



**HOPEBRIGHT**  
S C H O O L

## **Safeguarding And Child Protection Policy**

Reviewed September 2026  
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## 1. Introduction

Hopebright School is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in its care. Safeguarding is embedded in every aspect of school life and is central to the School's culture, leadership, curriculum, pastoral systems, and operational procedures. This policy sets out the **statutory safeguarding framework, operational expectations, and professional standards** that underpin all safeguarding practice at Hopebright School. It reflects current requirements under:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025/26)**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (latest guidance)**
- **The Children Act 1989 and 2004**
- **UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 (where safeguarding intersects with information sharing)**
- **Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014**
- Relevant local safeguarding partner arrangements

This policy is designed to ensure full compliance with expectations set out by **Ofsted and the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)**, particularly in relation to safeguarding effectiveness, leadership accountability, and the promotion of a strong safeguarding culture.

### Scope of Application

This policy applies to all individuals connected with Hopebright School, including but not limited to:

- All permanent, temporary, and supply staff
- Volunteers and work experience placements
- Governors and trustees or equivalent oversight bodies
- Contractors, agency staff, and service providers
- Visitors and external professionals working on site or remotely

All such individuals are expected to understand, uphold, and act in accordance with the safeguarding expectations set out in this policy. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, termination of engagement, or referral to relevant professional bodies.

### Safeguarding Culture and Ethos

Hopebright School maintains a **whole-school safeguarding culture**, where safeguarding is not limited to designated roles but is recognised as a shared professional responsibility.

The School ensures that:

- Safeguarding is prioritised in all decision-making processes
- Leaders actively promote a culture of vigilance and accountability
- Staff understand and apply a **"it could happen here"** mindset
- Concerns are recorded, escalated, and acted upon without delay
- Early intervention and preventative safeguarding are embedded across the school environment

Safeguarding is considered integral to educational quality and is a key indicator of effective leadership and management under inspection frameworks.

### **Child-Centred Approach**

Hopebright School adopts a **child-centred and trauma-informed safeguarding approach**, ensuring that the needs, safety, and welfare of the child remain the primary consideration in all safeguarding decisions.

In practice, this means:

- The child's voice is actively sought, recorded, and considered
- Decisions are made in the child's best interests, even where this differs from adult perspectives
- Pupils are supported to express concerns safely and confidently
- Barriers to disclosure are recognised and actively reduced
- Contextual factors affecting a child's wellbeing are taken into account

The School recognises that safeguarding is not solely reactive, but also **preventative, relational, and informed by understanding the lived experiences of children.**

### **Pupil Voice and Lived Experience**

Hopebright School actively promotes mechanisms for pupils to express their views, including:

- Safe reporting systems
- Pastoral support structures
- Trusted adult relationships
- Pupil feedback channels
- Safeguarding conversations and check-ins

Pupil voice is not treated as supplementary information but as a **core component of safeguarding intelligence**, informing risk assessments, support planning, and wider school safeguarding strategy.

Where appropriate, pupils' lived experiences are used to inform:

- safeguarding interventions
- behaviour support strategies
- curriculum development (including RSHE)
- pastoral and wellbeing provision

### **Safeguarding as a Shared Responsibility**

Safeguarding at Hopebright School is recognised as **everyone's responsibility**, regardless of role or seniority.

All adults are expected to:

- Act in the best interests of children at all times
- Recognise signs of abuse, neglect, or harm
- Report concerns immediately and appropriately
- Follow safeguarding procedures without delay
- Maintain professional curiosity and appropriate challenge
- Ensure concerns are never ignored or assumed to be someone else's responsibility

Staff are reminded that safeguarding concerns can arise in any context, including:

- academic settings
- pastoral interactions
- online activity
- behaviour incidents
- off-site or extracurricular activities

### **Professional Accountability**

Hopebright School maintains clear expectations of professional conduct in relation to safeguarding.

All staff must:

- Read and understand this policy as part of induction and ongoing training
- Comply with safeguarding procedures at all times
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries
- Record concerns accurately, factually, and promptly
- Escalate concerns where there is uncertainty or disagreement

Safeguarding practice is subject to continuous monitoring, supervision, training, and review to ensure compliance with statutory expectations and best practice guidance.

### **Commitment to Continuous Improvement**

Hopebright School is committed to continuously improving safeguarding practice through:

- Regular training and professional development
- Reflective practice and case review
- Learning from serious case reviews and national guidance updates
- Internal safeguarding audits and quality assurance
- Leadership oversight and governance scrutiny

This ensures safeguarding practice remains dynamic, responsive, and aligned with evolving statutory requirements and best practice expectations.

## **2. Principles for Child Protection and Safeguarding**

Hopebright School's safeguarding practice is underpinned by a set of core principles which reflect statutory guidance and best practice expectations under **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025/26)**, **Working Together to Safeguard Children**, and inspection frameworks used by **Ofsted and the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)**. These principles guide all decision-making, professional judgement, and operational safeguarding activity across the school.

The welfare of the child is paramount

Hopebright School places the **best interests and welfare of the child at the centre of all safeguarding decisions**. This principle takes precedence over competing considerations, including operational, administrative, or organisational priorities.

All actions taken by staff must be assessed against the question:

- *“What is in the best interest of the child’s safety, wellbeing, and development?”*

Where there is any doubt, decisions are escalated promptly to safeguarding leads to ensure timely and appropriate intervention.

All children have the right to feel safe, valued, and heard

The School recognises that every child has an equal right to:

- Feel safe in all environments, including online spaces
- Be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness
- Have their voice heard and taken seriously
- Access trusted adults who will act on concerns

Hopebright School actively promotes a culture in which pupils are supported to speak openly about worries, knowing they will be listened to and believed where appropriate, and that action will be taken in their best interests.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of every adult in school

Safeguarding is not limited to designated roles. It is a **whole-school responsibility** that applies to all adults working within Hopebright School.

All staff, governors, volunteers, contractors, and visitors are expected to:

- Understand safeguarding indicators and concerns
- Act immediately when concerns arise
- Follow reporting procedures without delay
- Never assume someone else will take responsibility

A strong safeguarding culture depends on collective vigilance, shared accountability, and consistent professional standards across all roles.

Early identification and early help are essential

Hopebright School recognises that **early identification of need and timely intervention significantly improve outcomes for children.**

The School is committed to:

- Identifying emerging concerns at the earliest opportunity
- Providing appropriate early help support before issues escalate
- Working with families to reduce risk factors and improve wellbeing
- Referring to external agencies where thresholds for statutory intervention are met

Early help is viewed as a proactive safeguarding tool, not a lower-level response.

We maintain professional curiosity and challenge

All staff are expected to exercise **professional curiosity**, meaning they must:

- Explore concerns rather than accept information at face value
- Ask appropriate follow-up questions where something does not seem right

- Consider patterns of behaviour over time, not isolated incidents
- Challenge assumptions, including those made by colleagues or external professionals where safeguarding concerns exist

Professional challenge is a core safeguarding expectation. Staff must feel confident to escalate concerns through appropriate channels, even where uncertainty exists.

We recognise the additional vulnerabilities of pupils with SEND

Hopebright School recognises that children with **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)** may be at increased risk of:

- Abuse or neglect
- Communication barriers in disclosing concerns
- Social isolation or dependency on adults
- Misinterpretation of behaviour or communication
- Reduced access to safeguarding information or support

The School ensures that safeguarding responses for pupils with SEND are:

- Individualised and proportionate
- Communicated in accessible formats
- Supported by relevant professionals where required
- Informed by education, health, and care planning where applicable

All staff are expected to consider SEND needs when identifying and responding to safeguarding concerns.

We work collaboratively with parents and multi-agency partners

Hopebright School recognises that effective safeguarding relies on **strong, timely, and coordinated partnership working**.

The School actively collaborates with:

- Parents and carers
- Local authority safeguarding teams
- Social care services
- Health professionals, including mental health services
- Police and specialist agencies where appropriate
- Virtual School Heads (for looked-after and previously looked-after children)

Where appropriate, the School:

- Shares relevant information lawfully and proportionately
- Participates in multi-agency safeguarding meetings and plans
- Supports coordinated intervention and early help strategies
- Maintains clear records of all professional liaison and decisions

The School also recognises that in rare cases, safeguarding responsibilities may require action without parental consent where there is a legal basis to do so and in line with statutory guidance.

### 3. Scope

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is written in accordance with current statutory and non-statutory guidance and reflects the safeguarding duties placed upon independent schools in England. It establishes the framework within which Hopebright School operates to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This policy is designed to ensure full compliance with expectations set out in **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)**, **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**, and relevant education and safeguarding legislation. It also reflects the requirements of the **Independent School Standards (ISS) Regulations 2019 (as amended)** and associated regulatory expectations used by Ofsted and the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI).

#### Statutory and Regulatory Framework

This policy has been developed with due regard to the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)** – statutory safeguarding guidance for schools and colleges
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)** – inter-agency safeguarding framework
- **Education Act 2002 (Sections 157 and 175)** – duties on safeguarding and promoting welfare of children
- **Children Act 1989** – legal framework for child welfare and protection
- **Children Act 2004** – duty to cooperate to improve children’s wellbeing
- **Independent School Standards Regulations 2019 (as amended)** – regulatory requirements for safeguarding in independent schools
- Relevant **local safeguarding partner arrangements** and multi-agency procedures

This policy is reviewed in line with updates to statutory guidance and emerging safeguarding risks, including online safety, contextual safeguarding, and emerging exploitation risks.

#### Application of the Policy

This policy applies in full to all individuals connected with Hopebright School, including but not limited to:

- All permanent staff members
- Temporary, supply, and agency staff
- Governors or equivalent oversight body members
- Volunteers, including unpaid helpers and work experience placements
- Contractors and service providers working on school premises or remotely
- External professionals visiting or delivering services within the school
- Visitors, including those with short-term or supervised access

All such individuals are expected to:

- Understand and comply with safeguarding expectations relevant to their role
- Follow reporting and escalation procedures without delay

- Maintain professional boundaries at all times
- Contribute to a safe and secure environment for children

Failure to comply with safeguarding expectations may result in disciplinary action, termination of engagement, or referral to relevant professional or statutory bodies.

### **Safeguarding Coverage**

This policy applies to all aspects of school activity, including but not limited to:

- On-site school provision during and outside of normal hours
- Educational trips, visits, and off-site activities
- Remote and online learning environments
- School transport arrangements where applicable
- Extra-curricular activities and enrichment programmes
- Digital communications and use of school-approved online platforms
- Any situation where staff are acting in a professional capacity in relation to pupils

Safeguarding responsibilities extend beyond the school site and include any activity where pupils are under the care, supervision, or influence of Hopebright School staff.

### **Policy Accessibility and Understanding**

To ensure effective implementation and compliance:

- All staff are required to read and understand this policy as part of their induction and ongoing safeguarding training
- The policy is reinforced through regular safeguarding updates and refresher training
- Key safeguarding expectations are embedded within staff codes of conduct and operational procedures
- Staff are supported to seek clarification from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) where uncertainty arises

### **Supporting Summaries**

To ensure clarity and accessibility for different audiences, the School provides:

- **Appendix 1: Staff Safeguarding Summary** – a concise operational overview of key responsibilities, reporting procedures, and escalation pathways
- **Appendix 2: Parent and Carer Safeguarding Summary** – a simplified explanation of safeguarding arrangements, reporting concerns, and the School's duty of care

These summaries support transparency and ensure that safeguarding expectations are clearly communicated to all stakeholders.

### **Ongoing Review and Compliance**

This policy is subject to:

- Annual review by senior leadership
- Governance oversight and approval
- Updates in response to changes in statutory guidance or safeguarding practice
- Consideration of lessons learned from safeguarding audits, case reviews, and national developments

Hopebright School ensures that safeguarding practice remains dynamic, responsive, and fully aligned with current statutory expectations and best practice guidance.

#### 4. Key Definitions

Hopebright School uses the statutory definitions set out in **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)** and associated safeguarding legislation to ensure a consistent and legally accurate understanding of safeguarding terminology across the school. Clear and shared definitions are essential to ensure that all staff interpret safeguarding concerns consistently, respond appropriately, and escalate concerns without delay.

##### Child

A **child** is defined as any person who has not yet reached their **18th birthday**, regardless of whether they are living independently, in further education, or are subject to legal orders. Safeguarding responsibilities apply equally to all pupils enrolled at Hopebright School, including those approaching adulthood, where vulnerabilities may still exist.

##### Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in accordance with **KCSIE 2025** as: The process of protecting children from maltreatment, 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, and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

In practice at Hopebright School, safeguarding includes a wide range of activities and responsibilities, including but not limited to:

- Protecting children from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and harm
- Preventing physical, emotional, and psychological harm
- Supporting children's health, wellbeing, and development
- Identifying and responding to early signs of need or vulnerability
- Providing safe environments for learning and development
- Ensuring appropriate supervision, boundaries, and professional conduct
- Promoting resilience, wellbeing, and positive mental health
- Working collaboratively with families and external agencies to improve outcomes

Safeguarding is a **proactive and preventative responsibility**, not solely a reactive response to harm.

##### Child Protection

Child protection is a specific and critical component of safeguarding.

It refers to:

The actions taken to protect children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. Child protection is triggered where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child may be experiencing abuse or neglect or is at risk of serious harm.

At Hopebright School, child protection includes:

- Responding to disclosures of abuse or neglect
- Recognising and reporting indicators of harm

- Making referrals to local authority children’s social care where required
- Participating in multi-agency safeguarding procedures
- Supporting statutory investigations where appropriate
- Maintaining accurate, factual, and timely records of concerns

Child protection concerns are always escalated immediately to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or deputy DSLs, in line with school procedures.

### **Relationship Between Safeguarding and Child Protection**

Safeguarding is the **umbrella term** that covers all actions taken to keep children safe and promote their welfare. Child protection is a **subset of safeguarding**, focused specifically on children who are at risk of, or experiencing, significant harm.

All staff at Hopebright School are expected to understand that:

- Not all safeguarding concerns meet the threshold for child protection
- All child protection concerns are safeguarding concerns
- Early identification and early help can prevent escalation to child protection intervention

### **Professional Understanding and Application**

All staff are required to:

- Understand and apply these definitions in daily practice
- Use consistent terminology when recording or reporting concerns
- Avoid interpreting safeguarding matters subjectively or in isolation
- Seek guidance from the DSL where thresholds or definitions are unclear

Hopebright School ensures that safeguarding terminology is reinforced through:

- Induction training
- Annual safeguarding updates
- Case-based learning and professional development
- Supervision and safeguarding briefings

## **5. Equality & Diversity**

Hopebright School is fully committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) across all aspects of its safeguarding practice, in line with the **Equality Act 2010** and statutory safeguarding expectations set out in **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)**. This commitment is integral to the School’s safeguarding culture and is actively embedded in decision-making, policy implementation, curriculum design, and staff conduct. The School recognises that effective safeguarding cannot be achieved without an inclusive approach that actively identifies and addresses barriers to safety, wellbeing, and participation for all pupils.

### **Commitment to Non-Discrimination**

Hopebright School does not tolerate unlawful discrimination in any form. All pupils, staff, families, and visitors are treated with dignity, fairness, and respect.

The School ensures that no child or adult is disadvantaged or treated less favourably on the basis of any protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010, including:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership (in staff context)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

All safeguarding decisions are made objectively, based on risk, need, and welfare considerations, and are never influenced by bias or prejudice.

#### **Proactive Promotion of Inclusion**

Hopebright School takes a proactive approach to equality and inclusion by actively seeking to remove barriers that may prevent pupils from accessing safeguarding support or educational opportunities.

This includes:

- Ensuring equitable access to safeguarding reporting routes
- Providing inclusive pastoral and wellbeing support systems
- Adapting communication methods to meet individual needs
- Ensuring all pupils can meaningfully participate in safeguarding processes
- Promoting respect for diversity through the curriculum and school culture

The School recognises that equality is not passive; it requires ongoing action, reflection, and improvement.

#### **Support for Pupils with Protected Characteristics**

Hopebright School is committed to providing appropriate and tailored support for pupils with protected characteristics, recognising that some pupils may face additional barriers or risks.

Where appropriate, the School will:

- Make reasonable adjustments to support participation and inclusion
- Ensure safeguarding information is accessible and understandable
- Provide additional pastoral or specialist support where required
- Work collaboratively with families and external agencies
- Consider individual needs in all safeguarding and behaviour-related decisions

Staff are expected to understand how protected characteristics may influence a child's experience of harm, disclosure, or engagement with safeguarding processes.

#### **Culturally Competent Safeguarding Practice**

The School recognises the importance of **cultural competence in safeguarding practice**, ensuring that all staff:

- Understand how cultural backgrounds may influence communication, behaviour, or help-seeking

- Avoid assumptions or stereotypes when assessing safeguarding concerns
- Remain professionally curious while respecting cultural context
- Distinguish between cultural practices and safeguarding risks
- Ensure that concerns are always assessed based on risk and evidence, not cultural bias

Safeguarding decisions are always guided by the principle that **the welfare of the child is paramount**, while maintaining respect for diversity and cultural identity.

### **Intersectional Vulnerabilities**

Hopebright School recognises that children may experience **intersectional vulnerabilities**, where multiple factors combine to increase risk or complexity of need.

This may include, but is not limited to, the interaction between:

- SEND and communication difficulties
- Socio-economic disadvantage
- Race, ethnicity, or cultural background
- Gender identity or sexual orientation
- Mental health needs
- Care experience or family circumstances
- Online vulnerability or digital exposure

The School acknowledges that these overlapping factors may:

- Increase susceptibility to harm or exploitation
- Create barriers to disclosure or support-seeking
- Affect how safeguarding concerns present or are interpreted

Staff are expected to consider the **whole child in context**, rather than assessing risks in isolation.

### **Inclusive Safeguarding Culture**

Hopebright School actively promotes an inclusive safeguarding culture where:

- Every child is valued and respected
- Differences are understood and embraced
- Discrimination is challenged promptly and appropriately
- All pupils can access support without fear or stigma
- Equality considerations are embedded in safeguarding decision-making

The School ensures that safeguarding practice is consistently fair, proportionate, and sensitive to individual needs, while always prioritising child welfare and safety.

### **Continuous Review and Improvement**

The School regularly reviews its equality and diversity practice through:

- Safeguarding audits and case reviews
- Staff training and professional development
- Pupil voice and feedback mechanisms

- Analysis of behaviour, safeguarding, and inclusion data
- Leadership and governance oversight

This ensures that equality, diversity, and inclusion remain central to safeguarding effectiveness and school improvement.

## 6. Safeguarding and Promoting Welfare

Hopebright School adopts a **child-centred, evidence-informed safeguarding approach**, consistent with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)** and wider statutory safeguarding frameworks. Safeguarding is understood as a continuous, proactive process that extends beyond responding to harm and includes the **promotion of children’s welfare, development, and educational outcomes**. The School ensures that safeguarding is embedded in everyday practice, decision-making, and culture, with a strong focus on **early identification, timely intervention, and coordinated multi-agency working**.

### Child-Centred Safeguarding Approach

At Hopebright School, safeguarding practice is firmly centred on the needs, voice, and lived experience of the child.

This means:

- The child’s welfare is always the primary consideration in all safeguarding decisions
- Pupils are listened to and taken seriously when expressing concerns
- Decisions are informed by the child’s perspective wherever possible
- The School considers the whole context of the child’s life, not isolated incidents
- Interventions are designed to support safety, stability, and positive outcomes

Staff are expected to maintain a **professional curiosity** and consider what may be happening beneath the surface of presented behaviour or disclosures.

### Early Identification of Need and Risk

Hopebright School places strong emphasis on the **early identification of safeguarding concerns**, recognising that early action can prevent escalation and reduce harm.

The School ensures:

- Staff are trained to recognise early signs of abuse, neglect, or exploitation
- Behavioural, emotional, and attendance indicators are monitored closely
- Concerns are recorded promptly and accurately
- Patterns of concern are identified through safeguarding systems and pastoral oversight
- Low-level concerns are taken seriously and reviewed in context

Early identification is supported by strong communication between pastoral staff, teaching staff, safeguarding leads, and external professionals where appropriate.

### Information Sharing

Effective safeguarding relies on **lawful, necessary, and proportionate information sharing**.

Hopebright School recognises that:

- Information sharing is essential to safeguarding and promoting welfare
- No single professional holds complete safeguarding information
- Delays in sharing information can increase risk to children

The School operates in line with:

- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018
- KCSIE 2025 guidance on information sharing
- Local safeguarding partner procedures

Information will be shared:

- With consent where appropriate and safe to do so
- Without consent where there is a legal basis and safeguarding risk requires it
- On a need-to-know basis, ensuring proportionality and confidentiality

All safeguarding-related information sharing is:

- Recorded clearly and factually
- Stored securely in designated systems
- Shared only with authorised professionals or agencies

### **Timely and Appropriate Action**

Hopebright School is committed to ensuring that safeguarding concerns are acted upon **without delay**.

This includes:

- Immediate reporting of concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Prompt escalation where risk is identified
- Timely referral to external agencies where thresholds are met
- Implementation of support plans or protective measures as required
- Ongoing review of safeguarding concerns and interventions

The School recognises that delays in response can increase risk and therefore prioritises **speed, accuracy, and professional judgement** in all safeguarding responses.

### **Multi-Agency Collaboration**

Safeguarding at Hopebright School is delivered through **effective multi-agency partnership working**.

The School actively collaborates with:

- Children's social care services
- Health professionals, including mental health services
- Police and specialist safeguarding units where appropriate
- Local authority safeguarding partners
- Virtual School Heads (for looked-after and previously looked-after children)
- Early help and family support services

The School contributes fully to:

- Child protection conferences and core groups
- Early help assessments and planning
- Strategy discussions and safeguarding meetings
- Multi-agency risk assessments and intervention planning

All multi-agency working is undertaken with the aim of improving outcomes and ensuring coordinated support for children and families.

### **Increased Vulnerability and Risk Factors**

Hopebright School recognises that some groups of pupils may face **additional safeguarding vulnerabilities** due to their circumstances or experiences.

Particular consideration is given to:

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

- Communication barriers may limit disclosure
- Behaviour may mask underlying safeguarding concerns
- Increased dependence on adults may increase vulnerability

Pupils Missing Education or at Risk of Missing Education

- Reduced visibility to safeguarding professionals
- Increased risk of exploitation or neglect
- Potential disengagement from protective school structures

Pupils in Alternative Provision

- Increased complexity of educational placement
- Potential fragmentation of safeguarding oversight
- Greater exposure to external environments and risks

The School ensures that safeguarding oversight remains robust for all such pupils through:

- Regular review meetings
- Cross-agency communication
- Tracking of attendance, engagement, and wellbeing
- Consistent application of safeguarding procedures across settings

### **Promoting Welfare and Positive Outcomes**

Safeguarding at Hopebright School extends beyond risk management and includes active promotion of children's welfare.

This includes:

- Supporting emotional wellbeing and resilience
- Promoting positive relationships and safe behaviour
- Ensuring access to appropriate support services
- Creating a safe and inclusive learning environment
- Encouraging pupil engagement, belonging, and achievement

The School recognises that safeguarding and education are intrinsically linked, and that strong safeguarding practice contributes directly to improved educational and life outcomes for children.

### **Continuous Safeguarding Improvement**

Hopebright School is committed to ongoing evaluation and improvement of safeguarding practice through:

- Regular staff training and updates
- Case reviews and reflective practice
- Safeguarding audits and compliance checks
- Analysis of trends and patterns in concerns
- Leadership and governance oversight

This ensures safeguarding remains dynamic, responsive, and aligned with evolving statutory expectations and best practice guidance.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding at Hopebright School is underpinned by a clear structure of responsibility, ensuring that all staff understand their individual and collective duties in protecting children and promoting their welfare. These responsibilities reflect statutory requirements set out in **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)** and associated safeguarding legislation.

Safeguarding is a **shared responsibility**, but accountability for coordination, decision-making, and escalation sits with designated safeguarding personnel and school leadership.

### Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputies

Hopebright School has a **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** and trained deputy DSLs who hold statutory responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.

The DSL and deputies are responsible for ensuring that safeguarding concerns are **identified, recorded, escalated, and managed appropriately** in line with statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures.

#### **Core Responsibilities of the DSL**

The DSL is responsible for:

##### Safeguarding Coordination and Oversight

- Acting as the central point of contact for all safeguarding and child protection concerns
- Ensuring safeguarding concerns are recorded accurately and securely
- Maintaining oversight of all open safeguarding cases and monitoring risk levels
- Ensuring timely and appropriate escalation of concerns

##### Decision-Making and Referrals

- Making referrals to children's social care where thresholds are met
- Contacting the Integrated Front Door (IFD) or equivalent local safeguarding hub when required
- Liaising with police and external agencies where necessary
- Supporting multi-agency safeguarding processes, including strategy discussions and case conferences

##### Support and Guidance

- Providing advice and support to staff on safeguarding matters
- Ensuring staff understand safeguarding procedures and thresholds
- Supporting early help assessments and interventions
- Acting as a source of safeguarding expertise within the school

##### Training and Culture

- Ensuring all staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and updates
- Promoting a strong safeguarding culture across the school
- Keeping up to date with changes in legislation, guidance, and local procedures
- Ensuring safeguarding policies are implemented consistently

#### **Deputy DSLs**

Deputy DSLs are trained to the same standard as the DSL and may carry out DSL duties in their absence.

They support:

- Case management and safeguarding oversight
- Staff consultation and advice
- Referrals and liaison with external agencies
- Monitoring of safeguarding trends and concerns

At all times, safeguarding responsibility remains clearly allocated and accessible within the school structure.

### **Appendix 3 Reference**

Full statutory responsibilities, role expectations, and operational duties of the DSL and deputies are detailed in **Appendix 3 (DSL Role Specification and Safeguarding Procedures)**.

All Staff Responsibilities

Safeguarding is a **fundamental duty of every adult working at Hopebright School**, regardless of role, seniority, or contact level with children.

All staff are expected to act in accordance with safeguarding training, policy, and professional standards at all times.

#### **All staff must:**

##### 1. Provide a Safe Environment

- Promote a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all pupils
- Be alert to signs of abuse, neglect, or harm
- Contribute to a safeguarding culture of vigilance and care
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times

##### 2. Maintain Professional Curiosity

- Question situations that do not seem right
- Avoid accepting explanations at face value without appropriate consideration
- Recognise that children may not always disclose concerns directly
- Consider patterns of behaviour, not isolated incidents
- Escalate concerns even where uncertainty exists

Professional curiosity is an essential safeguarding competency and is expected of all staff.

##### 3. Report Concerns Immediately

- All safeguarding concerns must be reported **without delay** to the DSL or deputy DSL
- Concerns must be recorded factually, accurately, and contemporaneously
- Staff must not wait to “gather more evidence” before reporting
- Escalation must follow school safeguarding procedures

Delays in reporting are treated as a safeguarding risk.

##### 4. Do Not Investigate Concerns

- Staff must never investigate safeguarding concerns independently
- Staff must not question children in a manner that could compromise evidence or increase distress
- Initial disclosure responses should be limited to:

- listening
- reassurance
- clarification of immediate safety
- reporting to DSL

Investigation is the responsibility of safeguarding professionals and external agencies.

#### 5. Understand Confidentiality Limits

- Confidentiality is not absolute in safeguarding matters
- Information must be shared appropriately where a child may be at risk
- Staff must not promise confidentiality to a child or adult where safeguarding concerns exist
- Information sharing must follow UK GDPR principles and safeguarding thresholds

#### 6. Support Early Help Processes

- Staff contribute to early identification of need and vulnerability
- Participate in early help assessments where required
- Provide relevant information to DSL or external agencies when appropriate
- Support preventative safeguarding work aimed at reducing escalation of risk

Early help is a key safeguarding intervention and is actively promoted across the school.

#### 7. Know How to Refer to the Integrated Front Door (IFD)

All staff must be aware that safeguarding referrals to children's social care are made via the **Integrated Front Door (IFD)** or equivalent local authority safeguarding pathway.

Staff are not expected to make direct referrals unless instructed; however, they must:

- Understand the purpose of the IFD
- Know the escalation route through the DSL
- Recognise when concerns may meet referral thresholds
- Act immediately when serious concerns arise

The DSL retains responsibility for formal referral decisions but relies on staff to identify and escalate concerns promptly.

#### **Shared Accountability**

Hopebright School recognises that effective safeguarding relies on:

- clear leadership and designated responsibility
- consistent staff vigilance
- prompt reporting and escalation
- strong communication and professional judgement

All staff play an essential role in safeguarding and are expected to act as **active safeguarding professionals**, not passive observers.

## **8. Record Keeping**

Hopebright School maintains robust, accurate, and secure safeguarding record-keeping systems in line with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)**, **UK GDPR**, and the **Data Protection Act 2018**. Effective record keeping is a fundamental safeguarding requirement and is essential for ensuring continuity of care, informed decision-making, and accountability.

Safeguarding records are treated as **highly sensitive information** and are managed with strict confidentiality, security, and oversight.

### **Core Principles of Safeguarding Records**

Hopebright School ensures that all safeguarding records are:

- Accurate and factually based
- Written contemporaneously or as soon as possible after the event
- Clear, concise, and free from opinion or speculation
- Written in a way that is understandable to others, including external agencies
- Stored securely within designated safeguarding systems

All records must clearly distinguish between:

- factual observations
- disclosures from children or adults
- professional judgement and analysis
- actions taken and decisions made

### **Recording of Concerns, Discussions, and Decisions**

All safeguarding-related information must be recorded, including:

- All safeguarding concerns, however minor they may appear
- Disclosures made by children or adults
- Professional discussions between staff and safeguarding leads
- Decisions taken in response to concerns
- Rationale for decisions, including why certain actions were or were not taken
- Referrals made to external agencies and outcomes where known

The School recognises that **decision-making transparency is critical**, and therefore records must clearly demonstrate the reasoning behind safeguarding actions.

### **Use of Body Maps**

Where physical injuries are observed or disclosed, body maps may be used to support accurate recording.

In such cases:

- Body maps are completed in line with safeguarding procedures
- Only factual observations are recorded (size, location, description of injury)
- Body maps are stored securely with safeguarding records
- They are used solely for safeguarding purposes and not for general medical record keeping

Body maps support multi-agency understanding and may be shared appropriately with safeguarding partners where required.

### **Photographs of Injuries**

Hopebright School **does not permit staff to take photographs of injuries** on children.

Instead:

- Written descriptions and body maps must be used
- Any visual evidence required is obtained through appropriate medical or statutory channels
- Staff must escalate concerns immediately to the DSL for guidance

This approach ensures compliance with safeguarding best practice, data protection requirements, and professional boundaries.

### **Transfer and Sharing of Records**

When a pupil transfers to another educational setting, safeguarding records must be transferred securely and promptly.

The School ensures that:

- Records are transferred within **5 working days** of confirmation of transfer where possible
- Transfer is conducted securely (encrypted or secure courier where applicable)
- Receipt of records by the receiving setting is confirmed
- A record of transfer is retained by Hopebright School

Safeguarding files are never sent via unsecured email or informal communication channels.

### **Retention of Safeguarding Records**

Safeguarding records are retained in accordance with statutory requirements and safeguarding best practice:

- **General safeguarding records:** retained until the pupil is **age 25**
- **Looked After Children (LAC) or previously LAC records:** retained until **age 75** or in line with statutory archival requirements
- Records may be retained longer where there is ongoing safeguarding relevance or legal requirement

Retention decisions are reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with legal obligations and safeguarding continuity.

### **Data Protection and Lawful Basis for Processing**

Safeguarding records are processed in accordance with:

- **UK GDPR**
- **Data Protection Act 2018**
- Relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance

The lawful bases for processing safeguarding data include:

- **Article 6(1)(c)** – legal obligation (compliance with safeguarding law)
- **Article 6(1)(e)** – public task (education and safeguarding duties)
- **Article 9(2)(g)** – substantial public interest (safeguarding children)

Where appropriate, additional conditions under Schedule 1 of the Data Protection Act 2018 are also applied.

All data sharing is:

- necessary
- proportionate
- relevant to safeguarding purposes
- restricted to authorised individuals or agencies

#### **Security and Access Control**

Safeguarding records are subject to strict access controls:

- Access is restricted to authorised safeguarding staff only
- Digital records are protected by role-based permissions and secure login systems
- Paper records are stored in locked, secure locations
- Audit trails are maintained where electronic systems are used

Staff must not access safeguarding records unless there is a legitimate professional need to do so.

#### **Quality and Accountability of Records**

Hopebright School recognises that safeguarding records may be required for:

- multi-agency safeguarding processes
- statutory reviews and investigations
- inspection by Ofsted or ISI
- internal safeguarding audits
- legal proceedings or complaints

As such, records must be:

- professionally written
- objective and evidence-based
- sufficiently detailed to support external scrutiny
- regularly reviewed by safeguarding leadership

Poor record keeping is treated as a safeguarding and professional performance issue.

#### **Continuous Improvement**

Safeguarding record-keeping practice is regularly reviewed through:

- internal safeguarding audits
- DSL quality assurance checks
- training and refresher updates
- lessons learned from case reviews
- inspection feedback and regulatory expectations

This ensures that Hopebright School maintains high standards of safeguarding documentation in line with current statutory and inspection requirements.

## 9. Responding to a Disclosure

Hopebright School recognises that disclosures of abuse or safeguarding concerns are a critical moment in a child's experience and must always be handled with care, professionalism, and strict adherence to statutory guidance, including **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)**.

All staff must be aware that how they respond can significantly impact a child's willingness to share further information and their ongoing safety and wellbeing.

### Initial Response to a Disclosure

When a child makes a disclosure, staff must:

Provide a calm, safe, and private space

- Ensure the child feels safe and is not interrupted or overheard where possible
- Maintain a calm, reassuring, and non-reactive demeanour
- Position themselves at an appropriate level to support accessibility and comfort

Listen actively without interruption

- Allow the child to speak freely in their own time
- Avoid interrupting, correcting, or finishing sentences
- Use attentive body language to show they are being heard
- Take the disclosure seriously, regardless of perceived severity or detail

Avoid leading or suggestive questions

Staff must not:

- Ask questions that imply an answer
- Introduce new information into the child's account
- Attempt to "test" or verify the disclosure
- Conduct investigative questioning

Where clarification is necessary, staff should only use **open, minimal prompts**, such as:

- "Can you tell me more about that?"
- "What happened next?"
- "Is there anything else you want to tell me?"

Use direct safeguarding questions only where appropriate

Where there is immediate safeguarding need or clarification is essential for safety, staff may ask brief, neutral, open questions focused on:

- What has happened
- Who is involved
- Whether the child is safe now

This must always be done in a **non-leading, child-focused manner**, and never as part of an investigation.

Record accurately and factually

As soon as possible after the disclosure, staff must record:

- The child's **exact words (verbatim where possible)**
- The child's demeanour (e.g., emotional state, behaviour observed)
- Date, time, and location of the disclosure
- Context in which the disclosure was made
- Any immediate actions taken
- Professional rationale for any decisions made

Records must be:

- factual, objective, and free from interpretation
- written contemporaneously or immediately after the disclosure
- securely stored in line with safeguarding procedures

Never promise confidentiality

Staff must never:

- Promise to keep information secret
- Agree to withhold safeguarding concerns from relevant professionals

Instead, staff must explain that:

- They may need to share information to keep the child safe
- Information will only be shared with appropriate safeguarding professionals
- The child will be supported throughout the process

Explain next steps clearly

At an age-appropriate level, staff must inform the child:

- That the information will be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- That the DSL will decide what happens next to keep them safe
- That they may be supported further by trusted adults or external services
- That they will be listened to and kept informed where appropriate

This helps to reduce anxiety and reinforces trust in safeguarding processes.

Report immediately to the DSL

All disclosures must be reported to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy DSL without delay.**

Staff must:

- Not wait until the end of the day to report
- Not attempt to investigate or resolve the concern independently
- Ensure urgent concerns are escalated immediately in person or via secure reporting systems

Where there is immediate risk of harm, emergency safeguarding procedures must be followed without delay.

#### **Professional Standards and Safeguarding Integrity**

Hopebright School expects all staff to demonstrate:

- Professional calmness and emotional control
- Sensitivity and trauma-informed practice

- Strict adherence to safeguarding procedures
- Awareness that disclosures may form part of wider patterns of harm
- Commitment to acting in the child's best interests at all times

All disclosures are treated as **potential safeguarding concerns until assessed by the DSL**.

#### **Safeguarding Outcome Focus**

The purpose of appropriate disclosure handling is to ensure:

- the child feels heard and believed
- information is captured accurately
- risk is identified and assessed promptly
- appropriate safeguarding action is taken without delay
- the child is protected from further harm

### **10. Prevention**

Hopebright School adopts a **proactive and preventative safeguarding approach**, recognising that effective safeguarding is achieved not only through response to harm, but through the systematic reduction of risk factors and the promotion of protective factors across the school environment.

This preventative framework aligns with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)**, **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**, and inspection expectations from both **Ofsted and the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)**, which emphasise culture, early intervention, and safeguarding embedded within school life.

The School actively works to create an environment where children feel safe, supported, and able to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

#### **Respectful, Inclusive School Ethos**

Hopebright School promotes a **culture of respect, dignity, and inclusion**, which underpins all safeguarding practice.

This includes:

- Promoting positive relationships between pupils and staff
- Encouraging mutual respect and kindness within the school community
- Actively challenging discriminatory attitudes or behaviours
- Ensuring that every child feels valued, regardless of background or identity
- Embedding safeguarding messages within everyday school interactions

A positive school ethos is recognised as a key protective factor in reducing safeguarding risks.

#### **Anti-Bullying and Anti-Discrimination Practice**

The School maintains a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and discrimination in all forms, including online behaviour.

Preventative measures include:

- Clear anti-bullying policies and reporting mechanisms
- Active supervision and monitoring of pupil interactions

- Early identification of peer-on-peer abuse or harmful behaviours
- Swift and proportionate intervention when concerns arise
- Education on respectful behaviour and diversity

Discriminatory behaviour is addressed promptly and is treated as a potential safeguarding concern where appropriate.

#### **High-Quality Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSE)**

Hopebright School delivers **high-quality, age-appropriate Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSE)** in line with statutory guidance.

RSE provision supports safeguarding by enabling pupils to:

- Understand healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Recognise appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- Develop awareness of consent and personal boundaries
- Identify risks in both offline and online environments
- Know how and where to seek help

The curriculum is designed to be inclusive, developmentally appropriate, and responsive to the needs of pupils, including those who may be more vulnerable.

#### **Therapeutic and SEMH-Informed Approaches**

The School recognises that some pupils may present with **Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs**, trauma histories, or complex life experiences.

A preventative safeguarding approach therefore includes:

- Therapeutic-informed behaviour support strategies
- Trauma-aware interactions and responses
- Emotional regulation and wellbeing support
- Consistent, predictable routines and structures
- Access to pastoral and specialist support where required

These approaches help reduce escalation of behaviour, improve emotional safety, and support long-term resilience.

#### **Clear Behaviour Expectations and Boundaries**

Hopebright School maintains **clear, consistent, and positively reinforced behaviour expectations**.

This contributes to safeguarding by:

- Establishing predictable and safe learning environments
- Reducing opportunities for peer-on-peer harm
- Supporting early identification of behavioural concerns
- Reinforcing respectful interactions and personal responsibility
- Ensuring staff apply boundaries consistently and fairly

Behaviour expectations are explicitly taught, modelled, and reinforced across the school.

#### **Staff Training, Supervision, and Professional Development**

Prevention is strengthened through a highly trained and reflective workforce.

The School ensures that staff:

- Receive regular safeguarding training aligned with KCSIE updates
- Understand emerging risks, including online harm and exploitation
- Are trained in trauma-informed and SEMH-aware approaches
- Participate in supervision, safeguarding briefings, and reflective practice
- Are supported to identify early warning signs and vulnerabilities

Training is continuously reviewed to reflect emerging national safeguarding priorities.

### **Empowering Pupils to Speak Up**

Hopebright School actively promotes a culture where pupils feel safe and confident to share concerns.

This is achieved through:

- Accessible and trusted reporting systems
- Strong relationships with key adults in school
- Reinforcement of “speaking up” messages across the curriculum
- Opportunities for pupil voice and feedback
- Assurance that concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon

Pupils are supported to understand:

- what safeguarding concerns are
- how to seek help
- who they can talk to
- what will happen when they raise a concern

The School recognises that **early disclosure is a key protective factor in safeguarding children.**

### **Integrated Preventative Safeguarding Culture**

Hopebright School’s preventative safeguarding approach is not a standalone function but is embedded across all aspects of school life, including:

- curriculum design
- pastoral systems
- behaviour management
- staff conduct and training
- leadership oversight

The aim is to ensure that safeguarding is **preventative, embedded, and continuously reinforced**, reducing risk and promoting positive outcomes for all pupils.

## 11. Early Help

Hopebright School is committed to the principles of **Early Help**, recognising it as a fundamental component of effective safeguarding practice. Early Help is a proactive approach designed to identify and address emerging needs at the earliest possible stage before concerns escalate to the threshold of statutory intervention.

The School operates in line with **Bolton's Framework for Action** and local safeguarding partnership arrangements, alongside the expectations set out in **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)** and **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**. Early Help is embedded within the School's wider safeguarding and pastoral systems and is recognised as a key preventative safeguarding mechanism.

### Purpose of Early Help

Early Help aims to:

- Identify emerging concerns affecting a child's welfare, development, or wellbeing
- Provide timely and coordinated support to children and families
- Prevent escalation of need into statutory safeguarding intervention
- Improve outcomes through early, targeted, and collaborative support
- Strengthen resilience and protective factors within the child's environment

Hopebright School recognises that effective Early Help can significantly reduce the likelihood of harm, exclusion, or long-term vulnerability.

### Identification of Emerging Needs

All staff have a responsibility to be alert to early indicators of need, which may include:

- changes in behaviour, attendance, or presentation
- emotional wellbeing concerns
- signs of neglect or inconsistent care
- family stressors or instability
- SEND-related barriers to learning or communication
- peer relationship difficulties or isolation
- indicators of online risk or exploitation

Staff are expected to exercise **professional curiosity** and consider patterns over time, not isolated incidents.

Where concerns are identified, staff must report them promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or appropriate pastoral lead.

### Information Sharing

Effective Early Help relies on **timely, lawful, and proportionate information sharing** between professionals.

Hopebright School ensures that:

- relevant information is shared with appropriate consent where possible
- information is shared without consent where there is a lawful safeguarding basis
- data sharing complies with UK GDPR and safeguarding legislation
- only relevant and necessary information is disclosed
- records of information sharing are maintained securely

The School recognises that delays in information sharing can hinder effective early intervention and increase risk to the child.

### **Early Help Assessments**

Where appropriate, Hopebright School will engage in or initiate an **Early Help Assessment (EHA)** in line with local safeguarding procedures.

The School will:

- contribute to multi-agency assessments where required
- support the identification of strengths, needs, and risks
- work with families to develop agreed support plans
- ensure the child's voice is included in the assessment process
- review progress and outcomes regularly

Early Help Assessments are used to coordinate support across education, health, and social care services where appropriate.

### **Multi-Agency and Family Collaboration**

Hopebright School recognises that Early Help is most effective when delivered through **collaborative, multi-agency working**.

The School actively works with:

- parents and carers
- local authority Early Help services
- health professionals and CAMHS where appropriate
- social care (where thresholds are not yet met for statutory intervention)
- other relevant support services

The School aims to build **constructive, solution-focused relationships with families**, supporting engagement and shared responsibility for improving outcomes.

Where appropriate, Early Help plans are jointly developed and reviewed with all relevant stakeholders.

### **Escalation to Statutory Services (Integrated Front Door)**

Where Early Help is no longer sufficient to meet a child's needs, or where concerns escalate in severity or complexity, the School will take prompt action to escalate concerns.

This includes referral to the **Integrated Front Door (IFD)** or equivalent local authority safeguarding hub.

Escalation will occur where:

- risk of significant harm is identified or suspected
- Early Help interventions are not improving outcomes
- concerns meet thresholds for statutory social care involvement
- there is immediate safeguarding risk requiring urgent action

The DSL is responsible for determining escalation, but all staff are expected to continue reporting concerns without delay.

### **Continuity and Safeguarding Oversight**

Hopebright School ensures that Early Help work is:

- clearly recorded and monitored
- regularly reviewed for effectiveness
- adjusted in response to changing needs
- integrated with safeguarding planning where required

The School maintains oversight of Early Help interventions to ensure consistency, accountability, and alignment with safeguarding outcomes.

### **Commitment to Early Intervention**

Hopebright School recognises Early Help as a critical safeguarding tool that:

- reduces the likelihood of harm
- supports improved long-term outcomes for children
- strengthens family resilience
- promotes inclusion and engagement in education

Early Help is therefore embedded as a **core safeguarding responsibility across the school**, not a separate or optional process.

## **12. Types of Abuse and Neglect**

Hopebright School follows the statutory definitions of abuse and neglect as set out in **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)** and **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**. These definitions form the basis for all safeguarding decision-making, staff training, and referral thresholds.

All staff are expected to understand these categories, recognise potential indicators, and act promptly in accordance with safeguarding procedures. Abuse can occur in any setting, including within families, peer groups, institutions, or online environments.

### **Statutory Categories of Abuse**

#### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse involves deliberately causing physical harm to a child. It may also include situations where a parent or carer fabricates or induces illness in a child (fabricated or induced illness).

Examples may include:

- hitting, shaking, kicking, or punching
- burning or scalding
- poisoning or inappropriate administration of medication
- excessive physical punishment or restraint

- unexplained injuries or repeated injuries with inconsistent explanations

Indicators may include:

- frequent or unexplained injuries
- reluctance to explain injuries or fear of adults
- behavioural changes such as aggression or withdrawal
- wearing clothing to conceal injuries

Physical abuse is always treated as a **serious safeguarding concern requiring immediate escalation**.

#### Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child that causes severe and adverse effects on emotional development and wellbeing.

It may involve:

- persistent criticism, humiliation, or rejection
- emotional unavailability or neglect of emotional needs
- exposure to domestic abuse or severe conflict
- unrealistic expectations or pressure
- bullying or cyberbullying
- inappropriate control or coercion

Indicators may include:

- low self-esteem or self-worth
- anxiety, depression, or emotional withdrawal
- extreme behavioural responses or attachment difficulties
- delayed emotional development

Emotional abuse can be difficult to identify and often occurs alongside other forms of abuse.

#### Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

This includes:

- physical contact sexual activities
- non-contact activities such as grooming, exploitation, or exposure to sexual content
- online sexual abuse, including coercion or manipulation
- sexual exploitation or abuse within relationships
- indecent exposure or involvement in pornography

Indicators may include:

- sexualised behaviour inappropriate for age
- sudden changes in behaviour or emotional wellbeing
- secrecy around online activity or communication
- unexplained gifts, money, or attention from unknown adults or peers

All concerns relating to sexual abuse are treated with **the highest level of safeguarding urgency and sensitivity.**

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in serious impairment of health or development.

Neglect may include failure to provide:

- adequate food, clothing, or shelter
- protection from physical or emotional harm
- access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- supervision or appropriate boundaries
- emotional support and affection

Indicators may include:

- persistent hunger, tiredness, or poor hygiene
- inappropriate clothing for weather conditions
- frequent absence from school or lateness
- untreated medical conditions
- developmental delays or poor growth

Neglect is often cumulative and may escalate over time if not addressed.

#### **Contextual Nature of Abuse**

Hopebright School recognises that abuse may occur in a variety of contexts, including:

- **Within the family home** (intra-familial abuse)
- **Within peer groups** (peer-on-peer abuse or harmful sexual behaviour)
- **Within institutions or organisations**
- **Within the community** (including exploitation or criminal activity)
- **Online environments**, including social media, messaging platforms, and gaming spaces

The School adopts a **contextual safeguarding approach**, recognising that risks may arise outside of school but still have a direct impact on a child's safety and wellbeing.

#### **Online and Digital Abuse**

The School recognises that all categories of abuse may occur online, including:

- grooming and exploitation
- cyberbullying and harassment
- exposure to harmful or inappropriate content
- coercion, manipulation, or blackmail (including sextortion)
- peer-on-peer harmful behaviour

Online safeguarding is treated as integral to all abuse categories, not a separate issue.

#### **Professional Responsibility**

All staff at Hopebright School must:

- remain vigilant to all forms of abuse and neglect

- understand that indicators may be subtle or cumulative
- avoid making assumptions based on appearance or behaviour alone
- report concerns immediately to the DSL or deputy DSL
- recognise that children may experience multiple forms of abuse simultaneously

Staff must always act on the principle that **concerns should be reported, not investigated or ignored.**

### **Safeguarding Thresholds and Response**

Where abuse or neglect is suspected:

- concerns must be recorded and escalated immediately
- the DSL will assess risk and determine appropriate action
- referrals may be made to children's social care or the Integrated Front Door (IFD)
- multi-agency involvement will be initiated where required

All decisions are made in line with statutory guidance and the principle that **the welfare of the child is paramount.**

### **Summary**

Hopebright School recognises that safeguarding concerns are rarely isolated, static, or immediately visible. Abuse and neglect may present in subtle, complex, or cumulative ways and can be masked by a child's behaviour, communication style, presentation, or apparent wellbeing. Children may also not recognise that they are being harmed or may be unable or unwilling to disclose concerns directly. For this reason, safeguarding at Hopebright School is underpinned by a **vigilant, informed, and consistently applied professional approach**, where all staff understand that early signs of concern must never be dismissed, normalised, or delayed in reporting. The School expects all adults to maintain a **professional culture of awareness and curiosity**, ensuring that small or seemingly isolated indicators are considered within the wider context of the child's lived experience. This includes recognising that patterns over time, changes in behaviour, or inconsistencies in presentation may be significant safeguarding indicators.

Hopebright School emphasises that effective safeguarding depends on:

- **early recognition of risk indicators**, however small
- **consistent and timely reporting of concerns** to the DSL or deputy DSL
- **accurate and objective recording of information**
- **appropriate escalation in line with statutory thresholds and local safeguarding procedures**
- **multi-agency collaboration where required to protect the child**

All staff are expected to act on the principle that it is better to report a concern early than to wait for certainty, as delay can increase risk and reduce the effectiveness of intervention. The School's safeguarding culture ensures that concerns are not managed in isolation but are considered as part of a broader safeguarding picture. This enables informed decision-making, effective risk management, and appropriate escalation where necessary to statutory services, including children's social care via the Integrated Front Door (IFD).

Ultimately, Hopebright School's safeguarding approach ensures that all children are supported within a **safe, responsive, and protective environment**, where concerns are identified early, acted upon without delay, and managed in the child's best interests at all times.

### **13. Specific Safeguarding Circumstances**

Hopebright School recognises that children may be exposed to a wide range of complex safeguarding risks that require specialist awareness, contextual understanding, and coordinated multi-agency responses. The School follows all relevant statutory guidance, including **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)**, **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**, and local safeguarding partner procedures. These safeguarding circumstances are not exhaustive, and staff are expected to maintain professional curiosity and consider the possibility that multiple risks may coexist or overlap.

#### **Domestic Abuse**

The School recognises that exposure to domestic abuse is a safeguarding concern in itself and can have a significant impact on a child's emotional wellbeing, development, and behaviour.

Staff are alert to:

- emotional distress or anxiety
- withdrawal or aggression
- unexplained changes in behaviour or attendance
- difficulty forming secure relationships

Hopebright School works closely with safeguarding partners to ensure children affected by domestic abuse receive appropriate support and intervention.

#### **Operation Encompass**

Hopebright School participates in **Operation Encompass** arrangements where applicable.

This ensures that:

- the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is informed prior to the start of the school day when a child has been involved in or exposed to a domestic abuse incident
- appropriate support is provided in school without requiring the child to disclose
- information is handled sensitively and securely
- support is tailored to the child's emotional and educational needs

#### **Child-on-Child Abuse**

The School recognises that children may be at risk from their peers, including within school and online environments.

This may include:

- bullying (including cyberbullying)
- physical abuse or intimidation
- emotional abuse or coercive behaviour
- sexual violence or sexual harassment
- harmful sexualised behaviour

All allegations of child-on-child abuse are taken seriously and are never dismissed as “banter” or “part of growing up.”

### **Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)**

Hopebright School understands that some children may display inappropriate or harmful sexual behaviour that requires specialist assessment and intervention.

The School:

- responds promptly to concerns
- considers developmental stage and context
- works with specialist agencies where required
- ensures safeguarding responses are proportionate and child-centred
- prioritises safety for all children involved

### **Online Safety**

Online safeguarding is a core safeguarding priority.

The School addresses risks including:

- online grooming and exploitation
- cyberbullying and harassment
- exposure to inappropriate or harmful content
- sextortion and coercion
- peer-to-peer harmful behaviour online
- misuse of social media and gaming platforms

Staff are expected to remain vigilant to digital safeguarding risks across all aspects of school life.

### **Criminal Exploitation (County Lines)**

Hopebright School recognises the risks associated with **criminal exploitation and county lines activity**, where children may be targeted and coerced into criminal activity.

Indicators may include:

- unexplained absences or missing episodes
- possession of unexplained money, gifts, or items
- changes in behaviour or associations
- travelling outside local areas without explanation

The School works closely with safeguarding partners and law enforcement where concerns arise.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

CSE involves the manipulation or coercion of a child into sexual activity in exchange for something, including attention, gifts, or status.

The School is alert to:

- inappropriate relationships or attachments
- secrecy around relationships or online activity
- unexplained possessions or gifts

- changes in emotional wellbeing or behaviour

All concerns are escalated immediately to safeguarding leads.

#### **Serious Violence**

The School recognises the risk of children being affected by or drawn into serious violence.

This includes:

- knife crime or weapon carrying
- gang-related activity
- violent peer relationships
- exploitation by older individuals or groups

Hopebright School works preventatively to identify risk factors early and intervene appropriately.

#### **Honour-Based Abuse and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

The School recognises that honour-based abuse and FGM are serious safeguarding concerns and forms of abuse.

Staff are trained to recognise indicators and understand that:

- FGM is illegal in the UK
- it is a mandatory reporting duty for teachers where FGM is disclosed or identified
- concerns must be escalated immediately to the DSL

#### **Radicalisation and the Prevent Duty**

Hopebright School complies fully with the **Prevent Duty (Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015)**.

The School is alert to:

- exposure to extremist ideologies
- online radicalisation risks
- changes in behaviour, beliefs, or associations
- isolation or withdrawal

Concerns are referred through safeguarding channels and may be escalated to Prevent safeguarding partners (Channel programme where appropriate).

#### **Children with Family Members in Prison**

The School recognises that children with family members in custody may experience:

- emotional distress
- stigma or isolation
- safeguarding vulnerabilities
- disrupted family relationships

Support is provided through pastoral systems and external agencies where appropriate.

#### **Homelessness**

Homelessness or housing instability is recognised as a safeguarding and welfare concern.

The School works with families and local authorities to:

- ensure continuity of education
- support access to services

- reduce disruption to learning and wellbeing

### **Mental Health**

The School recognises that mental health is closely linked to safeguarding.

Staff are alert to:

- changes in mood or behaviour
- withdrawal or isolation
- self-harm or suicidal ideation
- anxiety or emotional dysregulation

Where concerns arise, the DSL and pastoral teams ensure appropriate support and referral pathways are followed.

### **Missing Education / Attendance Concerns**

Persistent absence or missing education is treated as a potential safeguarding indicator.

The School monitors:

- attendance patterns
- unexplained absences
- repeated lateness or disengagement

Where concerns arise, Early Help or safeguarding escalation procedures are implemented.

### **Private Fostering**

Hopebright School recognises its duty to identify potential private fostering arrangements.

Where identified or suspected:

- the local authority is notified
- safeguarding checks are completed
- the arrangement is monitored in line with statutory requirements

### **SEND Vulnerabilities**

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may face increased safeguarding risks due to:

- communication barriers
- dependence on adults
- difficulties recognising or reporting abuse
- increased susceptibility to exploitation

The School ensures safeguarding approaches are adapted to meet individual needs.

### **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

Where applicable, safeguarding within EYFS settings is guided by statutory EYFS requirements.

The School ensures:

- high levels of supervision and safeguarding awareness
- safe recruitment and staffing ratios
- secure environments and risk management
- age-appropriate safeguarding education and practice

### **Integrated Safeguarding Approach**

Hopebright School recognises that these safeguarding circumstances often overlap and may present in complex combinations.

The School ensures:

- early identification and professional curiosity
- timely escalation and referral
- multi-agency collaboration
- child-centred decision-making
- consistent application of statutory guidance

Safeguarding responses are always proportionate, informed, and focused on the **best interests and safety of the child**.

## 14. Whistleblowing

Hopebright School is committed to the highest standards of safeguarding practice, professional conduct, and organisational integrity. We recognise that effective safeguarding depends on a culture where staff feel confident to raise concerns about unsafe, unethical, or unlawful practice without fear of reprisal. This policy is underpinned by the **Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)**, and best practice safeguarding governance expectations.

### Purpose of Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing enables staff to report concerns about:

- unsafe or poor safeguarding practice
- failures to follow statutory safeguarding procedures
- actions that may place children at risk of harm
- inadequate response to safeguarding disclosures or concerns
- misconduct by colleagues, leaders, or external professionals
- breaches of professional codes of conduct or school policies
- attempts to conceal safeguarding failures or incidents

Whistleblowing is distinct from complaints procedures and is specifically focused on concerns that affect the safety and welfare of children.

### Expectation of Staff

All staff at Hopebright School have a professional duty to:

- act in the best interests of children at all times
- report safeguarding concerns without delay
- escalate concerns where they believe they are not being appropriately addressed
- challenge unsafe practice where it is safe and appropriate to do so
- understand that safeguarding concerns always override hierarchical reporting structures

### Staff must not:

- ignore safeguarding concerns
- assume someone else will report an issue
- be discouraged from reporting due to fear of consequences

### Reporting Procedures

Concerns should normally be raised in the first instance with:

- the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or
- a member of the senior leadership team

Where staff feel unable to raise concerns internally, or where concerns relate to senior leadership, they may escalate through:

- the School's formal Whistleblowing Policy
- designated external whistleblowing channels
- relevant safeguarding authorities where appropriate

All reports will be taken seriously, investigated appropriately, and handled sensitively.

#### Protection for Whistleblowers

Hopebright School ensures that staff who raise concerns in good faith will:

- be treated fairly and professionally
- not suffer detriment, victimisation, or retaliation
- receive appropriate support and feedback where possible
- have their concerns handled confidentially, where appropriate

Malicious or knowingly false allegations may result in disciplinary action; however, genuine concerns raised in good faith will always be protected.

#### Safeguarding Link

Where whistleblowing concerns involve safeguarding matters, they will be:

- escalated immediately to the DSL or deputy DSL
- recorded securely in safeguarding systems where appropriate
- considered under statutory safeguarding thresholds
- referred to external agencies if required

The welfare of the child remains the paramount consideration in all cases.

### **15. Escalation and Professional Challenge**

Hopebright School recognises that effective safeguarding relies on **professional collaboration, constructive challenge, and clear escalation pathways**, particularly where there is disagreement between professionals regarding safeguarding decisions or thresholds. The School follows **Bolton safeguarding partnership escalation procedures** and aligns with national guidance in **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**.

#### Principles of Professional Challenge

Professional disagreement is an expected and healthy part of safeguarding practice where it is used constructively to improve outcomes for children.

Staff are expected to:

- engage in respectful, evidence-based professional dialogue
- maintain focus on the child's welfare and safety
- remain open to alternative perspectives and information
- document discussions and decisions clearly
- escalate concerns appropriately where resolution is not achieved

Professional challenge must always remain **child-centred, proportionate, and solution-focused**.

#### When Escalation is Required

Escalation may be required when:

- there is disagreement between professionals about safeguarding thresholds
- concerns are not being acted upon in a timely or appropriate manner
- there is perceived minimisation or dismissal of safeguarding risk

- repeated concerns have not resulted in effective intervention
- there is uncertainty about roles, responsibilities, or decision-making

Escalation ensures that safeguarding decisions are appropriately reviewed, and that no child is left at risk due to breakdowns in professional communication.

#### Escalation Process

Where concerns cannot be resolved informally, Hopebright School will:

1. Seek clarification through direct professional dialogue with the relevant agency or professional
2. Involve the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for oversight and coordination
3. Refer to formal escalation procedures under the local safeguarding partnership framework
4. Document all actions, decisions, and rationale in safeguarding records
5. Continue to prioritise immediate safeguarding needs while escalation is ongoing

Escalation is not a sign of conflict but a mechanism to ensure **accountability, clarity, and child-centred decision-making**.

#### Professional Accountability and Safeguarding Responsibility

All professionals working with children have a shared responsibility to:

- act in the best interests of the child at all times
- ensure concerns are not lost or delayed within systems
- maintain accurate and transparent communication
- support effective multi-agency safeguarding outcomes

Hopebright School supports a culture where **appropriate professional challenge is encouraged and expected**, as it strengthens safeguarding practice and improves outcomes for children.

#### Recording and Governance

All whistleblowing and escalation actions are:

- recorded securely and appropriately
- subject to safeguarding oversight by the DSL
- available for internal audit, inspection, and governance review
- monitored for patterns or systemic issues

This ensures organisational learning and continuous improvement in safeguarding practice.

## 16. Managing Allegations Against Staff

Hopebright School is committed to ensuring that all allegations against staff, volunteers, supply staff, contractors, and any other adults working with children are managed in a **fair, consistent, timely, and robust safeguarding manner**, in line with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)**, **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**, and local safeguarding partner procedures. The School follows updated **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** procedures and the relevant **First Steps guidance**, alongside internal safeguarding escalation and investigation flowcharts (Appendix 11).

### Scope of Allegations

An allegation may relate to an adult who 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 or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm
- behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

This includes behaviour that may have occurred inside or outside of school, including online activity.

### Initial Response

All concerns or allegations must be reported **immediately and without delay** to the Headteacher or designated safeguarding lead (DSL), unless the allegation concerns those individuals, in which case it must be reported directly to the LADO.

Upon receiving an allegation, the School will:

- ensure immediate safeguarding of the child/children involved
- make a written record of the concern
- not investigate the allegation independently
- preserve evidence where relevant
- contact the LADO within statutory timescales

### LADO Involvement

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted in all cases that meet the threshold for allegations management.

The LADO will:

- provide advice and guidance
- oversee the management of the allegation
- determine whether a formal strategy meeting is required
- ensure appropriate multi-agency coordination

Hopebright School fully cooperates with LADO processes at all stages.

### Suspension and Risk Management

Suspension of staff is not automatic and will only be considered where necessary to:

- protect children
- ensure integrity of investigation

- prevent interference with evidence or witnesses

Any decision to suspend staff will be made in line with employment law, safeguarding considerations, and advice from the LADO and relevant agencies.

#### Confidentiality

All allegations are treated with strict confidentiality. Information is shared only with:

- those who need to know for safeguarding purposes
- the LADO and relevant statutory agencies
- senior leadership as appropriate

Staff must not discuss allegations internally or externally unless authorised.

#### Record Keeping

All allegation-related records will be:

- accurate, factual, and securely stored
- maintained separately from personnel files where required
- retained in accordance with statutory retention guidance
- accessible only to authorised safeguarding and HR personnel

#### Outcome of Allegations

Outcomes may include:

- substantiated
- unsubstantiated
- unfounded
- malicious
- false

All outcomes will be recorded appropriately and reviewed for organisational learning where relevant.

## 17. Safer Recruitment

Hopebright School is committed to the principles of **Safer Recruitment** to ensure that all adults working in the school are suitable to work with children and young people. The School fully complies with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)**, the **Independent School Standards (ISS)**, and relevant employment and safeguarding legislation.

Safer recruitment practices are applied consistently to all staff, volunteers, contractors, agency staff, and governors.

### Core Recruitment Safeguards

Before any appointment is confirmed, the School ensures:

- **Enhanced DBS checks** with barred list checks where applicable
- **Children's Barred List checks** for regulated activity roles
- **Prohibition from teaching checks** (where applicable)
- **Identity verification** using official documentation
- **Verification of qualifications** relevant to the role
- **Full employment history checks**, with explanations for gaps
- **Two or more satisfactory references**, including safeguarding questions
- **Right to work in the UK checks**

All checks are completed and verified **before the individual commences employment or regulated activity**.

### Recruitment Process Standards

Hopebright School ensures that:

- at least one member of every recruitment panel has completed accredited safer recruitment training
- safeguarding considerations are embedded throughout the selection process
- interview questions explicitly explore safeguarding attitudes and understanding
- any concerns arising during recruitment are fully explored before appointment decisions are made

### Ongoing Safeguarding Suitability

Safer recruitment is not a one-time process. The School ensures ongoing suitability through:

- probationary review processes
- continuous safeguarding training
- performance monitoring and supervision
- updated DBS checks where required
- reporting duties for changes in circumstances

### Single Central Record (SCR)

The School maintains a **Single Central Record (SCR)** that is:

- accurate
- regularly updated
- fully compliant with statutory requirements

- subject to internal and external audit

The SCR records all required pre-employment safeguarding checks.

## **18. Visitors and Contractors**

Hopebright School is committed to maintaining a safe environment for all pupils by ensuring that all visitors and contractors are appropriately managed, supervised, and compliant with safeguarding expectations.

This applies to all individuals entering the school site, including:

- contractors and maintenance personnel
- agency staff and supply teachers
- external professionals and service providers
- volunteers and visitors
- inspectors and external agencies

### Entry and Identification

All visitors must:

- sign in on arrival using the school's visitor management system
- provide valid identification where required
- wear clearly visible identification badges at all times
- be logged in accordance with safeguarding and fire safety procedures

Visitors must not move freely around the school site unaccompanied unless authorised.

### Supervision Requirements

All visitors and contractors:

- are supervised by a designated member of staff unless appropriately vetted
- must not be left alone with pupils unless formal safeguarding clearance and checks are in place
- must comply with all instructions given by school staff

Where appropriate, enhanced safeguarding checks may be required depending on the nature and frequency of contact with children.

### Safeguarding Expectations

All visitors and contractors are required to:

- follow the School's safeguarding and child protection procedures
- report any concerns immediately to a member of staff or DSL
- adhere to appropriate professional boundaries at all times
- avoid any behaviour that could be misinterpreted or place children at risk

Failure to comply with safeguarding expectations may result in removal from site and reporting to relevant authorities.

### Contractor Control Measures

Where contractors are on site:

- their working areas are clearly defined and controlled
- access to pupil areas is restricted wherever possible
- risk assessments and safeguarding requirements are completed in advance

- supervision is maintained in line with risk level and activity type

#### Summary

Hopebright School ensures that safer recruitment and visitor management systems operate as part of a wider safeguarding framework designed to:

- prevent unsuitable adults from gaining access to children
- maintain a secure and controlled school environment
- ensure compliance with statutory safeguarding requirements
- uphold the highest standards of child protection practice

#### **19. Useful Contacts**

A list of updated contacts is provided in the appendices.



## Appendices

1. Staff Summary of Safeguarding Policy
2. Parent Summary
3. Role of the DSL
4. Guidance for Safeguarding Records
5. Record of Concern Form
6. Body Map Guidance
7. Home Injury Form
8. Child Protection File Front Sheet
9. Chronology Template
10. Transfer of Records Form
11. LADO First Steps
12. Allegations Tracking Form
13. Designated Teacher for CLA
14. Referral Flowchart
15. Operation Encompass Flowchart
16. Harmful Sexual Behaviour Flowchart
17. FGM Flowchart
18. Staff Declaration of Understanding

## **Appendix 1 – Staff Summary of Safeguarding Policy**

### **Purpose**

This summary provides all staff with a concise reference to their safeguarding responsibilities at Hopebright School. Safeguarding is the responsibility of every adult.

### **Key Principles**

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- Safeguarding concerns must always be acted upon immediately
- Do not investigate—report only
- Professional curiosity is essential
- Early Help is safeguarding
- Record accurately and factually

### **What Staff Must Do**

Staff must:

- Be alert to signs of abuse, neglect, and vulnerability
- Listen to children and take disclosures seriously
- Record concerns immediately using the school system
- Report all concerns to the DSL without delay
- Maintain confidentiality (do not promise secrecy)
- Follow the school’s safeguarding and whistleblowing procedures

### **What Staff Must Never Do**

Staff must not:

- Investigate concerns
- Promise confidentiality
- Ask leading questions
- Delay reporting concerns
- Ignore low-level concerns or patterns

### **Key Contacts**

- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): School safeguarding lead
- Deputy DSL(s): Named safeguarding deputies
- External escalation: Local Authority Integrated Front Door (IFD)

## **Appendix 2 – Parent Summary of Safeguarding Policy**

### **Our Commitment**

Hopebright School is committed to keeping all children safe and promoting their welfare at all times.

### **What Safeguarding Means**

Safeguarding includes:

- Protecting children from harm
- Supporting their health and development
- Ensuring safe care and education
- Acting quickly when concerns arise

### **What Happens if We Have Concerns**

If we are concerned about a child:

- We will talk to trained safeguarding staff
- We may contact external agencies for advice or support
- We will always act in the child's best interests

We will normally work with parents unless doing so would increase risk.

### **Early Help**

We may offer Early Help support if a child or family needs additional support. This is voluntary and supportive, not punitive.

### **Reporting Concerns**

If parents have concerns about a child, they should contact:

- the school safeguarding team (DSL)
- or a trusted member of staff

### **Confidentiality**

We follow strict confidentiality rules but may share information where required to keep a child safe.

## **Appendix 3 – Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

### **Core Purpose**

The DSL is responsible for leading safeguarding and child protection across Hopebright School.

### **Key Responsibilities**

The DSL will:

- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection
- Manage and respond to safeguarding concerns and referrals
- Liaise with local authority children's services and external agencies
- Provide advice and support to staff
- Ensure safeguarding training is up to date
- Maintain safeguarding records securely
- Oversee Early Help processes
- Ensure KCSIE compliance across the school

### **Decision-Making**

The DSL:

- Determines escalation thresholds
- Makes referrals to the Integrated Front Door (IFD)
- Coordinates multi-agency safeguarding responses
- Ensures appropriate action is taken without delay

### **Deputy DSLs**

Deputy DSLs:

- Support the DSL in safeguarding duties
- Act in their absence
- Handle safeguarding concerns when delegated

### **Accountability**

The DSL ensures safeguarding systems are:

- effective
- compliant
- regularly reviewed
- evidence-ready for inspection

## **Appendix 4 – Guidance for Safeguarding Records**

### **Purpose**

Safeguarding records are legal documents and may be required for inspection, safeguarding reviews, or court proceedings.

### **Recording Standards**

Records must:

- be factual and objective
- use clear, professional language
- include date, time, and context
- record the child's exact words where possible
- include actions taken and rationale

### **What to Record**

Record:

- disclosures
- observations
- injuries (via body map if required)
- professional discussions
- decisions and outcomes
- referrals and external contact

### **Storage**

Records must be:

- stored securely in the safeguarding system
- access-restricted to authorised staff
- not stored on personal devices or email accounts

### **Confidentiality**

Information must only be shared:

- on a need-to-know basis
- for safeguarding purposes
- in line with UK GDPR lawful bases



## **Appendix 5 – Record of Concern Form**

### **Child Details**

- Name:
- DOB:
- Year Group/Class:
- Date of concern:
- Time of concern:

### **Concern Details**

Describe clearly:

- what was observed or disclosed
- where and when it happened
- who was involved
- exact words used (if applicable)

### **Professional Response**

- Immediate action taken:
- Who was informed:
- DSL notified (Y/N):

### **Staff Details**

- Name:
- Role:
- Signature:

### **DSL Action**

- Action taken:
- Referral made (Y/N):
- Outcome / next steps:

## **Appendix 6 – Body Map Guidance**

### **Purpose**

Body maps are used to record visible injuries in a clear, factual, and safeguarding-appropriate manner.

### **When to Use**

Use a body map when:

- an injury is observed
- a child discloses physical harm
- clarification is required for safeguarding records

### **Recording Requirements**

Staff must:

- mark the location of injury clearly
- describe size, colour, and appearance
- avoid assumptions about cause
- not photograph injuries

### **Important Rules**

- Do not speculate on how injury occurred
- Do not question the child beyond safeguarding necessity
- Always report immediately to DSL
- Store securely with safeguarding records

## **Appendix 7 – Home Injury Form**

### **Purpose**

To record injuries observed or disclosed that may have occurred outside school.

### **Child Details**

- Name:
- DOB:
- Class:
- Date/time observed:

### **Injury Description**

- Location of injury:
- Description (size, colour, shape):
- Child explanation (if given verbatim):

### **Staff Observation**

- Behaviour/appearance of child:
- Any concerns raised:

### **Action Taken**

- DSL informed: Y/N
- Time reported:
- Further action required:

### **Staff Confirmation**

- Name:
- Role:
- Signature:
- Date:

## **Appendix 8 – Child Protection File Front Sheet**

### **Child Protection File – Front Sheet**

#### **Child Details**

- Full Name:
- Date of Birth:
- Year Group/Class:
- UPN (if applicable):
- Home Address:
- Parent/Carer Details:
- Emergency Contact(s):

#### **Key Professional Details**

- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):
- Deputy DSL(s):
- Social Worker (if applicable):
- Early Help Lead (if applicable):
- Virtual School (if CLA):

#### **File Status**

- Open / Closed (circle one)
- Date opened:
- Reason for opening:

#### **Risk Indicators Summary**

##### **Brief overview of key safeguarding concerns:**

#### **Key Agencies Involved**

- Children’s Social Care:
- Police:
- Health:
- Other agencies:

#### **Important Dates**

- First concern recorded:
- Referral dates:
- Strategy meetings:
- Review dates:

#### **Confidentiality Statement**

This file contains sensitive safeguarding information and must be stored securely and accessed only by authorised safeguarding personnel.

**Appendix 9 – Chronology Template**

**Safeguarding Chronology**

Date	Event / Concern	Source	Action Taken	Outcome / Notes	Staff Initials

**Guidance**

Chronologies must:

- be maintained from first point of concern
- include all safeguarding-relevant events
- show escalation patterns clearly
- support professional analysis and decision-making
- be updated contemporaneously

**Types of Events to Include**

- disclosures
- injuries or observations
- attendance concerns
- behavioural changes
- Early Help involvement
- agency involvement
- referrals and outcomes

## **Appendix 10 – Transfer of Records Form**

### **Safeguarding Record Transfer Form**

#### **Child Details**

- Name:
- DOB:
- Current School: Hopebright School
- Destination School:

#### **Reason for Transfer**

- Move of school
- In-year transfer
- Placement change
- Other:

#### **Record Contents Confirmed**

- Child Protection File included: Yes / No
- Chronology included: Yes / No
- Additional reports included: Yes / No

#### **Transfer Details**

- Date sent:
- Method of transfer: Secure / Hand delivery / Other
- Recipient name:
- Role:
- Receiving confirmation received: Yes / No

#### **Authorisation**

- DSL Name:
- Signature:
- Date:

#### **Security Statement**

All safeguarding records must be transferred securely within **5 working days** of confirmation of placement change, in line with statutory guidance.

## **Appendix 11 – LADO First Steps**

### **LADO Initial Action Guidance**

#### **When to Refer**

Contact LADO immediately if a concern involves:

- possible harm to a child by an adult
- criminal offence against a child
- inappropriate conduct suggesting risk
- behaviour impacting suitability to work with children

### **Immediate Actions**

1. Ensure immediate safety of child/children
2. Do NOT investigate
3. Record factual information
4. Inform Headteacher/DSL immediately
5. Contact LADO without delay

### **Information Required**

- Child details
- Staff member details
- Nature of concern
- Dates/times
- Any immediate safeguarding actions taken

### **LADO Outcome Pathways**

- No further action
- Internal management process
- LADO strategy meeting required
- Police involvement required

### **Confidentiality**

Information must only be shared with those directly involved in safeguarding management.



## **Appendix 12 – Allegations Tracking Form**

### **Allegation Management Record**

#### **Staff Member Details**

- Name:
- Role:
- Allegation reference number:

#### **Allegation Details**

- Date received:
- Source of allegation:
- Summary of concern:

#### **Immediate Action**

- Suspension considered: Yes / No
- Child safeguarding actions taken:
- LADO contacted: Yes / No (Date/time):

#### **Case Management**

- Strategy meeting dates:
- Agencies involved:
- Updates:

#### **Outcome**

- Substantiated
- Unsubstantiated
- False
- Malicious
- Unfounded

#### **Post-Outcome Actions**

- HR action (if applicable):
- Training/retraining:
- Safeguarding review required:

## **Appendix 13 – Designated Teacher for Looked After Children (CLA)**

### **Role of the Designated Teacher**

Hopebright School appoints a Designated Teacher responsible for the education and welfare of **Looked After Children (CLA)** and **Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)**.

### **Key Responsibilities**

The Designated Teacher will:

- act as the lead advocate for CLA/PLAC pupils
- ensure Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are implemented and reviewed
- liaise with Virtual School Head (VSH)
- track attainment, attendance, and progress
- ensure targeted support and interventions are in place
- promote high expectations and aspiration

### **Multi-Agency Working**

The Designated Teacher will work with:

- social workers
- carers and guardians
- Virtual School teams
- pastoral and safeguarding staff

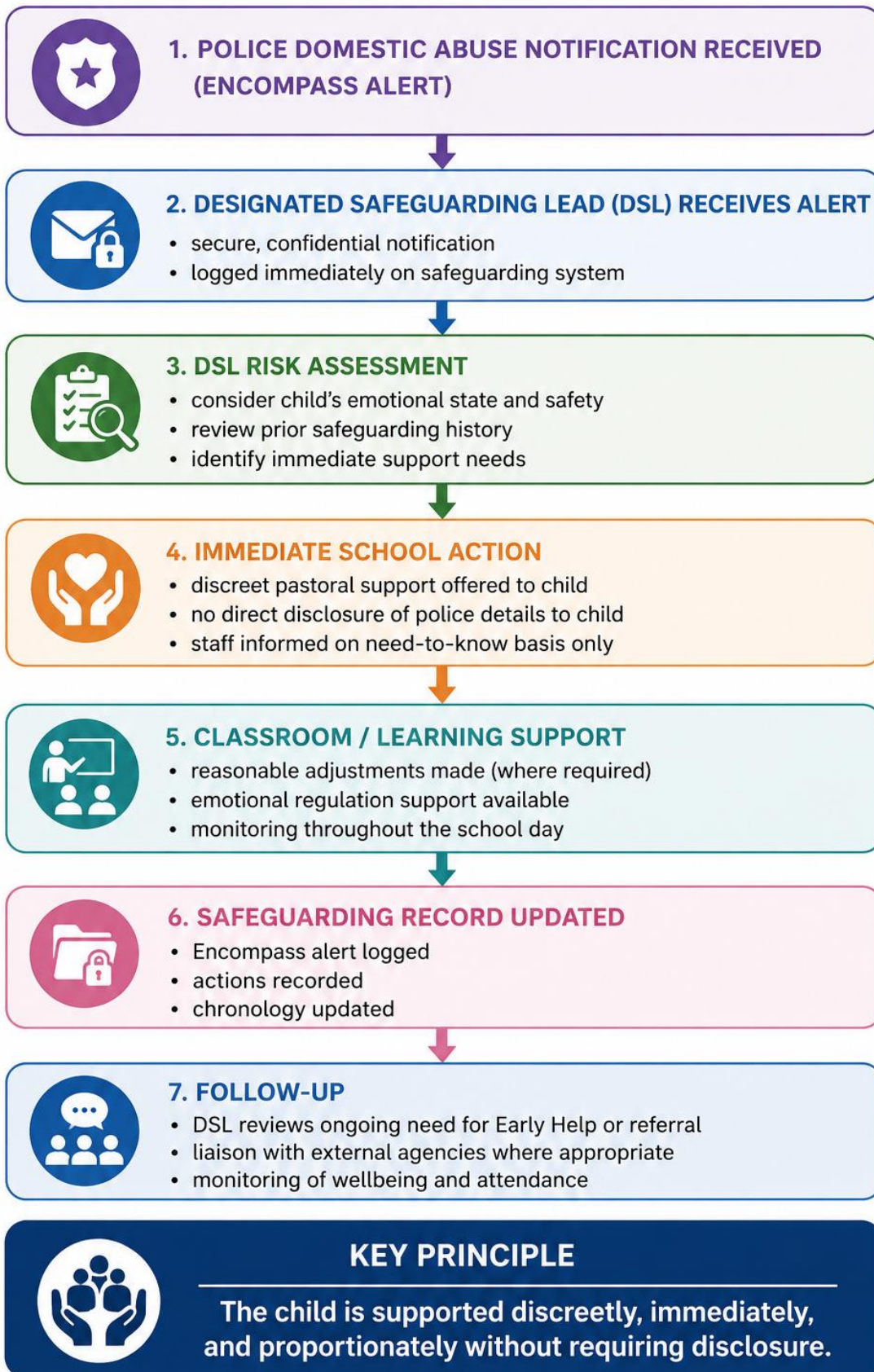
### **Safeguarding Link**

CLA pupils are recognised as potentially **highly vulnerable**, and safeguarding concerns must be escalated immediately via DSL procedures.

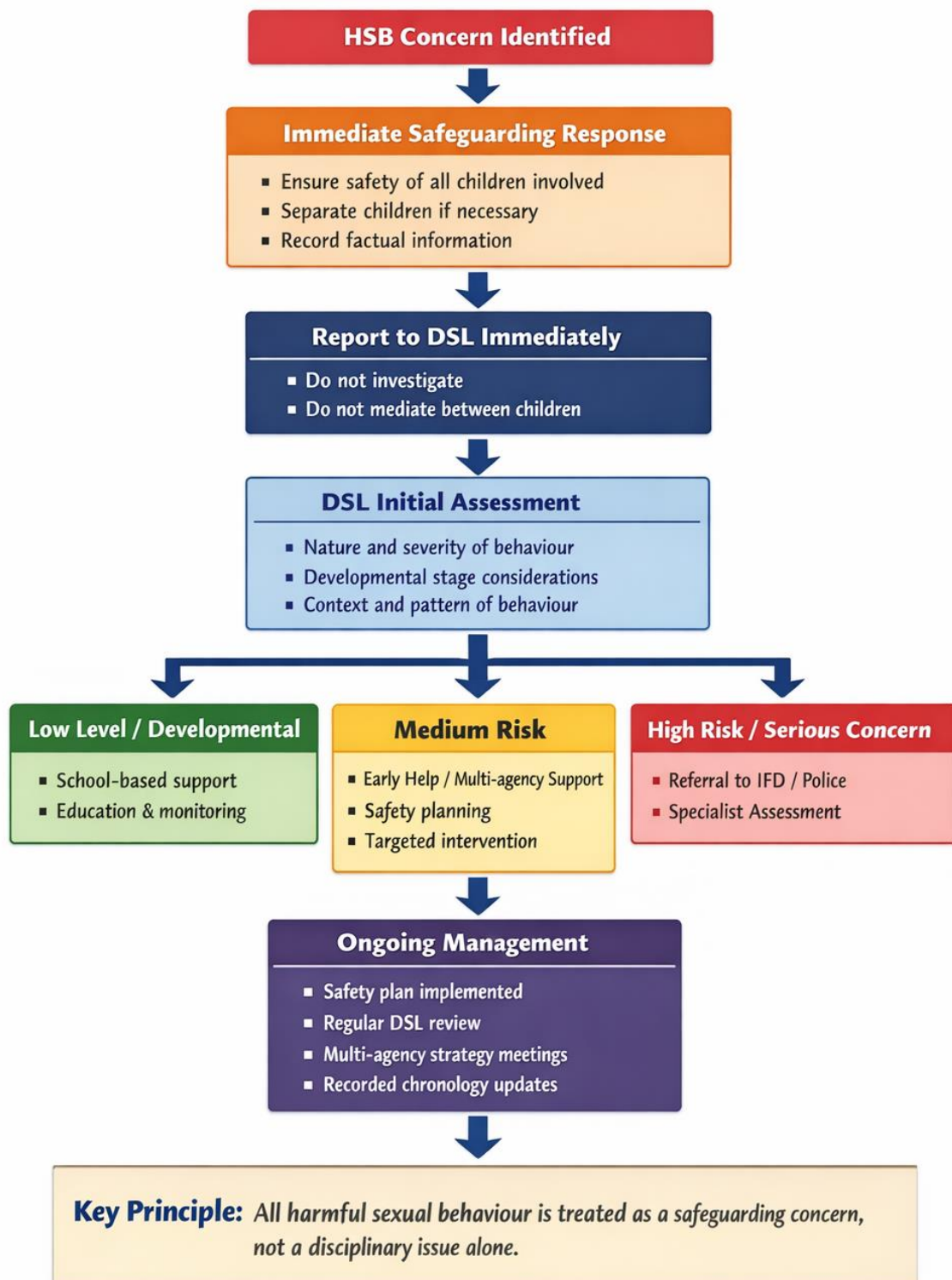
## APPENDIX 14 – SAFEGUARDING REFERRAL FLOWCHART



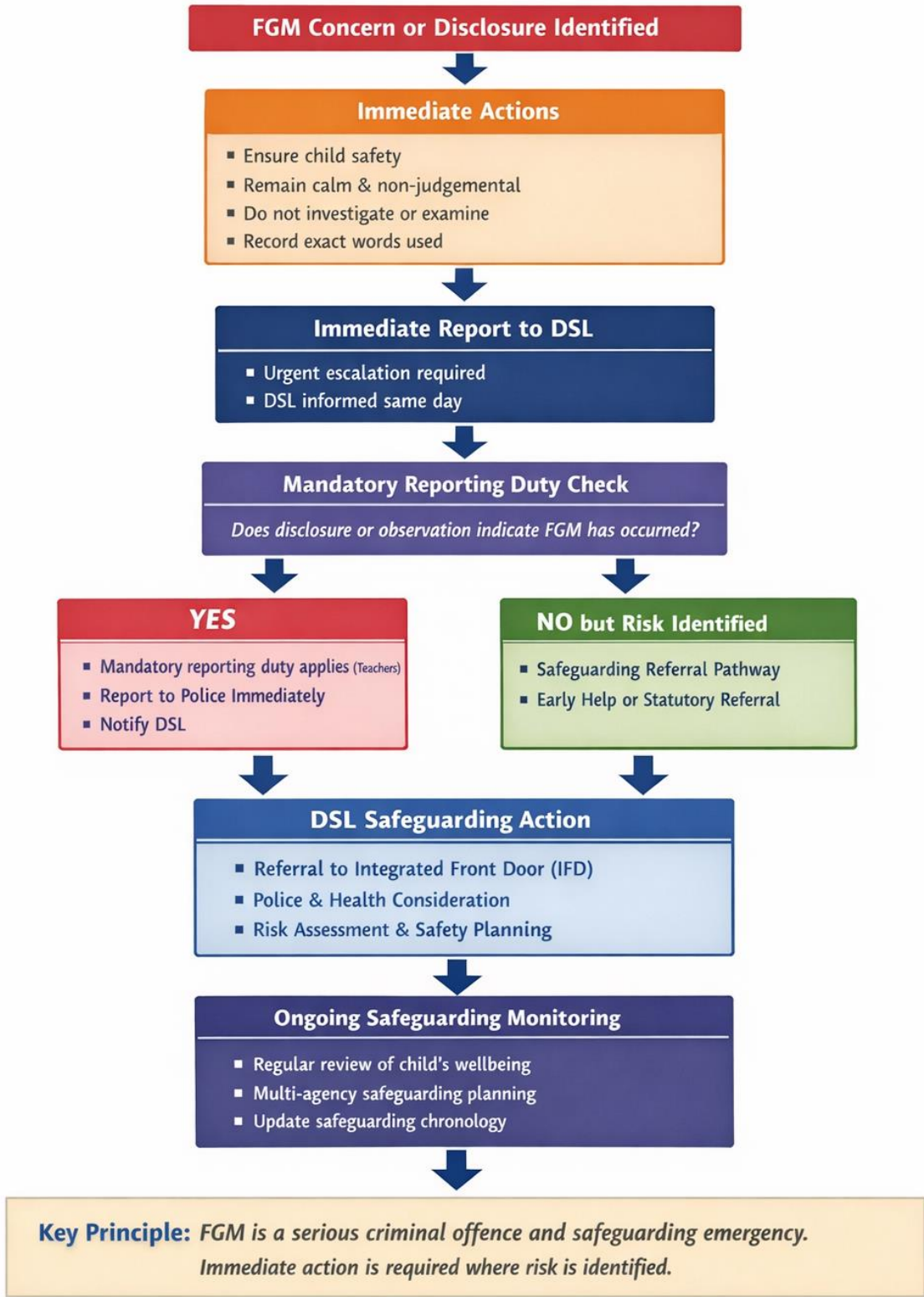
## APPENDIX 15 – OPERATION ENCOMPASS FLOWCHART



## Appendix 16 – Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) Flowchart



**Appendix 17 – Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Flowchart**



## **Appendix 18 – Staff Declaration of Safeguarding Understanding**

### **Safeguarding Policy Understanding Declaration**

#### **Staff Member Details**

- Name:
- Role:
- Date of induction/training:

#### **Declaration**

I confirm that I:

- have read and understood Hopebright School’s Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- understand that safeguarding is my personal responsibility
- know how to report concerns immediately to the DSL or deputy DSL
- understand the procedure for disclosures and record keeping
- understand the limits of confidentiality
- understand escalation procedures, including Early Help and statutory referral pathways
- understand whistleblowing procedures and professional challenge expectations
- understand safeguarding risks including abuse, neglect, online harm, and exploitation
- will follow all safeguarding procedures without exception

#### **Commitment Statement**

I understand that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- safeguarding concerns must never be ignored or delayed
- I must not investigate concerns myself
- I must act professionally, promptly, and in accordance with school procedures

#### **Confirmation**

- Signature: \_\_\_\_\_
- Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Safeguarding Integrity Statement**

This declaration forms part of Hopebright School’s safeguarding compliance evidence and may be reviewed during internal audit, inspection, or safeguarding review processes.