recognise and report any concerns immediately as they arise

### **Child protection file**

- The senior DSL is responsible for ensuring that, when a child leaves the school, their child protection or child in need file or confidential file is transferred to the new school at the same time the child goes on roll of the new school or education provision
- A record of the number of children open and subject to CP, CiN, and LAC concerns is maintained
- A record or data on the cohort of children having or have had a social worker and social care involvement will be maintained
- We will ensure our management arrangements for maintaining, keeping, and storing information and records for children, where a safeguarding or child protection concern has been identified for a child, is managed following statutory guidance
- Child protection records will be kept electronically using the CPOMS system

### **Availability**

During term time, the senior DSL or deputy will always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. In exceptional circumstances, their availability may be through online systems such as Skype or TEAMS. In the absence of the DSLs, a member of the senior leadership team will be nominated to provide cover. Appropriate arrangements will also need to be in place all year round for any out-of-school hours activities.

### **The Head Teacher**

#### **Will ensure that:**

- The policies and procedures are available to staff and ensure that staff are aware of and understand them
- Senior leaders have oversight of the SCR, and it is reviewed regularly
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the DSL and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice regarding children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies
- All staff, including supply teachers and volunteers, have access to and have read and understood the requirements placed on them in this policy and the staff code of conduct
- That there are mechanisms in place to assist staff to fully understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in KCSiE 2025.
- Where there is an allegation made against a member of staff or volunteer that meets the criteria for a referral to the LADO, then the headteacher will discuss the allegation immediately with the LADO (within 24 hours) and the trust's HR team and ensure that cases are managed in line with policy

- If the allegation is against the Head Teacher, the Trust will manage the allegation and consult with statutory safeguarding leads, such as the Local Authority LADO

## **Equals Trust**

We recognise that the trust has strategic leadership responsibility for the safeguarding arrangements in place and must ensure our schools comply with their duties from the statutory guidance, ensuring all policies, procedures, and training are effective and comply with the law.

The trust will be collectively responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within the school's ethos and reflected in the school's day-to-day safeguarding practices by:

- Ensuring there is an individual member of the governing body to take leadership responsibility for safeguarding and championing child protection issues in the school
- Ensuring that the school has effective policies and procedures in line with statutory guidance, as well as with local NSCP guidance, and monitors the school's compliance with them
- Ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are in place for appropriate action to be taken promptly to promote children's welfare
- Recognising the importance of information sharing between agencies through the statutory guidance
- Ensuring cooperation with the local authority and other safeguarding partners
- Ensuring the school appoints a senior DSL from the leadership team to take lead responsibility for child protection/safeguarding, and that a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children is appointed and appropriately trained
- Ensure all members of the governing body undertake safeguarding training to ensure they have the knowledge and information needed to equip them to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place are effective
- Ensure that the Chair of Governors and the named Safeguarding Governor have access to role-specific training
- Ensuring there are procedures in place to manage allegations against staff and exercise disciplinary functions in respect of dealing with a complaint
- Ensuring that arrangements/procedures are in place to manage and provide clarity on the process for sharing 'low-level' concerns
- Ensuring appropriate responses to children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions or have unexplained or persistent absence from education. We will ensure our schools follow up promptly all cases of unexplained absence and we will ensure pupil attendance data is reviewed regularly and is submitted to the DfE as appropriate.
- Ensuring appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect children online
- Ensuring there is a trust-wide policy regarding generative AI in place, which takes into account the risks of AI
- Any safeguarding concerns involving outside organisations will be addressed through our safeguarding policies and procedures, and in line with the local NSCP procedures
- Ensure there are policies and resources to prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with children
- Inform any new prospective employees that online social media checks will be conducted along with all the other safer recruitment pre-employment checks.

## **Looked After Children – The Role of the Designated Teacher and the DSL**

A Designated Teacher is appointed who has responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who are looked after. They have the appropriate training and will collaborate with the Virtual School to ensure that the progress of the child is supported.

- The DSL and SENDCo will work closely together as we recognise that children may have been abused or neglected before becoming looked after and may also have SEND. We will ensure they are supported and able to thrive and take the most out of their education by linking with the virtual school, their social worker, parents, and carers
- We recognise that those children who were previously looked after potentially remain vulnerable, and staff will be informed of the importance of maintaining support for them
- We will continue to recognise the importance of working with agencies and take prompt action where necessary to safeguard these children who may remain vulnerable.

## **Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

We recognise that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges on and offline. Guidance says that children with disabilities are 3 times more likely to be abused than their peers.

We are aware that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect for children with SEND, and they may be more vulnerable to peer group isolation or bullying than other children. They may not always show outward signs and may have communication barriers and difficulties in reporting challenges, especially involving exploitation or incidents involving child-on-child harm, abuse, or harassment.

Our policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children, which may include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse, such as behaviour, mood, and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- Children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by issues like bullying without outwardly showing any signs, and may have communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming their ability to disclose incidents or the risk of harm they feel subject to
- Addressing individual behaviour concerns and incidents, considering the child's SEND
- Recognising and having in place additional support, for example, to teach, advise, mentor, and support children with SEND from online harms, hoaxes, bullying, grooming, and radicalisation, and enable them to have confidence and the ability to stay safe online

## **Taking Action Where Concerns are Identified**

We recognise the difference between concerns about a child and a child in immediate danger.

When staff have concerns about a child, they will need to decide what action to take. A discussion should take place with the DSL to agree on a course of action.

If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made immediately to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and/or immediately to the police if at imminent risk of harm. If the member of staff is

unable to discuss this with a DSL or the Head Teacher, they must make the referral themselves and inform the DSL as soon as possible.

**If a child chooses to tell a member of staff about alleged abuse, there are several actions that staff will need to take to support the child:**

- The key facts will be established in language that the child understands. Where possible, the child's own words will be used in clarifying/expanding on what has been said
- No promises will be made to the child, e.g., to keep secrets
- Staff will stay calm and be available to listen
- Staff will actively listen with the utmost care to what the child is saying
- Where questions are asked, this should be done without pressurising and only using open questions
- Leading questions should be avoided as much as possible
- Questioning should not be extensive or repetitive
- Staff will not/should not put words in the child's mouth, but will subsequently note the main points carefully
- The staff will keep a full written record on the CPOMS system (or signed and dated on paper and then uploaded to CPOMS), including the time the conversation with the child took place, an outline of what was said, comments on the child's body language, etc
- It is not appropriate for staff to make children write statements about abuse that may have happened to them, or get them to sign the staff record
- Staff will reassure the child and let them know that they were right to inform them, and will inform the child that this information will now be passed on to protect them
- The DSL will be immediately informed
- Information should be shared with children's social care without delay, either to the child's social worker or to the MASH. Children's Social Care will liaise with the police where required, which will ensure an appropriate police officer response rather than a uniformed response
- The Police will only be contacted directly in an emergency or if a child is at immediate risk of harm, abuse, or danger
- If unsure, the MASH has a Consultation Phone Line during office hours where a conversation (without naming child/ren) can be used to speak with a qualified social worker. No record of the conversation will be made; it is purely an advice line.

**Staff should never attempt to investigate suspected child abuse by interviewing the child or any others involved, especially if a criminal act is thought to have occurred. The only people who should investigate child abuse and harm are Social Care, the Police, or the NSPCC.**

## Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential; however, a member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to children. Children will not be given promises that any information about an allegation will not be shared.

The Head Teacher or DSL will disclose personal information about a pupil to other members of staff, including the level of involvement of other agencies, only on a 'need to know' basis.

All staff are aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children. They are aware that the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and UK General Data Protection

Regulation (UK GDPR) should not be a barrier to the sharing of information where failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm.

Further guidance can be found by visiting the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership website: <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/nscp>

## Information Sharing

Effective sharing of information between practitioners and local organisations and agencies is essential for early identification of need, assessment, and service provision to keep children safe. Rapid Reviews (RRs) have highlighted that missed opportunities to record and thereby understand the significance of sharing information promptly can have severe consequences for the safety and welfare, and well-being of children.

We adopt the information sharing principles detailed in statutory safeguarding guidance contained within:

- DfE KCSiE 2025
- HM Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- HM Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents, and carers (Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)).

## Records and Monitoring

Safeguarding, child protection, and welfare concerns will be recorded and kept in a separate secure electronic file called CPOMS. A tag will be pinned to the top of the student profile page in the Arbor system to denote that a separate file exists.

Any concerns about a child will be recorded in writing within 24 hours. Records will provide a factual and evidence-based account, and there will be an accurate record of any actions. Records will be made and kept using the CPOMS system. Where an opinion or professional judgement is recorded, this should be clearly stated as such.

At no time will an individual member of staff or school be asked to or consider taking photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child's person; this type of behaviour could lead to the staff member being taken into 'managing allegations' procedures. Body maps will be used following recording guidance and to support clarity, for example, of areas of injury, marks, and bruising, and or touching.

Any concerns will be reported and recorded without delay to the appropriate safeguarding services, e.g., MASH or the child's social worker if there is already an open case to social care.

A chronology will be kept using the CPOMS system. Staff will record any minor concerns on CPOMS and will take responsibility for alerting the DSL should the number of concerns rise or, in their professional judgement, become significant.

We will ensure all our files are available for external scrutiny by a regulatory agency, or because of a serious case review or audit, as required by statutory guidance.

### **Why is recording important?**

Staff are encouraged to understand why it is important that records are comprehensive and accurate and what the messages from serious case reviews are in terms of recording and sharing information. It is often when a chronology of information is pieced together that the level of concern escalates or that the whole or wider picture becomes known.

We acknowledge that without information being recorded, it can be lost, misinformed, open to interpretation, or changed. This could be crucial information, the importance of which is not always necessarily apparent at the time. We will ensure all our recording is made promptly and are kept safe and noted by one of our DSLs to evidence the reporting and information being used to safeguard the child and to detail the child's journey through the safeguarding system.

We acknowledge that, on occasion, this information could be crucial evidence to safeguard a child or be evidence in future criminal prosecutions.

## **Recording Practice and Procedures**

Timely and accurate recording will take place when there are any issues regarding a child.

A recording of every incident or concern for the child will be made, including any telephone calls to other professionals. These will be recorded on CPOMS and will include any contact from other agencies who may wish to discuss concerns relating to a child. Actions will be agreed upon, and the roles and responsibilities of each agency will be clarified and outcomes recorded.

Records will include an analysis of the event or concerns and will take account of the holistic needs of the child and any historical information held on the child's file.

Support and advice will be sought from social care or the early help service whenever needed. In this way, a picture can emerge, and this will assist in promoting an evidence-based assessment and determining any action(s) that need to be taken. This may include no further action, whether an EHAF should be undertaken, or whether a referral should be made to MASH/Children's Social Care in line with the NCC Pathway to Provision made available by NSCP.

Such robust practice across child protection and in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children will assist the school and DSL team in the early identification of any concerns that may require addressing further and the prevention of future harm, risk, or abuse.

## The Confidential Safeguarding File

The establishment of a Child Protection, CiN, or Confidential Safeguarding file, which is separate from the child's main school file, is an important principle in terms of storing and collating information about children that relates to either a child protection concern about a child's welfare outside of the usual range of concerns. It should be borne in mind that what constitutes a concern for one child may not be a concern for another, and the child's particular circumstances will need to be considered. Professional judgement will be a key factor when making this decision, and will need clear links between staff and those with DSL responsibilities in the school.

Our school uses the CPOMS electronic safeguarding system, which we use to record welfare and safeguarding-related issues. Examples of the types of records that will be recorded on CPOMS include:

- Referral to MASH/Children's Social Care
- Minor concerns
- Where a child is open to social care or the Early Help Service
- Communications with statutory safeguarding agencies

This list is not exhaustive.

We will keep electronic records of concerns about children even where there is no need to refer the matter to MASH/Children's Social Care (or similar) immediately, but these records will be kept on CPOMS and not on the child's main school file.

Records will be kept up to date and reviewed regularly by the DSL to evidence and support actions taken by staff in discharging their safeguarding arrangements. Original notes will be retained (but will be clearly identified as such) as this is a contemporaneous account; they may be important in any criminal proceedings arising from current or historical allegations of abuse or neglect.

### **Transfer of the child's safeguarding file**

We will adopt the file transfer guidance and arrangements contained in KCSiE and ensure that when a child moves school/education provision, their safeguarding file is sent securely to their new educational setting when the child starts/leaves the school.

For those children subject to social care and safeguarding agency involvement, we will ensure the file evidences the child's journey and includes the key information. Should a child subject to social care involvement transfer schools, we will ensure the child's confidential file is transferred within 5 days.

DSLs will liaise directly with the receiving school and will hold a discussion to share important information to support the child's transfer to ensure the child remains safeguarded, has any reasonable adjustments agreed, and to ensure the transition is as smooth as possible.

We will maintain information on cohorts of children who have been open to social care, have had a social worker, or who are closed to social care and may have returned to the family home. This information will only be considered for sharing, if appropriate, with the new school in advance of the child leaving to allow the new school to continue supporting children appropriately.

## Education - Opportunities to Teach Safeguarding

We will teach children in an age-appropriate way about safeguarding issues that affect them, and we aim to provide them with the skills, attributes, and knowledge to help them navigate risks, including covering online safety.

The education we provide for online safety will consider the need for children to learn using online technologies in a safe environment, whether that be in school, in the home, or in a community environment. This will also be taught as part of a wider RSHE programme as well as through other subject areas and ICT.

We will ensure a whole-school approach is in place to promote giving children the space to explore key issues in a sensitive way and the confidence to seek the support of adults should they encounter problems or online harms.

We will carefully consider mobile phone use and how this is managed. We are aware that many children have independent and unsupervised access to smart technology in their home or outside of school, which could mean, some children may be vulnerable to harm and exploitation via their mobile and smart technology. We will use opportunities to raise awareness of risks and share this with parents and carers where able.

We will make children and parents aware of online safety in a variety of ways to minimise the safeguarding risks technology can pose. We will signpost to places where they can seek advice, help and support.

## Helplines and reporting

- Children can talk to a Child Line counsellor 24 hours a day about anything that is worrying them by ringing 0800 11 11 or in an online chat at <https://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/1-2-1-counsellor-chat/>
- Where staff members feel unable to raise an issue with their employer or feel that they have a genuine concern that is not being addressed we acknowledge they may wish to consider whistleblowing channels. Likewise, if parents and carers are concerned about their child they can contact the NSPCC Helpline by phoning 0800 028 028 0295 or by emailing [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

There are a range of resources and helpful information for parents and carers available on our website at [www.cropwellbishop.notts.sch.uk](http://www.cropwellbishop.notts.sch.uk)

## Appendices

| Appendix | Document                                                                                                             |
|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1        | NCC Flow Chart 2024-2025<br><br>'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused or at risk of harm or neglect |
| 2        | Body Maps Guidance and Body Maps                                                                                     |

## Appendix 1

### Actions where there are concerns about a child's welfare in or outside of school

- Be alert to signs of abuse, question unusual behaviour or changes to presentation

### Where a child discloses abuse, neglect, sexual violence, sexual harassment or online harm

- Listen to what they say, keep calm, reassure they are right to tell and you will take action to help keep them safe
- Inform them you need to share the information and what you are going to do next
- Do not promise confidentiality, you will need to share/ report the information to appropriate services
- **DO NOT DELAY; take any immediate necessary action to protect the child and ensure the DSL is informed or member of SLT in the DSL's absence.**
- Do not question further or inform the alleged abuser.

### Discuss the concerns with the DSL

- The DSL will consider further actions including consultation with Children's Social Care/ MASH
- Concerns and discussion, decisions and reasons for decision should be recorded on CPOMS
- At all stages the child's circumstances should be kept under review and re-refer if concerned to ensure the child's circumstances improve – **the child's best interests must come first.**

### Still have concerns? REFER TO MASH

Have child/families' personal details to hand and be clear about concern/allegations and contact - make referral.

### Safeguarding concern resolved/no longer held

Support has been agreed, record decisions and any follow up actions.

**MASH Tel: 0300 500 80 90**

**Consultation Line Tel: 0115 977 4247**

(Office Hours Monday to Friday)

Where need is identified, contact the **Early Help Service**

**If the child is at immediate risk dial 101 and ask for assistance**

**Out of hours**

**Emergency**

**Duty Team**

**5.00pm –8.30am**

**Tel: 0300 4564546**

### Unmet needs identified.

Decide what actions are needed to support the child.

**Consult with the child, family and relevant agencies: Agree support, refer to NSCP 'Pathway to Provision' Guidance.**

**Contacts:** For any allegations/concerns regarding an adult who works with (either paid or voluntarily) employment with children contact the LA Designated Officer (LADO. For referrals Tel:- 0115 8041272. LADO Strategic Lead Tel: 0115 9773921 **Cheryl Stollery – LA Safeguarding Children in Education Officer Tel:- 0115 8041047**

**This flow chart is a brief guide - Please refer to our School Child Protection Policy.**

## **Appendix 2**

### **Body Map Guidance for Schools**

**Medical assistance should be sought where appropriate.**

Body Maps should be used to document and illustrate visible signs of harm and physical injuries.

Always use a black pen (never a pencil) and do not use correction fluid or any other eraser.

Do not remove clothing for the examination unless the injury site is freely available for treatment.

**\*At no time should an individual teacher/member of staff or school be asked to or consider taking photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child's person, this type of behaviour could lead to the staff member being taken into managing allegations procedures, the body map below should be used following recording guidance. Any concerns should be reported and recorded without delay to the appropriate safeguarding services, e.g. MASH or the child's social worker if already an open case to social care.**

**When you notice an injury to a child, try to record the following information in respect of each mark identified, e.g. red areas, swelling, bruising, cuts, lacerations and wounds, scalds and burns:**

- Exact site of injury on the body, e.g., upper outer arm/left cheek.
- Size of injury - in appropriate centimetres or inches.
- Approximate shape of injury, e.g. round/square or straight line.
- Colour of injury - if more than one colour, say so.
- Is the skin broken?
- Is there any swelling at the site of the injury, or elsewhere?
- Is there a scab/any blistering/any bleeding?
- Is the injury clean, or is there grit/fluff, etc.?
- Is mobility restricted as a result of the injury?
- Does the site of the injury feel hot?
- Does the child feel hot?
- Does the child feel pain?
- Has the child's body shape changed/are they holding themselves differently?

Importantly, the date and time of the recording must be stated as well as the name and designation of the person making the record. Add any further comments as required.

**Ensure First Aid is provided where required and record.**

A copy of the body map should be kept on the child's child protection file.

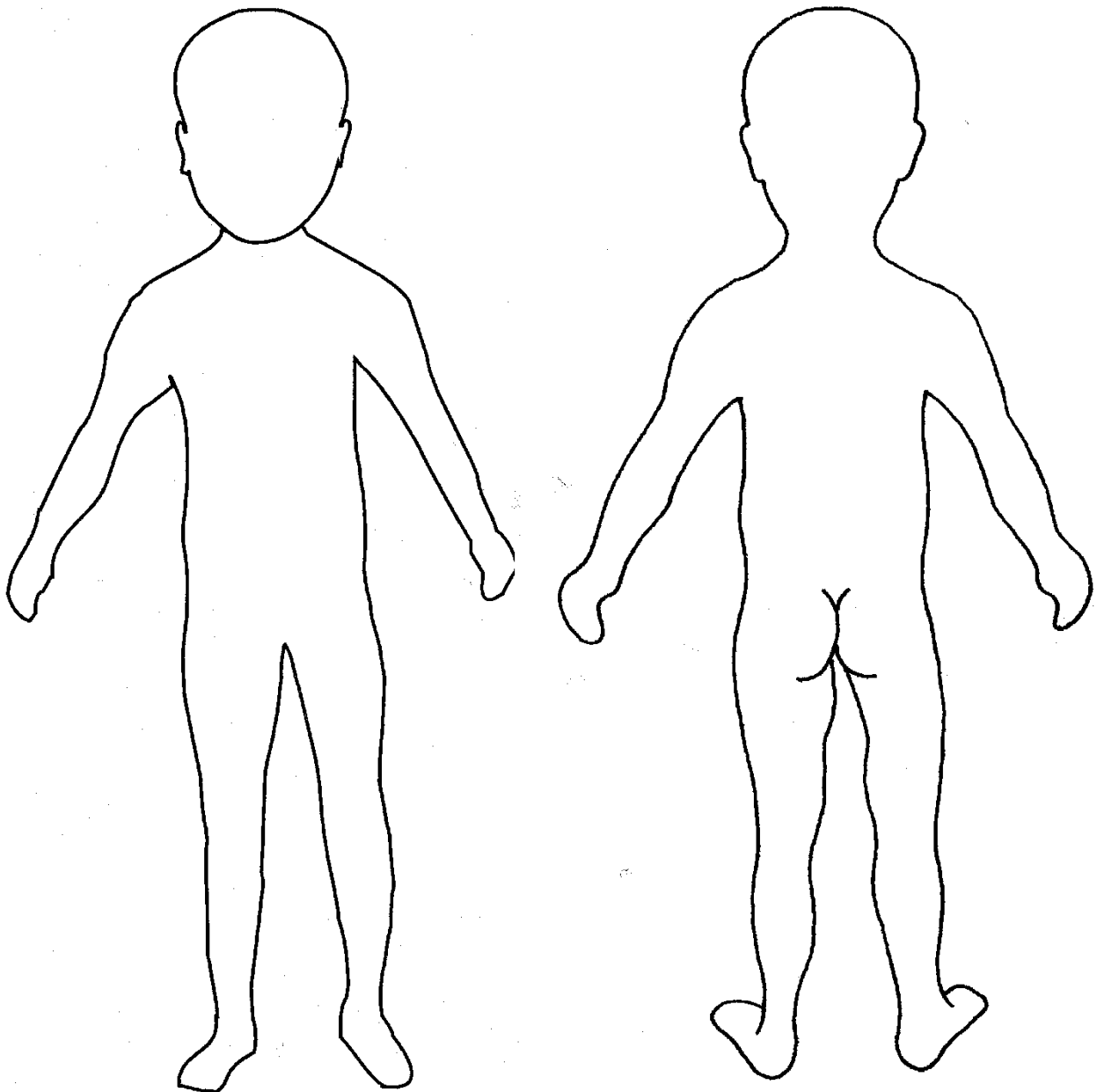
## BODYMAP

(This must be completed at the time of observation)

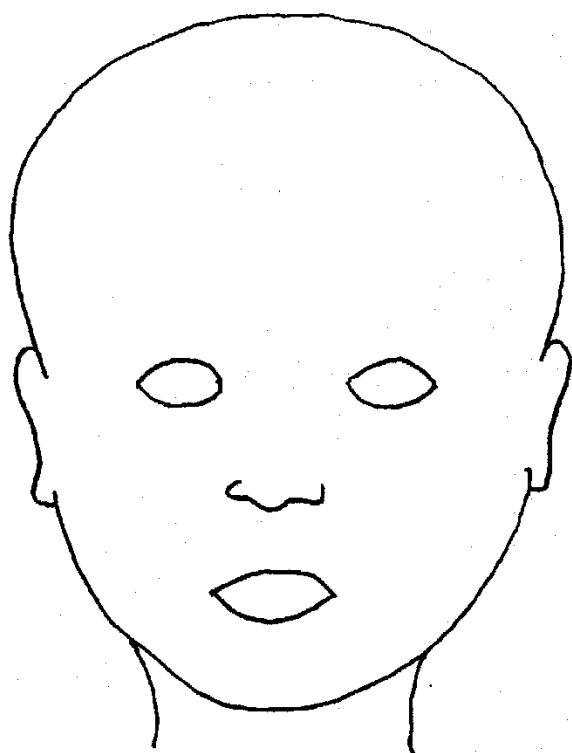
Names for Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Worker: \_\_\_\_\_ Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

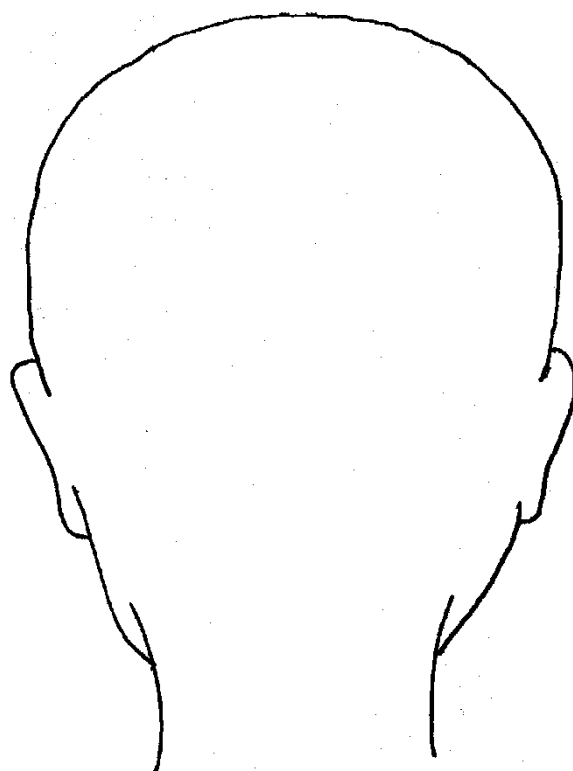
Date and time of observation: \_\_\_\_\_



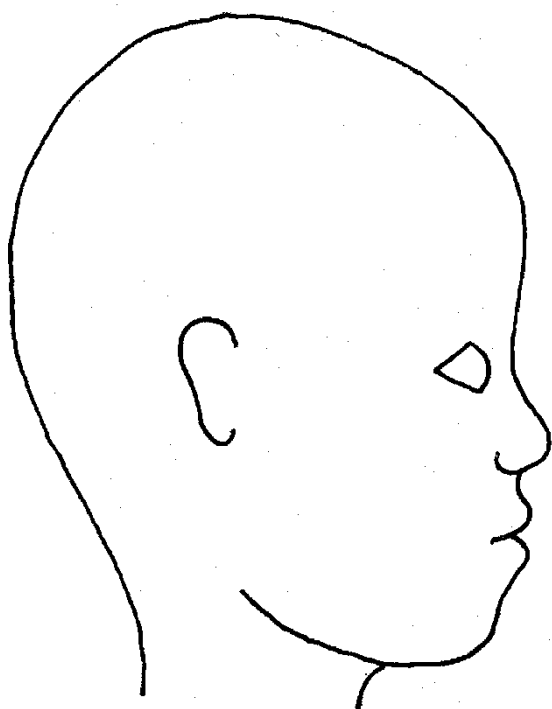
Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of observation: \_\_\_\_\_



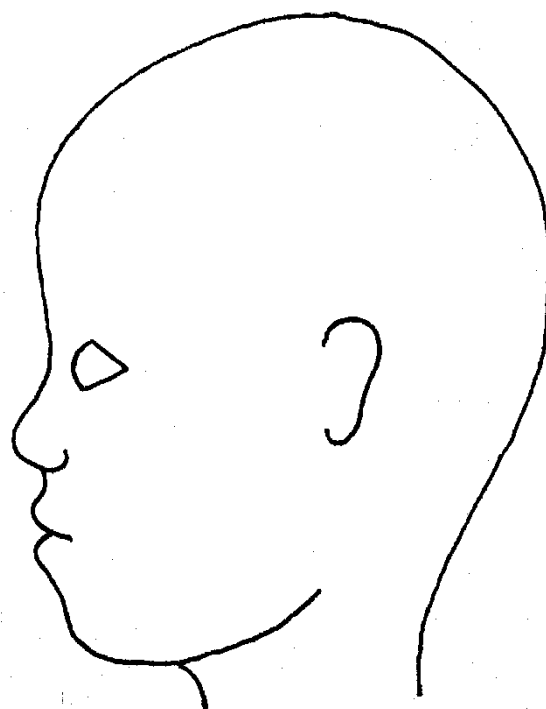
**FRONT**



**BACK**



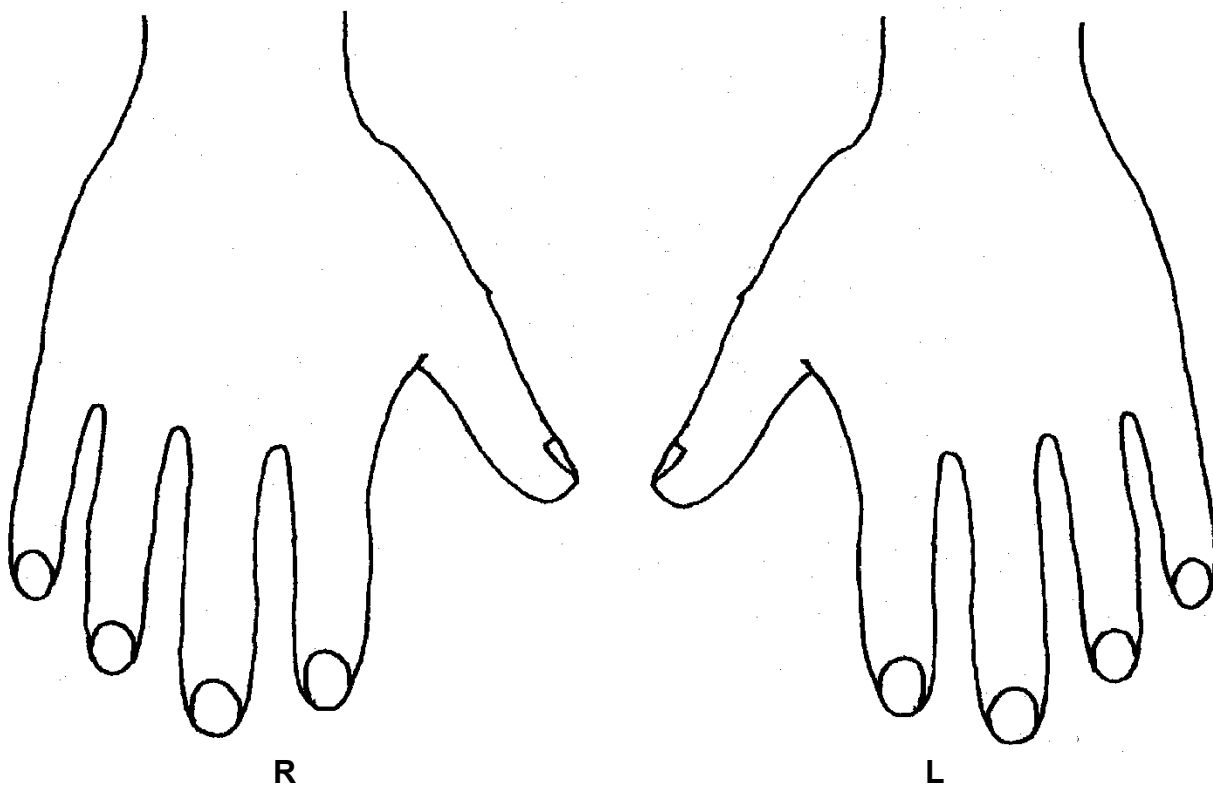
**RIGHT**



**LEFT**

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of  
observation: \_\_\_\_\_



**BACK**



R

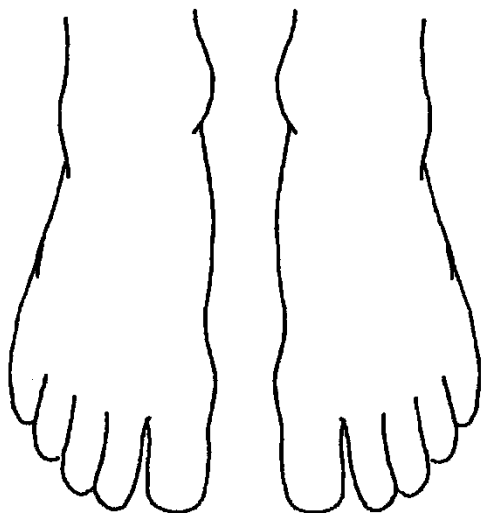


L

# PALM

Name of  
Child: \_\_\_\_\_

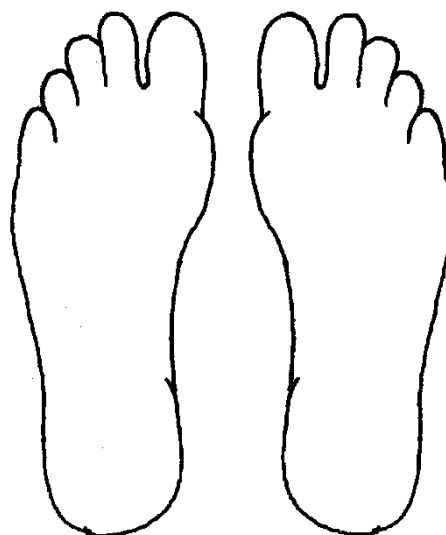
Date of  
observation: \_\_\_\_\_



R

TOP

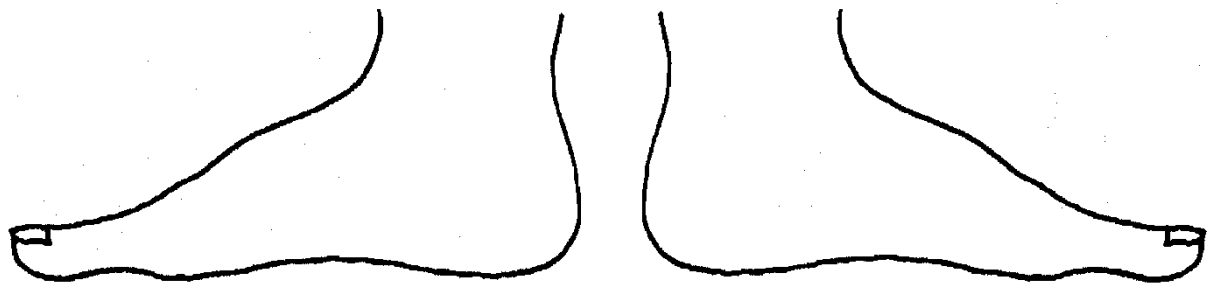
L



R

BOTTOM

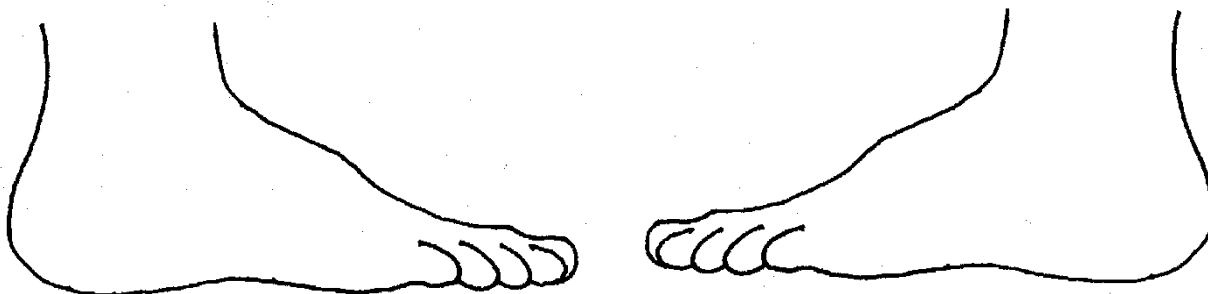
L



R

INNER

L



R

OUTER

L

Printed Name and  
Signature of worker:

Date:

Time:

Role of Worker

Other information: