

The Manor School

Safeguarding Policy

Pack 1

Child Protection Policy

2025 - 2026

Reviewed by:	Sariena Watkins
Review Date:	11.03.2026
Date of next review:	September 2026

Legal Status:

Compliance with the Independent School Standards (ISS).

This policy is written in accordance with the Independent School Standards (ISS) and forms part of The Manor School's statutory safeguarding framework.

It should be read alongside:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Education Act 2002
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Local Safeguarding Partnership procedures (Staffordshire)

The Manor School meets its legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by ensuring that all staff understand their responsibilities, follow clear procedures, and work in partnership with families and external agencies.

Applies to:

- The whole school inclusive of activities outside of the normal school hours.
- All staff (teaching and support staff), the proprietor and volunteers working in the school.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to:

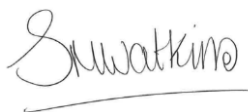
- Protect every child at The Manor School from harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Ensure staff understand how to identify concerns early and respond promptly.
- Promote a culture where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Embed trauma-informed, SEND-sensitive practice across all safeguarding activity.
- Provide clarity on how concerns are recorded, shared, and escalated.
- Ensure compliance with statutory guidance and local safeguarding expectations.

At its heart, this policy exists to ensure that every learner feels safe, valued, and able to engage fully in their education.

Date: 11th March 2026

Date: 23rd March 2026

Signed:



Sariena Watkins
Associate Headteacher



Signed:

Kelly Pope
Executive Headteacher

The Manor School is committed to creating a safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment where all children — particularly those with SEND — are protected from harm. We recognise that our pupils may have additional vulnerabilities, communication differences, or past experiences that require sensitive, proactive safeguarding practice.

We operate a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, neglect, discrimination, and child-on-child harm. Safeguarding is embedded in our curriculum, our culture, and our daily interactions. All staff are trained to notice early signs of distress, respond with curiosity and care, and act in the best interests of the child at all times. Safeguarding is not a single action; it is a continuous commitment to safety, dignity, and trust.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff (permanent, temporary, agency, volunteers)
- Governors and Directors
- Contractors and visitors
- Pupils and their families
- Any adult working on behalf of the school

It covers safeguarding concerns that occur:

- On school premises
- Off-site during trips or activities
- Online
- In the community
- Within the home or care setting

It also applies to concerns about children who are not currently on roll but who come to the attention of staff.

Principles

Our safeguarding practice is guided by the following principles:

- **Child-centred practice:** The needs, voice, and lived experience of the child are at the centre of every decision.
- **Trauma-informed and SEND-aware:** We recognise that behaviour is communication and respond with curiosity, not judgement.
- **Early intervention:** We act quickly to prevent concerns from escalating.
- **Partnership working:** We work closely with families, social care, health, and other agencies.
- **Transparency and accountability:** Staff understand their responsibilities and follow clear procedures.
- **Safe culture:** We promote openness, professional boundaries, and reflective practice.

Statutory Requirements

The Manor School fulfils its statutory safeguarding duties by:

- Following KCSIE and ensuring all staff read and understand Part 1.
- Appointing a trained Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputies.
- Ensuring all staff receive regular safeguarding and child protection training.
- Maintaining robust safer recruitment procedures.
- Keeping accurate, secure safeguarding records.
- Referring concerns to children’s social care without delay.
- Working with the Local Safeguarding Partnership.
- Ensuring pupils receive high-quality safeguarding education.
- Reviewing safeguarding policies annually.

Company Philosophy in Safeguarding

At Bayleaf Education, our safeguarding practice is rooted in our company philosophy: providing trauma-informed, therapeutic care where children and young people feel safe, valued and understood. We nurture trust, emotional growth and resilience through compassionate, consistent and relationship-led support.

These values sit alongside our CARE principles — Curiosity, Accountability, Respect and Engagement - which shape the professional conduct and relational practice of all staff.

- C = Curiosity and a bias for action fuel our innovation.
- A = Accountability to those we serve help us deliver results.
- R = Respect and Integrity are demonstrated in our actions.
- E = Engaged and Passionate Employees define our company

Our values guide every aspect of our safeguarding approach:

Value	How it is embedded in Safeguarding
Curiosity	We seek to understand the child’s lived experience. Staff approach concerns with curiosity rather than assumption, recognising that behaviour is a form of communication. This helps us identify unmet needs early and respond in a way that protects, supports and empowers.
Courage	We act with moral courage to safeguard children. This means speaking up, challenging unsafe practice, and taking decisive action when a child may be at risk. We do not avoid difficult conversations; we prioritise the safety and wellbeing of every young person.
Community	Safeguarding is a shared responsibility. We work collaboratively with families, professionals and the wider community to create a protective network around each child. Our culture is one of connection, belonging and collective accountability.

The Manor School Values and Safeguarding Culture

Safeguarding at The Manor School is rooted in our six core values. These values shape every decision, every interaction, and every policy. They ensure that our approach to child protection is not only compliant, but deeply human, relational, and responsive to the needs of our learners.

Value	How it is embedded in our policy
Respect	We treat every child with dignity, curiosity, and unconditional positive regard. Respect means listening to children’s voices — spoken, signed, symbolised, or expressed through behaviour — and responding with care. It means recognising each child’s identity, culture, communication style, and lived experience.
Independence	We empower children to understand their rights, make safe choices, and develop the confidence to speak up. Independence in safeguarding means teaching pupils how to recognise unsafe situations, how to ask for help, and how to navigate the world with increasing autonomy, supported by adults who scaffold rather than control
Confidence	We build a culture where children feel safe to express themselves and where staff feel confident to act. Confidence means ensuring every adult knows what to do, when to do it, and who to speak to. It also means creating an environment where children trust that adults will listen, believe them, and take action.
Achievement	We believe that children thrive when they feel safe, valued, and understood. Achievement in safeguarding is not academic — it is the achievement of safety, stability, and emotional security. When children are protected from harm, they are free to learn, grow, and flourish
Perseverance	Safeguarding is ongoing, reflective work that requires vigilance and resilience. Perseverance means noticing small changes, following up concerns, and staying curious even when situations are complex. It means never giving up on a child, a family, or a safeguarding concern.
Kindness	Kindness is the foundation of our safeguarding culture. It shapes how we speak to children, how we respond to distress, and how we support families. Kindness ensures that safeguarding is not just procedural — it is relational, compassionate, and rooted in care.

How Our Values Shape Safeguarding Practice

At The Manor School, our values are not abstract ideals; they are lived behaviours. They guide us to:

- Respond to concerns with empathy and professionalism
- Prioritise the child’s voice and experience
- Use trauma-informed approaches that reduce shame and increase safety
- Recognise the additional vulnerabilities of children with SEND
- Work collaboratively with families and external agencies
- Maintain high expectations of ourselves and each other
- Create a culture where safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility

Our values ensure that safeguarding is not simply a statutory duty — it is a moral commitment to every child in our care.

Definitions:

To ensure clarity and consistency across our safeguarding practice, The Manor School uses the following definitions, drawn from Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), Working Together to Safeguard Children, and relevant legislation. These definitions help staff recognise concerns early, understand the language used by partner agencies, and respond appropriately to the needs of our learners.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

It includes:

- Protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring children grow up in safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Child Protection

Child protection is a specific aspect of safeguarding.

It refers to the actions taken when a child is:

- Suffering harm
- At risk of suffering harm
- Likely to be harmed without intervention

Child protection procedures are activated when concerns meet statutory thresholds.

Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. A child may be abused by an adult or adults, or by another child or children. Abuse can be:

Physical Abuse

Causing physical harm to a child.

Examples include hitting, shaking, burning, poisoning, or fabricating illness.

Emotional Abuse

Persistent emotional maltreatment that impacts a child's emotional development.

Examples include humiliation, intimidation, rejection, or exposure to domestic abuse.

Sexual Abuse

Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

Includes contact and non-contact abuse, grooming, and online sexual harm.

Neglect

Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or emotional needs.

Includes inadequate supervision, lack of medical care, or failure to provide food, clothing, or shelter.

Harm

Harm refers to the ill-treatment or impairment of a child's health or development.

This includes:

- Physical harm
- Emotional harm
- Sexual harm

- Neglect
- Exposure to domestic abuse
- Exposure to exploitation

Significant Harm

Significant harm is the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention by children's social care. It may result from a single traumatic event or a combination of long-term concerns.

Early Help

Early Help refers to support provided as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. It aims to:

- Reduce escalation
- Strengthen family capacity
- Improve outcomes
- Prevent statutory intervention

At The Manor School, Early Help is proactive, relational, and tailored to the needs of children with SEND.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is the senior member of staff responsible for:

- Managing safeguarding concerns
- Liaising with social care and external agencies
- Overseeing safeguarding training
- Maintaining safeguarding records
- Ensuring a strong safeguarding culture

Deputy DSLs support this role and are trained to the same standard.

Child-on-Child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse occurs when a child harms another child.

This includes:

- Bullying (including online)
- Physical abuse
- Sexual violence or harassment
- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Initiation/hazing
- Upskirting
- Coercive or controlling behaviour

The Manor School has zero tolerance for child-on-child abuse.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence refers to offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, including rape, assault by penetration, and sexual assault.

Sexual harassment refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that:

- Violates dignity
- Creates a hostile or sexualised environment
- Intimidates, humiliates, or degrades

This can occur online or offline.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)

HSB describes sexual behaviours that are:

- Developmentally inappropriate
- Problematic
- Abusive
- Violent

HSB can occur between children of any age and may be online or in person.

Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

A form of sexual abuse where children are manipulated or coerced into sexual activity in exchange for something (money, gifts, status, affection).

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Where children are coerced into criminal activity, including county lines, theft, or drug distribution.

Modern Slavery / Trafficking

The movement or recruitment of children for exploitation.

Children Missing from Education (CME)

A child is CME if they are:

- Of compulsory school age
- Not on a school roll
- Not receiving suitable education

CME is a significant safeguarding risk.

Low-Level Concern

A low-level concern is any behaviour by an adult that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct
- Causes unease or “nagging doubt”
- Does not meet the harm threshold

Low-level concerns help identify patterns early and protect both children and staff.

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the act of reporting wrongdoing that is in the public interest.

Staff are protected when raising concerns about:

- Safeguarding failures
- Unsafe practice
- Misconduct
- Criminal behaviour

Contextual Safeguarding

Contextual safeguarding recognises that harm can occur:

- In the community
- Online
- In peer groups
- In public spaces

We assess risks beyond the home and school environment.

Roles & Responsibilities

Safeguarding is a collective responsibility. Every adult at The Manor School plays a vital role in creating a safe, nurturing environment where children feel protected, respected and able to thrive. The following outlines the responsibilities of all individuals and groups within our safeguarding system.

The Proprietor / Governance (Directors and Executive Headteacher)

The Proprietor is legally responsible for ensuring that The Manor School meets all statutory safeguarding duties. They will:

- Ensure the school has effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place
- Appoint a suitably qualified Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Ensure safeguarding is prioritised in strategic decision-making
- Monitor safeguarding practice through regular reports from the DSL
- Ensure safer recruitment procedures are followed
- Oversee the school's response to allegations against staff
- Ensure staff receive appropriate training and supervision
- Review safeguarding policies annually

Governance ensures that safeguarding is not only compliant, but embedded in the culture and values of the school.

The Headteacher - Sariena Watkins

The Headteacher holds overall operational responsibility for safeguarding and will:

- Ensure the implementation of this policy across the school
- Support the DSL and ensure they have sufficient time, training, and resources
- Ensure all staff understand their safeguarding duties
- Promote a culture of openness, professional curiosity, and reflective practice
- Ensure safer recruitment processes are followed
- Ensure concerns about staff are managed in line with Part 4 of KCSIE
- Ensure safeguarding is woven into curriculum, behaviour, and pastoral systems

The Headteacher models the values of respect, kindness, and perseverance in all safeguarding work.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead – Sariena Watkins (DSL)

The DSL is the senior lead for safeguarding and child protection. They are responsible for:

Managing Referrals

- Referring concerns to children's social care
- Liaising with the police where necessary
- Supporting staff who raise concerns
- Ensuring timely escalation when concerns persist

Record Keeping

- Maintaining accurate, secure safeguarding records
- Ensuring concerns are logged promptly and chronologically
- Monitoring patterns and emerging risks

Training & Supervision

- Ensuring all staff receive appropriate safeguarding training
- Providing safeguarding updates throughout the year
- Receiving regular supervision to support decision-making

Multi-Agency Working

- Attending strategy meetings, case conferences, and core groups
- Working collaboratively with social care, health, and other agencies
- Ensuring information is shared appropriately and lawfully

Safeguarding Culture

- Leading on safeguarding audits and policy reviews
- Ensuring safeguarding is visible in daily practice
- Promoting trauma-informed, SEND-aware approaches

The DSL is supported by **Deputy DSLs (Jude Taylor)**, who are trained to the same standard and can act in their absence.

All Staff

Every member of staff has a duty to safeguard children. All staff will:

- Read and understand Part 1 of KCSIE
- Attend safeguarding and child protection training
- Maintain professional curiosity and notice early signs of concern
- Record and report concerns immediately to the DSL
- Understand the needs and vulnerabilities of children with SEND
- Promote a culture of respect, kindness, and safety
- Maintain professional boundaries at all times
- Challenge unsafe practice or behaviour

Staff do not investigate concerns — they report them.

Agency Staff, Contractors, and Visitors

All adults working on site must:

- Follow the school's safeguarding procedures
- Wear identification at all times
- Report concerns immediately to the DSL
- Maintain professional boundaries

Contractors working during school hours will be supervised unless they have appropriate checks.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers play a vital role in safeguarding. They are expected to:

- Share relevant information with the school
- Work collaboratively with staff and external agencies
- Support their child's wellbeing and attendance
- Inform the school of changes in circumstances

We recognise that families may need support, and we approach all conversations with empathy and respect.

Pupils

Children at The Manor School are encouraged to:

- Speak to trusted adults when they feel unsafe
- Use communication systems that work for them (speech, AAC, symbols, gesture)
- Treat others with respect and kindness
- Understand their rights and personal boundaries

We teach pupils that their voice matters — in whatever form it is expressed.

Local Authority and External Agencies

We work closely with:

- Children’s Social Care
- Early Help Teams
- Police
- Health professionals
- CAMHS
- Virtual School Heads
- Local Safeguarding Partnership

These agencies provide specialist support, guidance, and intervention when needed.

SEND-Specific Responsibilities

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may face additional barriers to recognising, understanding, or reporting abuse. At The Manor School, we take proactive steps to ensure that safeguarding practice is fully accessible, responsive, and attuned to the needs of our learners. All staff have a responsibility to understand and respond to the unique vulnerabilities of children with SEND. This includes:

Understanding Vulnerability

Staff must recognise that children with SEND may be:

- Less able to recognise unsafe situations
- More reliant on adults for personal care
- More trusting of adults or peers
- More likely to experience communication barriers
- More likely to have experienced trauma or disrupted relationships
- At increased risk of bullying, exploitation, or child-on-child abuse

Staff respond with curiosity, patience, and sensitivity, avoiding assumptions about a child’s understanding or intent.

Communication and Expression

Staff must ensure that safeguarding conversations and reporting routes are accessible to all pupils. This includes:

- Using AAC, PECS, Makaton, symbols, or visual supports
- Observing behaviour as communication
- Providing quiet, regulated spaces for disclosure
- Allowing additional processing time
- Using social stories or visual scripts to explain safety concepts

Staff understand that a disclosure may not be verbal — it may be shown through behaviour, avoidance, changes in mood or distress.

Trauma-Informed Practice

Staff must:

- Respond to behaviour with curiosity rather than judgement
- Do not use punitive responses that may retraumatise pupils
- Prioritise emotional regulation and relational safety

- Understand that past trauma may influence current behaviour

Safeguarding decisions always consider the child's developmental stage, sensory profile, and emotional needs.

Personal and Intimate Care

Staff providing personal care must:

- Follow the school's Intimate Care Policy
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Ensure dignity, privacy, and consent
- Report any concerns immediately
- Record any unexplained marks or injuries

Children are supported to develop independence wherever possible.

Multi-Agency Collaboration

Staff must work closely with:

- SENCO
- Therapists
- Social workers
- Health professionals
- Residential care teams (where applicable)

This ensures that safeguarding decisions are informed by a holistic understanding of the child.

Reasonable Adjustments in Safeguarding Processes

When responding to concerns, staff must consider:

- Adjusted questioning approaches
- Additional adult support
- Familiar communication tools
- Sensory needs during meetings
- The child's preferred method of expression

Safeguarding processes must never disadvantage a child because of their disability or communication style.

Promoting Independence and Protective Behaviours

Staff teach pupils:

- How to recognise safe and unsafe touch
- How to identify trusted adults
- How to say "no" in ways that work for them
- How to understand personal boundaries
- How to seek help

This is delivered through adapted PSHE, social stories, and visual resources.

SEND and Child-on-Child Abuse

Staff must be alert to:

- Subtle forms of bullying
- Mimicking stims or communication devices
- Coercion masked as "friendship"
- Power imbalances between pupils

- Changes in behaviour or routines

SEND-specific vulnerabilities are always considered when assessing risk

Early Help

Early Help is a central part of safeguarding at The Manor School. We believe that children and families thrive when support is offered early, collaboratively, and without stigma. Our approach is proactive, relational, and rooted in our values of kindness, respect, and perseverance. Early Help is not a single service — it is a way of working that ensures children receive the right support, at the right time, from the right people.

What is Early Help?

Early Help refers to support provided as soon as a concern emerges, at any point in a child's life. It aims to:

- Prevent concerns from escalating
- Strengthen family capacity
- Improve outcomes for children
- Reduce the need for statutory intervention
- Promote safety, stability, and wellbeing

For our children with SEND, Early Help is especially important. It allows us to respond to communication differences, sensory needs, emotional regulation challenges, or family pressures before they become safeguarding risks.

Our Approach to Early Help

At The Manor School, Early Help is:

- ✓ **Trauma-informed:** We recognise that behaviour is communication and respond with curiosity, not judgement.
- ✓ **SEND-aware:** We adapt support to each child's communication style, sensory profile, and developmental stage.
- ✓ **Relational:** We build trusting relationships with families, recognising that they are experts in their child.
- ✓ **Holistic:** We consider the child's home, school, community, and online environments.
- ✓ **Collaborative:** We work closely with Staffordshire's Early Help services and other agencies.
- ✓ **Strengths-based:** We focus on what families do well and build on existing protective factors.

Identifying the Need for Early Help

Staff may identify the need for Early Help through:

- Changes in behaviour, mood, or presentation
- Attendance concerns or patterns of lateness
- Emerging mental health needs
- Difficulties at home
- Concerns about online safety
- Child-on-child conflict
- Family stress, bereavement, or financial hardship
- SEND-related vulnerabilities
- Disclosures from the child or family

Staff do not diagnose or investigate — they notice, record, and share concerns with the DSL/DDSL.

Staffordshire Early Help Pathways

As a Staffordshire school, we follow the local authority's Early Help processes. This includes:

Staffordshire Early Help Assessment (EHA).

The EHA is used to understand a child's needs holistically and coordinate support. The DSL or a trained staff member may complete an EHA with the family's consent.

Staffordshire Families First

Families First provides targeted support for families experiencing challenges such as:

- Parenting difficulties
- Emotional wellbeing concerns
- Domestic abuse
- Housing or financial issues
- SEND-related pressures

Staffordshire's Local Support Teams (LST)

LSTs offer multi-agency support and may lead Early Help plans.

Staffordshire Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS)

If concerns escalate or a child's needs become more complex, the DSL may consult CASS for advice or to discuss thresholds.

What Early Help Might Look Like

Support is tailored to each child and family. Early Help support may include:

- Pastoral support from a trusted adult
- Adapted communication tools (AAC, symbols, social stories)
- Emotional regulation strategies
- Attendance support
- Family meetings
- Signposting to community services
- Support from therapists or external professionals
- Multi-agency Early Help plans
- Home-school communication systems
- Support for transitions or routines

Working with Families

We recognise that families may need time, reassurance, and flexibility. We approach families with empathy, respect, and partnership. This means:

- Listening without judgement
- Recognising the pressures families may face
- Being transparent about concerns
- Offering support, not blame
- Ensuring families understand the Early Help process
- Involving families in all decisions

Reviewing and Escalating Early Help

Early Help is regularly reviewed to ensure it is effective. If:

- concerns persist
- risks increase
- new information emerges
- the child's needs escalate

The DSL will consider:

- consulting Staffordshire CASS
- making a referral to children's social care
- requesting multi-agency involvement
- adjusting the Early Help plan

Escalation is always done in the best interests of the child.

Recording Early Help

All Early Help activity is:

- recorded securely on the Schools Safeguarding log (SchoolPod – Safeguarding Chronology)
- monitored by the DSL/DDSL
- shared appropriately with relevant professionals
- reviewed regularly

Patterns and emerging risks are tracked to ensure timely intervention.

Thresholds for Intervention

Understanding thresholds helps staff recognise the level of need a child is experiencing and ensures that concerns are responded to promptly, proportionately and in line with Staffordshire's Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) guidance. At The Manor School, thresholds are never used to minimise concerns — they are used to guide action, support professional curiosity, and ensure that children receive the right help at the right time. We recognise that children with SEND may present differently, communicate differently, or mask distress. Staff must always consider the child's developmental stage, communication profile, and lived experience when assessing risk.

Overview of Threshold Levels

Staffordshire uses a four-level model of need. The Manor School aligns with this model:

Level 1 — Universal Needs

Children with no additional needs. These children are thriving, attending school, and making expected progress. Their needs are met through:

- Quality first teaching
- Pastoral support
- Universal services (GP, dentist, health visitor)

Staff action:

No safeguarding referral required. Continue monitoring and nurturing positive relationships.

Level 2 — Emerging Needs (Early Help)

Children who would benefit from additional support. These children may be experiencing:

- Low-level emotional or behavioural difficulties
- Emerging attendance concerns
- Family stress or changes at home
- SEND-related vulnerabilities
- Early signs of anxiety, withdrawal, or dysregulation
- Difficulties with friendships or peer relationships

Staff action:

- Record the concern

- Inform the DSL
- DSL considers Early Help
- Staffordshire Early Help Assessment (EHA) may be initiated with consent

Level 3 – Targeted Needs (Intensive Early Help / Multi-Agency Support)

Children with more complex needs requiring coordinated support. Indicators may include:

- Persistent attendance issues
- Escalating behaviour or emotional distress
- Family breakdown or significant parental difficulties
- Concerns about online safety
- Emerging exploitation risks (CSE/CCE)
- Repeated child-on-child incidents (Evidenced on Low Level Monitoring Log - SchoolPod)
- Increasing concerns despite Early Help

Staff action:

- Record and report to DSL
- DSL consults Staffordshire's Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS)
- Multi-agency Early Help plan may be led by Families First or Local Support Teams

This level requires multi-agency coordination.

Level 4 – Significant Harm (Statutory Intervention)

Children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Domestic abuse
- Exploitation (CSE/CCE)
- Serious mental health concerns
- Children missing from education where risk is high
- Immediate safety concerns

Staff action:

- Report to DSL immediately
- DSL contacts Staffordshire CASS or Police
- If a child is in immediate danger, DSL/DDSL to call 999

This level requires urgent statutory intervention.

Professional Curiosity and SEND Considerations

Thresholds must never be applied rigidly. Staff must:

- Look beyond the behaviour
- Consider communication differences
- Recognise that SEND can mask or mimic safeguarding concerns
- Notice small changes in presentation
- Seek the child's voice in whatever form it is expressed

A child with SEND may reach a higher threshold earlier because:

- They may be less able to recognise or report abuse
- They may rely on adults for personal care
- They may be more vulnerable to coercion or exploitation
- Their distress may present as dysregulation rather than words

Escalation and De-escalation

Safeguarding is dynamic. Thresholds can change quickly.

The DSL/DDSL will escalate concerns when:

- Risks increase
- New information emerges
- Early Help is not improving outcomes
- The child's safety is compromised

Concerns may be stepped down when:

- Risks reduce
- Support is effective
- The child's situation stabilises
- Families engage positively with Early Help

All decisions are recorded and reviewed.

Staffordshire CASS (Children's Advice and Support Service)

The DSL/DDSL may contact CASS for:

- Threshold advice
- Consultation
- Referral for statutory assessment
- Support with complex cases

CASS provides guidance on whether concerns meet:

- Section 17 (Child in Need)
- Section 47 (Child Protection)

Recording Threshold Decisions

The DSL records:

- The level of need
- Rationale for the threshold
- Actions taken
- Agencies involved
- Review dates

This ensures transparency, accountability, and continuity of care.

How to Report a Concern

Staff must follow three steps:

1. NOTICE

Observe what you see, hear, or sense.

Stay calm, present, and supportive.

2. RECORD

Write a factual, objective account as soon as possible.

Include:

- What happened
- When it happened
- Who was involved
- What the child said or communicated (exact words where possible)
- Your observations (not interpretations)

3. REPORT

Share the concern with the DSL immediately.

If the DSL is unavailable, report to a Deputy DSL.

If no DSL is available, report to the Executive Headteacher.

Staff must not delay reporting under any circumstances.

If a Child Makes a Disclosure

Children may disclose through:

- Words
- Behaviour
- Drawings
- AAC devices
- Gestures
- Changes in regulation

Staff must:

- Listen without interruption
- Stay calm and grounded
- Use the child's preferred communication method
- Avoid leading questions
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing
- Never promise confidentiality
- Record the disclosure verbatim where possible
- Report to the DSL immediately

The child's safety and emotional regulation come first.

Immediate Risk

If a child is in immediate danger, staff must:

- Inform the DSL/DDSL as soon as it is safe to do so the DSL/DDSL will call 999

Examples include:

- Serious physical harm
- Sexual assault
- A child going missing
- A child expressing intent to harm themselves or others
- FGM has occurred

- A dangerous adult on site

Staff must never wait for the DSL. If a child is at immediate risk and you cannot find a DSL/DDSL call 999.

What Happens After a Concern is Reported

The DSL/DDSL/Headteacher will:

- Review the information
- Decide the appropriate threshold
- Take action (Early Help, CASS consultation, referral, monitoring)
- Record all decisions and rationale
- Keep staff informed on a need-to-know basis

Staff may be asked for additional information but are not responsible for investigating.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Safeguarding information is shared:

- On a need-to-know basis
- In line with Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- To protect the child's safety and wellbeing

Staff must never:

- Discuss concerns with other staff unnecessarily
- Speak to parents before consulting the DSL
- Store safeguarding information on personal devices

The DSL ensures that information is shared lawfully and appropriately.

Recording Concerns

Good record-keeping protects children and staff. All concerns must be:

- Recorded promptly
- Factual and objective
- Logged on the school's safeguarding system (SchoolPod)
- Monitored for patterns or escalation

Allegations Against Staff

At The Manor School, we take all allegations against staff seriously. Children must feel safe with every adult in our community, and staff must feel protected by clear, fair processes. Allegations may relate to staff, volunteers, contractors, agency workers, or any adult working on behalf of the school.

An allegation is any concern that an adult has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk
- Behaved in a way that raises concerns about their suitability to work with children

- Behaved inappropriately online or outside of school in a way that impacts safeguarding

This includes behaviour that occurs on or off site, online or offline, and in or outside of working hours.

Reporting Allegations

If a staff member has a concern about another adult's behaviour (i.e. the concern relates to a member of staff, volunteer, contractor, or visitor) they must:

- Report directly to the Headteacher
- If the concern is about the Headteacher, report to the Executive Headteacher (Kelly Pope)
- If the concern is about the EHT, report to the Director of Education (Wayne Cooper)

Staff must not:

- Investigate
- Confront the adult
- Discuss the concern with colleagues
- Speak to the child's family

Confidentiality is essential.

The Role of the Headteacher / EHT / Director of Education

The Headteacher (or EHT or Director of Education) will:

- Gather basic information (not investigate)
- Contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) **within one working day**
- Follow Staffordshire's procedures for managing allegations
- Ensure the child is safe and supported
- Ensure the staff member is treated fairly and with dignity
- Record all actions and decisions

If the allegation involves a potential criminal offence, the police may need to be involved.

Low-Level Concerns vs Allegations

A low-level concern does not meet the harm threshold but still requires recording and review whereas an allegation meets the threshold for LADO involvement. The DSL/DSL and Headteacher will determine the correct pathway.

Reporting Low-Level Concerns

Low-level concerns must be reported in the same way as any other concern about a member of staff. Low-level concerns help us identify patterns early and protect both children and staff.

A low-level concern includes behaviour that is:

- Inconsistent with the staff code of conduct
- Causing unease or "nagging doubt"
- Potentially inappropriate, even if not harmful

Suspension

Suspension is not automatic and is a neutral act. It is considered when:

- A child may be at risk
- The allegation is serious
- The staff member's presence may impede the investigation

Outcomes

LADO investigations may conclude that the allegation is:

- Substantiated
- Unsubstantiated
- Unfounded
- Malicious
- False

The school will follow all recommended actions, including referrals to the DBS where required.

Support for Staff and Pupils

Safeguarding is always prioritised and staff are treated with fairness and respect. We provide:

- Emotional support for the child
- Clear communication with families (where appropriate)
- Support for the staff member, including access to HR and wellbeing services

Reporting Concerns About the School's Safeguarding Practice (Whistleblowing)

If a staff member is worried that:

- Safeguarding procedures are not being followed
- Concerns are not being taken seriously
- A child is at risk due to organisational failings

They must follow the Whistleblowing Policy - Staff are protected when raising concerns in good faith.

Information Sharing

Information sharing is essential to safeguarding. We share information to protect children, not to protect systems. Children are protected when professionals share concerns promptly, lawfully, and with clarity. At The Manor School, we follow the principles set out in:

- KCSIE
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR
- Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board guidance

Key Principles

We share information when:

- A child is at risk of harm
- It will support Early Help
- It will support multi-agency working
- It is necessary for safeguarding

We do not need consent to share information if:

- A child is at risk of significant harm
- Seeking consent would place a child at further risk
- A crime may have been committed

What Staff Must Do

Staff do not decide what information is shared externally — this is the DSL's responsibility. Staff must:

- Record concerns factually
- Share concerns with the DSL/DDSL immediately
- Never store safeguarding information on personal devices
- Never discuss safeguarding information with colleagues unnecessarily

The Role of the DSL

The DSL ensures that information is:

- Accurate
- Relevant
- Shared with the right people
- Shared at the right time
- Recorded securely
- Stored in line with statutory requirements

Multi-Agency Working

The DSL works closely with Staffordshire CASS, Families First, LADO, police, and other agencies.

We follow Staffordshire's protocols for secure communication. We share information with:

- Children's Social Care
- Police
- Health professionals
- Education settings
- Staffordshire Early Help services
- Residential care teams (where applicable)

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is never used as a reason to withhold information that could protect a child.

We share information on a need-to-know basis only.

Record Keeping

Good records protect children and staff. Accurate, timely, and secure record keeping is essential to safeguarding.

Records help us:

- Track patterns
- Understand the child's lived experience
- Support decision-making
- Provide evidence for referrals
- Ensure continuity of care

What Must Be Recorded

Records must be factual, objective, and free from personal opinion. Staff must record:

- Concerns or disclosures
- Observations (not interpretations)
- Dates, times, and locations
- Who was present
- Exact words used by the child where possible
- Actions taken
- Who the concern was reported to
- DSL/DDSL decisions and rationale

Where Records Are Stored

Safeguarding records are:

- Stored securely
- Password protected
- Accessible only to the DSL, Deputy DSLs, and Headteacher
- Kept separate from academic files

Chronologies

The DSL/DDSL maintains chronologies for children with ongoing concerns. Chronologies support Early Help and statutory assessments. These help identify:

- Patterns
- Escalation
- Repeated themes
- Emerging risks

Transferring Records

We follow Staffordshire's guidance for secure transfer. When a child moves school:

- Records are transferred securely within 5 days
- The DSL speaks directly to the receiving DSL
- Only safeguarding information is shared
- A copy is retained in line with statutory retention periods

Retention and Disposal

Safeguarding records are kept in line with:

- Statutory guidance
- Local authority expectations
- The school's Data Retention Policy

Records are disposed of securely when no longer required.

Multi-Agency Working

Safeguarding is most effective when professionals work together. At The Manor School, we are committed to strong, respectful, and proactive partnerships with external agencies. We recognise that no single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs, and that children are best protected when agencies share information, expertise, and responsibility.

Our multi-agency work is guided by:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- KCSIE 2025
- Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) procedures
- The Manor School's values of respect, kindness, and perseverance

Key Multi-Agency Partners

These partnerships ensure that children receive coordinated, holistic support. We work closely with:

- Staffordshire Children’s Advice and Support Service (CASS)
- Staffordshire Families First
- Local Support Teams (LST)
- Police and specialist units (e.g., Child Protection, Exploitation Teams)
- Health professionals (GPs, paediatricians, CAMHS, therapists)
- Education settings (previous or receiving schools)
- Virtual School Heads (for children in care)
- Residential care teams (where applicable)
- Youth offending services
- Early Help providers

The Role of the DSL in Multi-Agency Working

The DSL ensures that safeguarding decisions are informed by a full understanding of the child’s context. The DSL:

- Attends strategy meetings, case conferences, core groups, and Early Help reviews
- Shares information lawfully and appropriately
- Ensures the child’s voice is represented
- Advocates for the child’s needs, especially where SEND is a factor
- Ensures actions from meetings are completed
- Maintains accurate records of all multi-agency involvement

Staff Responsibilities in Multi-Agency Work

All staff must:

- Share concerns with the DSL promptly
- Provide factual information when requested
- Attend meetings when appropriate
- Follow agreed actions
- Maintain confidentiality

Staff do not contact external agencies directly unless instructed by the DSL/DDSL.

SEND and Multi-Agency Collaboration

For children with SEND, multi-agency working is essential. This ensures safeguarding decisions consider communication needs, sensory profiles, and developmental stages.

We collaborate with:

- Speech and language therapists
- Occupational therapists
- Educational psychologists
- Social workers
- CAMHS
- Residential care teams

Curriculum & Preventative Education

Safeguarding is not only reactive — it is preventative. At The Manor School, we embed safeguarding into our curriculum, daily routines, and school culture. We teach children how to stay safe, recognise unsafe situations, and seek help using communication methods that work for them.

Our preventative education is:

- Trauma-informed
- SEND-adapted
- Values-driven
- Practical and accessible
- Aligned with KCSIE and the RSHE curriculum

What We Teach

We teach pupils about:

- Personal safety and boundaries
- Trusted adults and help-seeking
- Safe and unsafe touch
- Online safety and digital citizenship
- Healthy friendships and relationships
- Emotional regulation and recognising feelings
- Bullying and child-on-child abuse
- Consent (in an age-appropriate, SEND-appropriate way)
- Protective behaviours
- Understanding privacy and body autonomy

Learning is delivered through:

- PSHE
- Social stories
- Visual supports
- Role-play
- AAC-supported lessons
- Small-group and 1:1 sessions

Online Safety Education

We teach pupils:

- How to stay safe online
- How to recognise unsafe content
- How to report concerns
- How to manage online interactions
- How to understand misinformation and digital risks

This is reinforced through:

- Assemblies
- Classroom displays
- Visual reminders
- Parent workshops

Staff Training and Modelling

Children learn best through relationships. Preventative education is strengthened by:

- Staff modelling respectful, safe behaviour
- Staff using consistent language around safety
- Staff reinforcing boundaries and consent
- Staff teaching emotional literacy throughout the day

Working with Families

We support families by offering:

- Workshops
- Resources
- Pastoral Home School Support
- Visual guides
- Advice on online safety
- Support with routines, regulation, and communication

Policy Review

Safeguarding is dynamic. Policies, procedures, and practices must evolve in response to:

- Changes in legislation
- Updates to KCSIE
- Local authority guidance
- Learning from safeguarding cases
- Feedback from staff, pupils, and families
- Internal audits and external reviews

Annual Review

This Child Protection Policy is reviewed:

- Annually
- Following any significant safeguarding incident
- When statutory guidance changes
- When Staffordshire updates local procedures

The review is led by:

- The DSL/DDSL
- The Headteacher
- The Executive Headteacher / Director of Education

Ongoing Monitoring

Throughout the year, the DSL:

- Monitors safeguarding records
- Reviews patterns and emerging risks
- Evaluates the effectiveness of Early Help
- Ensures training is up to date
- Conducts safeguarding audits
- Updates staff on changes in guidance

Staff Voice and Pupil Voice

To ensure that safeguarding remains responsive and relational we gather feedback from:

- Staff (training, confidence, clarity of procedures)
- Pupils (using AAC, symbols, or adapted methods)
- Families (accessibility, communication, support)

Governance Oversight (EHT / Director of Education)

Effective governance ensures accountability and strategic oversight. The governing body receives:

- Termly safeguarding reports
- Updates on training, referrals, and patterns
- Outcomes of audits

- Policy updates

Safeguarding Culture at The Manor School

Safeguarding is not a standalone policy — it is the culture that shapes every interaction, every decision, and every relationship in our school. Our safeguarding culture is built on:

- Professional curiosity
- Kindness and respect
- Trauma-informed practice
- SEND-aware approaches
- High expectations of ourselves and each other
- A commitment to listening to children in all the ways they communicate

We expect all staff to model our values and uphold the highest standards of professional behaviour.

Staff Training and Induction

All staff receive safeguarding training that is:

- Updated annually
- Aligned with KCSIE 2025
- Specific to Staffordshire's local procedures
- Tailored to the needs of our SEND learners

Training includes:

- Recognising abuse
- Child-on-child harm
- Online safety
- Exploitation (CSE/CCE)
- Early Help and thresholds
- Reporting concerns
- Low-level concerns
- Safer working practice
- Trauma-informed approaches
- Communication strategies for non-verbal pupils

New staff receive safeguarding induction before they begin working with children.

Safer Working Practice

All adults working at The Manor School must:

- Maintain professional boundaries
- Use appropriate language and behaviour
- Follow the Schools lone working policy when working with a child alone
- Follow the Intimate Care Policy
- Use mobile phones and technology safely
- Report any boundary concerns immediately
- Model respectful, safe interactions

We follow the guidance in Safer Working Practice for Adults Working with Children in Education Settings.

Online Safety Responsibilities

Online safety is part of safeguarding and is taught explicitly and reinforced daily.

Staff must:

- Model safe online behaviour
- Report online concerns immediately
- Support pupils to use technology safely
- Follow filtering and monitoring procedures
- Use school devices appropriately
- Never communicate with pupils on personal accounts

Safeguarding in the Curriculum

Safeguarding themes are woven through:

- PSHE
- RSHE
- Computing
- Communication sessions
- Social stories
- Visual supports
- Emotional regulation work

Children learn:

- How to stay safe
- How to recognise unsafe situations
- How to ask for help
- How to understand boundaries
- How to navigate friendships
- How to stay safe online

All content is adapted for SEND learners.

Safe Use of School Premises

The physical environment supports emotional and relational safety too. We ensure the school environment is safe by:

- Controlling access to the site
- Ensuring visitors sign in and wear ID
- Supervising contractors
- Maintaining safe physical spaces
- Conducting regular risk assessments
- Ensuring safe arrival and departure procedures

Whistleblowing

We follow our Whistleblowing Policy, which protects staff who speak up in good faith. Staff must feel safe to raise concerns about:

- Unsafe practice
- Poor safeguarding decisions

- Organisational failings
- Concerns about adults

Linked Policies

This Child Protection Policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Suite
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Filtering & Monitoring Policy
- Low-Level Concerns Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- SEND Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Positive Handling Policy
- Attendance & CME Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

These policies work together to create a comprehensive safeguarding system.

Approval and Review

This policy is:

- Approved by the Directors of Bayleaf Education and the Proprietor.
- Reviewed annually
- Updated in response to statutory changes
- Informed by Staffordshire's safeguarding procedures
- Evaluated through audits, staff feedback, and pupil voice

Safeguarding is a living, evolving practice — and we remain committed to continuous improvement.