MODEL CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

2026 JULY

ME, YOU & US

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

Appledore Safeguarding Policy

July 2026

ME, YOU & US

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Policy reviewed	
Next reviewed date	

KEY PERSONNEL			
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** Out of hours contact details will be made available to staff*
*** Any changes to key personnel/holiday/emergency contacts will be shared with the appropriate agencies and LA safeguarding boards/hubs*

Disclaimer: Devon Education Services (DES) makes every effort to ensure that the information in this document is accurate and up to date. If errors are brought to our attention, we will correct them as soon as practicable. Nevertheless, DES and its employees cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage or inconvenience caused as a result of reliance on any content in this publication. It is important that any setting adopting this policy personalise and amend according to need.

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Safeguarding Statement

Appledore School recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. We adopt a child-centered approach, ensuring that the best interests of the child are at the heart of all decision-making.

- We are committed to working in partnership with children, families and other agencies to provide help and support as soon as problems emerge and to protect children from harm, both within and outside the home, including online.
- We recognise the importance of a whole-family approach and actively involve parents, carers, and family networks wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so.
- We ensure that children's voices are heard and acted upon, and that all children are enabled to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Appledore School is committed to a strong, open and positive safeguarding culture. This means:

- staff feel confident to raise concerns
- concerns are acted on quickly
- leaders provide clear oversight
- safeguarding is embedded in all aspects of school life

Terminology

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 impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective
- care
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through
- a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

(Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026)

Child protection is part of safeguarding and refers to the activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm occurring inside or outside the home, including online.

Staff refers to all adults working for or on behalf of the school, including temporary staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors.

Child refers to anyone under the age of 18 (or up to 25 for care leavers).

Parents refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role, such as step-parents, foster carers, adoptive parents and the local authority as corporate parent.

Safeguarding Legislation and Guidance

The following safeguarding legislation and guidance has been considered when drafting this policy:

- Education Act 2002 Section 175 (maintained schools only)
- Education Act 2002 Section 157 (Independent schools incl Academies and CTC's)
- The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Teachers' Standards (Guidance for school leaders, school staff and governing bodies)
- Working Together to Safeguarding Children Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Information Sharing 2018
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused
- Filtering and monitoring standards in schools and colleges (DfE)

4. Policy Principles, Aims and Values

- All children have an equal right to protection, safeguarding and opportunities, regardless of their characteristics or circumstances.
- All adults, including staff, volunteers and governors, share responsibility for safeguarding and must act on any concerns that a child may be at risk of harm.
- The school will provide a safe, caring and supportive environment that promotes children's wellbeing and development.
- Appropriate support will be provided to children and staff involved in safeguarding concerns.

This policy aims to:

- ensure all staff understand their responsibility to safeguard children
- provide clear guidance on how to recognise and respond to concerns
- ensure children feel safe, valued, respected and listened to
- recognise that abuse can occur in families, communities and between children
- ensure concerns are identified, recorded and acted upon promptly
- promote effective communication within school and with external agencies
- support early identification and intervention to prevent escalation
- ensure safe recruitment practices are followed
- set clear expectations for professional conduct and safe working practice

Supporting and Protecting Children:

We recognise that children who are abused or experience harm may find it difficult to seek help and may show a range of behaviours or emotional responses.

The school plays a key role in providing stability, early support and protection. Positive, trusting relationships with staff are central to this.

Appledore School will:

- provide a safe and supportive environment
- encourage children to speak to trusted adults
- listen to children and take concerns seriously

- respor g
- refer to appropriate support services where needed
- work with families and partner agencies
- share information appropriately to keep children safe • teach children how to stay safe, including online and in relationships
- support children's wellbeing, confidence and independence

Appledore School community will:

- create an environment where children feel safe to talk and be heard
- ensure all children know who they can go to for help
- gather and respond to the views of children, parents and staff
- embed safeguarding across the curriculum
- teach children about risk, safety, relationships and online awareness
- ensure clear guidance on the safe use of technology is understood

5. Roles, Responsibilities and Training

We will follow the statutory guidance as set out in the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education (and associated documents and guidance), adhering to the roles, responsibilities and expectations identified for:

- Governing bodies, proprietors, and management committees.
- The headteacher
- The designated safeguarding lead
- The deputy designated safeguarding lead/s
- Staff
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

In summary these roles and responsibilities include

Governing Bodies / Proprietors

Governing bodies and proprietors hold strategic responsibility for safeguarding.

They will ensure that:

- safeguarding arrangements are effective, compliant and regularly reviewed
- there is a whole-school approach to safeguarding
- appropriate policies (e.g. safeguarding, behaviour, staff conduct) are in place
- a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is appointed with sufficient time and resources
- safer recruitment procedures are followed, including DBS checks and Single Central Record
- staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates
- pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety
- appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place
- allegations against staff are managed in line with statutory procedures (including LADO)

They will also provide challenge and oversight and ensure safeguarding is a priority across the school.

Headteacher / Principal

The Headtea for safeguarding.
They will ensure that:

- safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented effectively
- the DSL is supported with time, training and resources
- staff receive safeguarding training and understand their responsibilities
- there is a strong safeguarding culture across the school
- systems are in place for children to raise concerns and be heard
- appropriate action is taken where concerns or allegations arise
- staff wellbeing is supported

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
The DSL will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection
Key responsibilities include:

Managing referrals (the list below is not exhaustive)

- to Children's Social Care (Front Door)
- Police
- Channel (Prevent)
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Working with others

- act as a point of contact for safeguarding agencies
- support staff with safeguarding concerns
- work with parents/carers appropriately
- contribute to multi-agency plans

Information management

- maintain secure, accurate child protection records
- ensure information is shared appropriately

Raising awareness

- ensure safeguarding policies are understood
- promote a strong safeguarding culture

Training and development

- maintain up-to-date knowledge
- ensure staff receive safeguarding updates

Supporting staff

- provide advice and guidance
- support staff dealing with safeguarding issues

Child-centred practice

- understand and reflect the views, wishes and experiences of children

The DSL will be available during school hours and deputies trained to the same standard.

All Staff

All staff will play a critical frontline role in safeguarding.

They will:

- read and understand KCSIE Part 1 and Annex A
- maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”
- be able to identify signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- act in the best interests of the child

Responding to concerns

Staff will:

- report concerns immediately to the DSL
- record concerns clearly and factually
- not investigate or delay action
- support children appropriately

Disclosures

Staff must:

- listen carefully
- reassure the child
- not promise confidentiality
- pass information on without delay

Multi-agency working

- contribute to plans where required
- share information appropriately

Safeguarding environment

- help maintain a safe and supportive learning environment
- model appropriate professional conduct

Appledore School will ensure that staff, Governors, School and parents

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6. Recognising and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns 'It could happen here'

Recognise:
All staff should recognise that any child, in any setting, can be a victim of abuse and maintain an attitude of "it could happen here." Safeguarding issues are often complex and overlapping, with multiple factors present rather than isolated concerns.
Abuse, neglect, and exploitation are forms of maltreatment that can occur through harm caused or failure to prevent harm. These may take place within the family, institutional, or community settings, and can involve adults or other children. Abuse can occur both offline and online, including through the use of technology to facilitate harm. Child-on-child abuse may also take place and such abuse is never acceptable, it will be taken seriously and not dismissed as 'banter'.
Safeguarding concerns may also arise outside the home (contextual safeguarding), including risks such as sexual and criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, and radicalisation. Staff should also understand that behaviours such as substance misuse, truancy, and sexting can increase vulnerability and may be linked to child-on-child abuse.
Further details on the categories of abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect), indicators of harm, and specific safeguarding concerns are provided in the relevant appendices and statutory guidance, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

• Child missing or absent from education • Child missing from home or care • Child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE) • Bullying including cyberbullying • Domestic abuse • Drugs • Fabricated or induced illness • Faith abuse • Female genital mutilation (FGM) • Forced marriage • Gangs and youth violence	• Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG) • Mental health difficulties • Private fostering • Radicalisation • Youth produced sexual imagery (sexting) • Teenage relationship abuse • Trafficking • Child on child abuse • Upskirting • Serious violence • Sexual harassment

Staff may sometimes suspect a pupil is at risk without clear evidence, noticing changes in behaviour, unusual work, or signs of distress. While these indicators may be linked to everyday life events (such as family changes, bereavement, or illness), they could also signal abuse or safeguarding concerns. Staff will be professionally curious around such situations they will also explore barriers to attendance.
In such situations, staff will provide the pupil and/or their parents with an opportunity to talk and offer support, for example by asking if they are okay or how they can help.

Responding:

- Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL and put them in writing, see FLOW CHART A. Records should include:

nmary of the concern.
• details of how the concern was followed up and resolved.
• a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

- If the pupil does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice in FLOW CHART A and in the table below ‘pupil making a disclosure’.
- All concerns however small must be recorded and shared with the DSL as this information could provide the ‘missing’ piece of the bigger picture of the lived experience for the child.

FLOW CHART A

If a pupil discloses to a member of staff

- We recognise that disclosure takes courage; children may feel fear, shame, guilt or may not understand they are being abused.
- A child’s first experience of sharing concerns must be positive, as they may need to repeat their account to other professionals.

During their conversation with the pupil staff will

- Listen carefully and allow the child to speak freely.
- Remain calm, not show shock, and take the disclosure seriously.
- Reassure the child it is not their fault and they have done the right thing.
- Use open questions, avoid leading questions or assumptions.
- Allow silence and avoid pressure, judgement, or criticism.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact.
- Explain what will happen next and that information cannot be kept secret.

Notifying Parents

- Concerns will usually be discussed with parents by the DSL/DDSL.
- If informing parents may increase risk, advice will be sought from the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub first.
- Parents will not be informed in cases such as forced marriage or honour-based abuse where this could increase harm; police involvement may be necessary.

Making a referral

- All concerns or disclosures must be reported immediately to the DSL.
- The DSL will decide if a referral to the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub or other support is required.
- Any staff member can make a referral if necessary.
- Parents and the child will usually be informed unless this increases risk.
- If a child remains at risk or their situation does not improve, further action should be taken.
- Immediate danger requires urgent referral to the Safeguarding Hub and/or police.
- The DSL must be informed of all referrals.

Supporting our Staff

- We recognise safeguarding cases can be distressing for staff.
- Support is provided through the DSL and access to further guidance as needed.

7. Early Help and Families First

Devon adopts a graduated approach to help, including universal services, Family Help (targeted early help) and statutory intervention.
Staff will identify children and families who may benefit from early intervention and will work with the DSL to initiate appropriate support, including the use of early help assessments and multi-agency planning.
Early help aims to prevent escalation of need and improve outcomes for children by addressing concerns at the earliest possible stage.
School recognise that some children may have additional vulnerabilities due to e.g. specific need, previous childhood trauma and staff will always be professionally curious and approach such situations in a relational manner. Seeking to identify the child and families needs and strengths to improve safeguarding outcomes and lived experience.

Any child may benefit from early help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:
• Is disabled and has specific additional needs. • Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan). • Is a young carer. • Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups. • Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or from home. (CME) • Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves. • Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation. • Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse. • Has returned home to their family from care. • Is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect and/or exploitation. • Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited. • Is a privately fostered child. • Has an imprisoned parent. • Is experiencing mental health, wellbeing difficulties. • Is persistently absent from education (including persistently absent for part of the school day). • Is a child missing education (CME) • Has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit. • Is at risk of ‘honour’ based abuse such as FGM or forced marriage. • LGBTQ+, Gender questioning and gender diverse children. *This list is not exhaustive*

8. Recording, Confidentiality, Information Sharing and GDPR

The school recognises that effective safeguarding relies on timely, appropriate information sharing and accurate record-keeping. We work in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- Safeguarding information is highly sensitive and shared only on a strict need-to-know basis, as determined by the DSL or Headteacher.
- All staff have a professional duty to share information to protect children; GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 do not prevent sharing where a child is at risk.
- Staff must not promise confidentiality to a child if it could compromise their safety.
- Concerns should normally be discussed with the DSL, Headteacher, or Chair of Governors, who will decide on further sharing. However, any staff member can make a referral if necessary.
- Parents will usually be informed of referrals unless doing so would increase risk or impede a criminal investigation.
- Information should be shared early to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns.
- All information sharing must be:
    - Necessary and proportionate
    - Relevant and adequate
    - Accurate
    - Timely
    - Secure

Recording Safeguarding Concerns

All staff must:

- Use the school's agreed recording system.
- Record information factually, clearly, and promptly, including dates, times, and context.
- Include body maps where appropriate.
- Report concerns to the DSL immediately (verbally if urgent), followed by written records.
- Document decision-making, including thresholds, rationale, actions taken, support offered, and outcomes.
- Ensure the voice of the child is clearly captured.

Storage and Transfer of Records

- Safeguarding records are kept secure, confidential, and separate from pupil files.
- Records are managed in line with GDPR and statutory guidance.
- When a pupil transfers school, safeguarding files are shared securely and promptly (within 5 working days), with consideration for earlier information sharing where appropriate to support the child.

Inter-Agency Working

- The school will work collaboratively with external agencies and share relevant information to safeguard children effectively.
- Where appropriate, receiving settings may be involved in meetings (with consent) to support continuity of care.

9. Whistleblowing and allegations against staff

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of safeguarding and child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues, poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding arrangements. If it becomes necessary to consult outside the school, they should speak in the first instance, to the LADO following the Whistleblowing and Managing Allegations Policy.

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk
Staff should follow the schools agreed process if they have a concern for the Headteacher Whistleblowing and Managing Allegations policy.
All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents/carers to be conducted in view of other adults. Guidance about conduct and safe practice, including safe use of mobile phones by staff and volunteers will be given at induction. All staff must adhere to the school's **Staff Code of Conduct** and safer working practice guidance.
This includes:

- Maintaining professional boundaries
- Using technology appropriately
- Avoiding behaviour that could be misinterpreted

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Suspension of the member of staff, against whom an allegation has been made, needs careful consideration, and the Headteacher will seek the advice of the LADO and an HR Consultant in making this decision.
Staff, parents and governors are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing, including content placed on social media sites.
School will ensure that pupils are aware of how they can raise a concern should they be worried about a member of staff conduct. This may be for example by talking to a trusted adult, using an online 'tell us' button, anonymous reporting slips.

10. Physical Intervention

- Physical intervention will only be used as a last resort, where a child is at risk of harming themselves or others, and only the minimum force necessary will be applied.
- All incidents must be recorded and witnessed.
- Staff likely to use physical intervention will receive appropriate training.
- For children who may require planned physical intervention such plans will be agreed with pupils, parents and staff and included in care plans and/or risk assessments.
- Any intervention causing injury or distress may be subject to safeguarding or disciplinary procedures.

- Appro iised, and staff follow 'Safe Practice' guidance to maintain clear boundaries.

11. Online Safety

Appledore School recognises that online safety is a key component of safeguarding and that risks to children can occur both online and offline. Such risks can also include the use of Artificial Intelligence.

- Online safety is a whole-school responsibility and part of the safeguarding culture.
- Risks may include content, contact, conduct, and commerce harms.
- Children should be supported to use technology safely, respectfully, and responsibly.

The DSL will ensure appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place to safeguard pupils and with the support of the Governing Board hold regular review of systems to ensure effectiveness (as a minimum annually).
Should incidents/online concerns be reported they will be treated as a disclosure of concern/ safeguarding issue: recorded, investigated and supported.
In addition, staff will:

- Receive regular training on online safety risks
- Model safe and appropriate use of technology

Further detail on schools' response to online and AI risks can be found in our Internet Safety Policy.

12. Alternative Provision, Off-Site Safeguarding

Where pupils attend alternative provision or off-site settings, the school will ensure that:

- Appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place
- Providers have suitable safeguarding policies and procedures
- Staff working with children are appropriately vetted
- There is clear communication between the school and the provider

The school retains overall responsibility for safeguarding pupils placed in alternative provision.

13. Safeguarding through the Curriculum

The school recognises that safeguarding is not only about response, but also prevention through education. Pupils are taught how to recognise risks, develop resilience, and keep themselves safe.

- Safeguarding education is embedded across the curriculum (e.g. RSHE, PSHE, Computing, assemblies).
- Learning is age-appropriate, inclusive, and progressive.
- Pupils are supported to develop knowledge, skills, and confidence to stay safe in a range of contexts.

In line with statutory guidance, pupils are taught about:
Personal Safety and Wellbeing

- Healthy and respectful relationships
- Consent, boundaries, and recognising abuse
- Mental health, wellbeing, and seeking support

Online Safety

- Safe and responsible use of technology

- Risks exploitation, and harmful content
- Digital footprints and privacy

Risk and Vulnerability

- Exploitation (criminal and sexual)
- Child-on-Child abuse
- Substance misuse and risky behaviours
- Radicalisation and extremism (Prevent duty)

Wider Safeguarding Issues

- Domestic abuse
- FGM, forced marriage, honour-based abuse (as age-appropriate)
- County lines and serious youth violence

Skills and Protective Behaviours

Pupils are taught to:

- Recognise unsafe situations and warning signs
- Identify trusted adults and know how to seek help
- Report concerns confidently
- Make informed and safe decisions

Pupil Voice and Participation

- Pupils are encouraged to share worries and concerns
- Systems are in place to ensure pupils feel listened to and supported
- Feedback from pupils helps shape safeguarding practice

Staff Responsibilities

- All staff understand their role in reinforcing safeguarding messages
- Teaching is delivered by trained staff and supported through regular safeguarding updates
- Staff respond appropriately to any concerns arising from learning

Partnership with Parents and Agencies

- The school works with parents to promote safeguarding messages at home
- External agencies may support delivery (e.g. police, health professionals)

14. Devon Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements

The school works in accordance with the **Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership (Devon SCP)** multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

These arrangements are led by the three statutory safeguarding partners:

- Devon County Council
- NHS Devon
- Devon & Cornwall Police

The school will:

- Follow the Devon SCP policies and procedures and the Southwest Child Protection Procedures
- Apply the Devon Levels of Need framework to support decision-making and referrals
- Make referrals through the Children's Front Door (Request for Support) in line with local procedures
- Participate fully in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups and strategy discussions

- Share uard children
- Follow the Devon SCP escalation protocol where there are professional disagreements to ensure that children's safety is prioritised
- Engage with and implement learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and local safeguarding learning

15. Escalation and Professional Challenge

We recognise the importance of professional curiosity and challenge in safeguarding children.
If a member of staff feels that:

- A safeguarding concern has not been taken seriously
- Appropriate action has not been taken
- A child remains at risk

They must:

- Escalate their concern to the DSL or senior leader
- Follow the school's escalation procedures
- Refer directly to children's social care if necessary

The school will support staff to challenge decisions and will follow local escalation (professional challenge) procedures where there are disagreements between agencies.

16. Policy Links

This policy should be read alongside and links to our policies on:

• Behaviour • Staff Behaviour Policy / Code of Conduct • Whistleblowing • Anti-bullying • Health & Safety • Allegations against staff • Parental concerns • Attendance • Curriculum • PSHE • Teaching and Learning	• Administration of medicines • Drug Education • Relationships and Sex Education • Physical intervention • Online Safety, including staff use of mobile phones • Risk Assessment • Recruitment and Selection • Child Sexual Exploitation • Intimate Care • Radicalisation and Extremism • Data Protection/GDPR Guidance

Children's Front Door

If you are concerned that a child is being abused, or to request Targeted Early Help (L3) support you can

call: 0345 155 1071 **or**

complete the Request for Support online form available at:

https://devoncountycouncil.outsystemsenterprise.com/MASH/homepage

The DevonSCP Children's Front Door **consultation line** for **professionals only:** to request number email devonscp@devon.gov.uk.

Emergency Duty Team out of hours **0345 6000 388**

Police non-emergency 101

For all LADO enquiries Exeter (01392) 384964

childsc.localauthoritydesignatedofficersecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

Further info: https://new.devon.gov.uk

Managing allegations - Devon Children and Families Partnership (dcfp.org.uk)

Early Help

Locality Early Help Mailbox

North: earlyhelpnorthsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

Mid & East: earlyhelpmideastsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

South & West: earlyhelpsouthsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

Exeter: earlyhelpexetersecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

For emergencies outside of office hours please call:

0345 6000 388