



Safeguarding Policy & Guidance

**We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.
This policy was last reviewed on: 15th February 2021**

Contact Information

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Tim Wakefield, Founder & CEO
01902 552288
tim@switchmidlands.com

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Caroline Erskine-Murphy, Compliance & Quality Assurance
01902 552288
caroline@switchmidlands.com

Wolverhampton Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Kathy Hadley & Helen Hayes
Tel: 01902 550477

Secure email: LADO@secure.wolverhampton.gov.uk - when personal or confidential information inc. names of individuals) needs to be sent to the Designated Officer

Non-secure email: LADO@wolverhampton.gov.uk - when no confidential information is being sent / general enquiries

Summary of changes – June 2020

The policy has been revised to reflect the changes to the statutory guidance as outlined below.

Section	Changes
Throughout	All references to 'Keeping Children and young people Safe in Education' (2019) have been removed and replaced with reference to 'Keeping Children and young people Safe in Education' (2020).
1	Amended to include mental and physical health.
2	Reference to Relationship Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education added.
6	Amendments made to reflect the additional detail and staff knowledge related to extra-familial harms taking a variety of different forms and children and young people can be vulnerable to multiple harms
6	Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE): County Lines Amendments made to ensure staff are clear of the interconnectivity between CSE and CCE.
6	New section: Added to reflect the changes related to safeguarding and mental health
11	Information added to highlight transferrable risk from behaviours that may happen outside of service.
11	New paragraph added to reflect the role of services in the management of allegations against supply staff. Subsequent numbering altered.
12	Added the following links to guidance documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners, DfE (February 2017) • Mental Health and Behaviour in Services, DfE (November 2018) • Data protection: toolkit for services, DfE (September 2018)

Policy Consultation & Review

This policy is available on our website and is available on request from our head office.

We recognise the expertise our staff build by undertaking safeguarding training and managing safeguarding concerns on a daily basis and we therefore invite staff to contribute to and shape this policy and associated safeguarding arrangements.

The policy is provided to all staff at induction alongside our Staff Code of Conduct, Behaviour and Wellbeing Policy, Equal Opportunities. In addition, all staff are provided with Part One of the statutory guidance ['Keeping Children and young people Safe in Education'](#), DfE (2020).

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Designated and Deputy Safeguarding Leads on an annual basis.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually. This policy was last reviewed on: 28th November 2020

Page:	Section
5	Purpose & Aims
5	Service Ethos
6	Roles & Responsibilities
8	Training & Induction
9	Procedures for Managing Concerns
10	Specific Safeguarding Issues
14	Recording & Information Sharing
15	Working with Parents & Carers
16	Safer Recruitment
16	Safer Working Practice
16	Managing Allegations against Staff
19	Statutory Framework
	Appendix 1: Recording form for reporting concerns
	Appendix 2: Induction checklist for staff & volunteers

1. PURPOSE & AIMS

1.1 The purpose of Switch Midlands safeguarding policy is to ensure every child and young person who the service works with is safe and protected from harm. This means we will always work to:

- Protect children and young people and young people at our service from maltreatment;
- Prevent impairment of our children and young people's and young people's mental and physical health or development;
- Ensure that children and young people and young people at our service grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- Undertake that role so as to enable children and young people and young people at our service to have the best outcomes.

1.2 This policy will give clear direction to all staff including supply staff, volunteers, visitors and parents about expected behaviour and our legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people at our service.

1.3 Our service fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and young people and young people from harm and supporting and promoting the welfare of all children and young people who are service supports. The elements of our policy are prevention, protection and support.

1.4 We recognise that our safeguarding responsibilities are clearly linked to our responsibilities for ensuring that appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for children and young people who are absent from service or who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions.

1.5 This policy applies to all children and young people and young people, staff, parents, volunteers and visitors.

2. OUR ETHOS

2.1 The child or young person's welfare is of paramount importance. Our service will establish and maintain an ethos where children and young people feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and are safe. Children and young people at our service will be able to talk freely to any member of staff at our service if they are worried or concerned about something.

2.2 Everyone who comes into contact with children and young people and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children and young people. We recognise that staff at our service play a particularly important role as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children and young people to prevent concerns from escalating. **All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.** When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members must always act in the **best interests** of the child.

2.3 All staff and regular visitors will, through training and induction, know how to recognise indicators of concern, how to respond to a disclosure from a child and how to record and report this information. We will not make promises to any child and we will not keep secrets. Every child will know what the adult

will have to do with any information they have chosen to disclose.

2.4 Throughout our service we will provide activities and opportunities for children and young people to develop the skills they need to identify risks and stay safe. It will include covering relevant issues through Relationship Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education. This will also be extended to include material that will encourage our children and young people to develop essential life skills. Teaching children and young people and young people about how to stay safe and behave online, including identifying risks and how and when to seek support is crucial. Further information can be found in the DfE guidance [‘Teaching online safety in service.’](#)

2.5 At all times we will work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children and young people](#) (2018).

2.6 As part of our responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, we will provide support to early help when additional needs of children and young people are identified. These may include if a child:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan);
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- is a privately fostered child.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 It is the responsibility of every member of staff, volunteer and regular visitor to our service to ensure that they carry out the requirements of this policy and, at all times, work in a way that will safeguard and promote the welfare of all of the children and young people and young people at this service. This includes the responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children and young people can learn.

The CEO

3.2 At Switch Midlands the CEO is responsible for:

- To fulfil the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL);
- Identifying alternate members of staff to act as the Deputy Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in his/her absence to ensure there is always cover for the role;
- Ensuring that the policies and procedures adopted by the service, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are followed by all staff;
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and such concerns are addressed sensitively in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing procedures;
- Liaise with the LADO in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff or volunteer.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

3.6 The Designated Safeguarding Lead is a senior member of staff, from the leadership team who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within our service. The DSL will carry out their role in accordance with the responsibilities outlined in Annex B of [‘Keeping Children and young people Safe in Education’](#).

3.7 The DSL will provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters. Any concern for a child’s safety or welfare will be recorded in writing and given to the DSL.

3.8 During term time the designated safeguarding lead and or a deputy will always be available (during service or office hours) for staff in the service to discuss any safeguarding concerns. If in *exceptional* circumstances, a DSL is not available on the service site in person, we will ensure that they are available via telephone and/or any other relevant media.

3.9 The DSL at Switch Midlands will represent our service at child protection conferences and core group meetings. Through appropriate training, knowledge and experience our DSL will liaise with Children and Young People’s Services and other agencies where necessary, and make referrals of suspected abuse to Children and Young People’s Services, take part in strategy discussions and other interagency meetings and contribute to the assessment of children and young people.

3.10 The DSL will maintain written records and child protection files ensuring that they are kept confidential and stored securely.

3.11 The DSL is responsible for ensuring that all staff members and volunteers are aware of our policy and the procedure they need to follow. They will ensure that all staff, volunteers and regular visitors have received appropriate child protection information during induction and have been trained within the service.

3.12 We recognise that a child’s experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged

in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health. The DSL will use the information that they hold about children and young people to make decisions in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and help promote educational outcomes. The DSL will ensure that staff, know who these children and young people are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children and young people in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children and young people.

4. TRAINING & INDUCTION

4.1 When new staff join our service they will be informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They will be given a copy of our service's safeguarding policy along with the staff code of conduct, Part one and Annex A of '*Keeping Children and young people Safe in Education*' and told who our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs are. They will also receive a copy of the behaviour policy and the service's response to children and young people who go missing from education – this information is included in section 6 of this policy. All staff are expected to read these key documents. They will also be provided with the safeguarding recording form, given information on how to complete it and who to pass it to.

4.2 Every new member of staff or volunteer will receive safeguarding training during their induction period within 10 working days of joining the service. This programme will include information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, how to record, the processes for referral to Children and Young people's Services and the statutory assessments under Section 17 and Section 47 as well as the remit of the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The training will also include information about whistle-blowing in respect of concerns about another adult's behaviour and suitability to work with children and young people.

4.3 In addition to the safeguarding induction, we will ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part one of '*Keeping Children and young people Safe in Education*'. In order to achieve this, we will ensure that:

- all members of staff will undertake appropriate safeguarding training on a regular basis and we will evaluate the impact of this training;
- all staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children and young people effectively;

4.4 All regular visitors, temporary staff and volunteers to our service will be given a set of our safeguarding procedures; they will be informed of whom our DSL and alternate staff members are and what the recording and reporting system is. (See Appendix 2).

4.5 The DSL, the alternate designated member(s) of staff and any other senior member of staff who may be in a position of making referrals or attending child protection conferences or core groups will attend one of the

multi-agency training courses organised by Wolverhampton Safeguarding Board at least once every three years. In addition to formal training, DSL will ensure that they update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals, but at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

4.6 We actively encourage all of our staff to keep up to date with the most recent local and national safeguarding advice and guidance, Annex A of '*Keeping Children and young people Safe in Education*' (2020) provides links to guidance on specific safeguarding issues such as Child Sexual Exploitation and Female Genital Mutilation. In addition, local guidance can be accessed via Wolverhampton Safeguarding Board (<https://www.wolverhamptonsafeguarding.org.uk/>)

5. PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING CONCERNS

5.1 Switch Midlands adheres to child protection procedures that have been agreed locally through Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together. Where we identify children and young people and families in need of support, we will carry out our responsibilities in accordance with local procedures.

5.2 Every member of staff including volunteers working with children and young people at our service are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child and have a responsibility to take action as outline in this policy.

5.3 All staff are encouraged to report any concerns that they have and not see these as insignificant. On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. More often however, concerns accumulate over a period of time and are evidenced by building up a picture of harm over time; this is particularly true in cases of emotional abuse and neglect. In these circumstances, it is crucial that staff record and pass on concerns in accordance with this policy immediately to allow the DSL to build up a picture and access support for the child at the earliest opportunity. A reliance on memory without accurate and contemporaneous records of concern could lead to a failure to protect.

5.4 It is *not* the responsibility of service staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and pass the information on in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.

5.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be used as a first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern in our service. Any member of staff or visitor to the service who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that a child is at risk of harm must report it immediately to the DSL or, if unavailable, to the alternate designated person. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff.

5.6 All concerns about a child or young person should be reported **without delay** and recorded in writing using the agreed template (see Appendix 1).

5.7 Following receipt of any information raising concern, the DSL will consider what action to take and seek advice from Wolverhampton Safeguarding Board. All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented.

5.8 All referrals will be made in line with Wolverhampton Safeguarding Board procedures.

5.9 If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to Wolverhampton Safeguarding Board immediately. Anybody can make a referral in these circumstances. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration by raising concerns again with the DSL and/or the Headteacher. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.

5.10 Staff should always follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy in the first instance. However, they may also share information directly with Wolverhampton Safeguarding Board, or the police if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, their alternate and the Headteacher are all unavailable;
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety.

5.11 Any member of staff who does not feel that concerns about a child have been responded to appropriately and in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy should raise their concerns with the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors. If any member of staff does not feel the situation has been addressed appropriately at this point should contact Wolverhampton Safeguarding Board directly with their concerns.

6. Specific Safeguarding Issues

Contextual safeguarding

6.1 At Switch Midlands we recognise that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside of the service environment and/or can occur between children and young people outside of the service. This is known as contextual safeguarding. It is key that all service staff understand the definition of contextual safeguarding and consider whether children and young people are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Through training we will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children and young people can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence. When reporting concerns, staff should include as much information and background detail as possible so the DSL can make a referral with a holistic view of the child. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

6.2 We recognise that children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges and these are discussed in staff training. These additional barriers can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;

- children and young people with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying- without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

6.3 At Switch Midlands we recognise that a previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children and young people safe. When dealing with looked after children and young people and previously looked after children and young people, it is important that all agencies work together, and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children and young people, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE): County Lines

6.4 At Switch Midlands we train staff to recognise that both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

6.5 At Switch Midlands we recognise that Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse and this imbalance of power coerces, manipulates or deceives a child or young person into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator. Child sexual exploitation does not always include physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology.

6.6 At Switch Midlands we understand that criminal exploitation of children and young people is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity. Drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs. If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a referral to the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Board will be made alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

So-called 'honour-based violence (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage

6.7 At Switch Midlands we recognise that our staff are well placed to identify concerns and take action to prevent children and young people from becoming victims of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and other forms of so-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) and provide guidance on these issues through our safeguarding training. If staff have a concern regarding a child

that might be at risk of HBV, they should inform the DSL who will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multiagency liaison with police and children and young people's social care.

6.8 Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers. [Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003](#) (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. We will provide guidance and support to our teachers on this requirement and further information on when and how to make a report can be found in the following Home Office guidance: [Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation- procedural information](#) Home Office (December 2015)

6.9 At Switch Midlands we recognise that forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. The Forced Marriage Unit has [statutory guidance](#) and [Multi-agency guidelines](#) and can be contacted for advice or more information: Contact 020 7008 0151 or email fmu@fco.gov.uk

Preventing radicalisation and extremism

6.10 We recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is no different to safeguarding against any other vulnerability in today's society. At Switch Midlands, we will ensure that:

- Through training, staff, volunteers and governors have an understanding of what radicalisation and extremism is, why we need to be vigilant in service and how to respond when concerns arise.
- There are systems in place for keeping children and young people and young people safe from extremist material when accessing the internet in our service by using effective filtering and usage policies.
- The DSL has received Prevent training and will act as the point of contact within our service for any concerns relating to radicalisation and
- Through our service, we will promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children and young people and young people.

Peer on peer abuse

6.11 We recognise that children and young people are also vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional abuse by their peers or siblings. Abuse perpetrated by children and young people can be just as harmful as that perpetrated by an adult, so it is important that all staff and volunteers to remember the impact on both the victim of the abuse as well as to focus on the support for the child or young person exhibiting the harmful behaviour. Such abuse will always be taken as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an

adult and the same procedures will apply in respect of any child who is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Staff must never tolerate or dismiss concerns relating to peer on peer abuse; it must never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'.

6.12 At Switch Midlands all staff are trained so that they are aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- upskirting
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

6.13 All staff will understand that they should follow our safeguarding procedures for reporting a concern if they are worried about peer on peer abuse. The DSL will respond to any concerns related to peer on peer abuse in line with guidance outlined in Part five of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and '[Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children and young people in schools and colleges](#)' (May 2018). We will ensure that all concerns, discussions and decisions reached are clearly recorded and any identified actions are followed up.

6.14 We will work with other agencies as required to respond to concerns about sexual violence and harassment. We will seek consultations where there are concerns or worries about developmentally inappropriate or harmful sexual behaviour from the Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) Team as required so that we ensure we are offering the right support to the child(ren). Support will depend on the circumstances of each case and the needs of the child, it may include completion of risk assessments to support children and young people to remain in service whilst safeguarding other children and young people and the victim, delivery of early intervention in respect of HSB and/or referral to Wolverhampton Safeguarding Board where a pupil discloses a rape, an attempted rape or a serious sexual assault whether this has happened recently or in the past.

Safeguarding responses to children and young people who go missing

6.15 At Switch Midlands all staff should be aware of the safeguarding responsibilities for children and young people who are missing education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

6.16 At Switch Midlands we adhere to the following procedures and processes to ensure there is an appropriate safeguarding response to children and young people who are missing:

- An attendance register is taken at the start of the first session of each service day and once during the second session;
- We make every effort to contact parents and carers and follow up with the emergency contacts held;
- We hold at least one emergency contact number for each of the children and young people on our roll wherever possible.
- Staff will alert DSLs to any concerns raised regarding children and young people who are absent from the service.
- The DSLs will meet regularly with the staff team to ensure that each response is thorough and takes into account all the relevant information about individual children and young people.

Mental Health

6.17 At Switch Midlands all staff are made aware, through training, that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Our staff are well placed to observe children and young people day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

6.18 We understand that where children and young people have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Therefore, through training, staff are aware of how children and young people's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. All staff are aware that if they have a mental health concern about a child that is *also* a safeguarding concern, they should take immediate action by passing the information on to a Designated Safeguarding Lead.

6.19 At Switch Midlands we have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems and work with other agencies as required to respond to these concerns. Designated Safeguarding Leads make reference to the [Mental Health and Behaviour in Services' DfE guidance for further support.](#)

7. RECORDS AND INFORMATION SHARING

7.1 If staff are concerned about the welfare or safety of any child at our service, they will record their concern on the agreed reporting form (Appendix 1). They should ensure that the form is signed and dated. Any concerns should be passed to the DSL without delay.

7.2 Any information recorded will be kept in a separate named file, in a secure cabinet and not with the child's other files. These files will be the responsibility of the DSL. Child protection information will only be shared within service on the basis of 'need to know in the child's interests' and on the understanding that it remains strictly confidential.

7.3 Child protection information will only be kept in the file and this file will be kept up to date. Records of concern, copies of referrals, invitations to child protection conferences, core groups and reports will be stored here.

7.4 When a child leaves our service, the DSL will make contact with the DSL at the new service and will ensure that the child protection file is forwarded to the receiving service in an appropriately agreed manner. We will retain evidence to demonstrate how the file has been transferred; this may be in the form of a written confirmation of receipt from the receiving service and/or evidence of recorded delivery.

8. WORKING WITH PARENTS & CARERS

8.1 Switch Midlands is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.

8.2 When new children and young people join our service, parents and carers will be informed that we have a safeguarding policy. A copy will be provided to parents on request and is available on the service website. Parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries and what happens should we have cause to contact Wolverhampton Safeguarding Board.

8.3 We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission, or it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard a child from harm.

8.4 We will seek to share with parents any concerns we may have about their child *unless* to do so may place a child at increased risk of harm. A lack of parental engagement or agreement regarding the concerns the service has about a child will not prevent the DSL making a referral to Wolverhampton Safeguarding Board in those circumstances where it is appropriate to do so.

8.5 In order to keep children and young people safe and provide appropriate care for them, the service requires parents to provide accurate and up to date information regarding:

- Full names and contact details of all adults with whom the child normally lives;
- Full names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above);
- Emergency contact details (if different from above);
- Full details of any other adult authorised by the parent to collect the child from service (if different from the above).

The Service will retain this information on the child or young person's file. The service will only share information about children and young people with adults who have parental responsibility for a pupil or where a parent has given permission and the service has been supplied with the adult's full details in writing.

9. SAFER RECRUITMENT

9.1 We will ensure that the CEO has completed appropriate safer recruitment training. At all times the CEO will ensure that safer recruitment practices are followed in accordance with the requirements of *'Keeping Children and young people Safe in Education'*, DfE (2020). At least one person involved in conducting an interview will have received safer recruitment training.

9.2 At Switch Midlands we will use the recruitment and selection process to deter and reject unsuitable candidates. We require evidence of original academic certificates. We do not accept testimonials and insist on taking up references prior to interview. We will question the contents of application forms if we are unclear about them, we will undertake Disclosure and Barring Service checks and use any other means of ensuring we are recruiting and selecting the most suitable people to work with our children and young people.

9.3 We will maintain a Single Central Register (SCR) of all safer recruitment checks carried out in line with statutory requirements. A senior member of staff will check the SCR regularly to ensure that it meets statutory requirements.

10. SAFER WORKING PRACTICE

10.1 All adults who come into contact with our children and young people have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. There is a legal duty placed upon us to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of our children and young people are competent, confident and safe to do so.

10.2 All staff will be provided with a copy of our service's code of conduct at induction. There will be occasion when some form of physical contact is inevitable, for example if a child has an accident or is hurt or is in a situation of danger to themselves or others around them. However, at all times the agreed policy for safe restraint must be adhered to.

10.3 If staff, visitors, volunteers or parent helpers are working with children and young people alone they will, wherever possible, be visible to other members of staff. They will be expected to inform another member of staff of their whereabouts in service, who they are with and for how long. Doors, ideally, should have a clear glass panel in them and be left open.

10.4 Guidance about acceptable conduct and safe practice will be given to all staff and volunteers during induction. These are sensible steps that every adult should take in their daily professional conduct with children and young people. This advice can be found in ['Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who work with Children and young people and Young People in Education Settings'](#) (May 2019). All staff and volunteers are expected to carry out their work in accordance with this guidance and will be made aware that failure to do so could lead to disciplinary action.

11. MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

11.1 Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the wellbeing and very best outcomes for the children and young people at our service. We do recognise that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.

11.2 Allegations sometimes arise from a differing understanding of the same event, but when they occur, they are distressing and difficult for all concerned. We also recognise that many allegations are genuine and there are some adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children and young people. There may also be circumstances where a member of staff or volunteer is involved in an incident outside of service/college which did not involve children and young people but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children and young people; this is known as transferrable risk.

11.3 We will take all possible steps to safeguard our children and young people and to ensure that the adults in our service are safe to work with children and young people. When concerns arise, we will always ensure that the procedures outlined in the local protocol and Part 4 of *'Keeping Children and young people Safe in Education'*, DfE (2020) are adhered to and will seek appropriate advice. The first point of contact for services regarding LADO issues is via the contact details at the front of this document.

11.4 If an allegation is made or information is received about *any* adult who works in our setting which indicates that they may be unsuitable to work with children and young people, the member of staff receiving the information should inform the CEO immediately. This includes concerns relating to agency and supply staff and volunteers. Should an allegation be made against the CEO, this will be reported to the Deputy Safeguarding Lead. In the event that neither the CEO nor Deputy Safeguarding Lead is not contactable on that day, the information must be passed to and dealt with by the member of senior staff available.

In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the CEO, the procedure described in 11.3 should be followed.

11.5 The CEO or Deputy Safeguarding Lead will seek advice from the LADO within one working day. No member of staff will undertake further investigations before receiving advice from the LADO.

11.6 When using a supply agency, we inform the agency of our process for managing allegations against staff and keep them up to date with any policy developments. Where concerns are raised about an individual and the service is not their employer, we recognise that we still have responsibility to ensure allegations are dealt with properly. In order to achieve this, we will liaise with relevant parties including the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. Whilst the supply agency should be fully involved and co-operate with any enquiries from the LADO, police and/or children and young people's services, we recognise that the service will usually take the lead in conducting an investigation as we have direct access to any affected children and young people and other service staff to collect the facts.

11.7 Any member of staff or volunteer who does not feel confident to raise their concerns with the CEO or Deputy Safeguarding Lead should contact the LADO directly. Further national guidance can be found at: [Advice on whistleblowing](#). The [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](#) is also available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00am to 8:00pm, Monday to Friday or via e-mail: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Concerns including allegations that may meet the harms test should be addressed as set out in Part four of this guidance

11.7 The Service has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring

Service anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at our service, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the LADO and/or HR.

12. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- [Working Together to Safeguard Children and young people](#) DfE (July 2018)
- [Keeping Children and young people Safe in Education](#) DfE (2020)
- [Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who work with Children and young people and Young People in Education Settings](#) (May 2019)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) DfE (March 2015)
- [Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services](#) DfE (July 2018)
- [The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for services and childcare providers](#) DfE (June 2015)
- [Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation- procedural information](#) Home Office (December 2015)
- [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children and young people in services and colleges](#) DfE (May 2018)
- [Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#) DfE (February 2017)
- [Teaching online safety in service](#) DfE (June 2019)
- [Mental Health and Behaviour in Services](#) DfE (November 2018)
- [Data protection: toolkit for services](#) DfE (September 2018)

Appendix 1: Draft Recording Form for Safeguarding Concerns

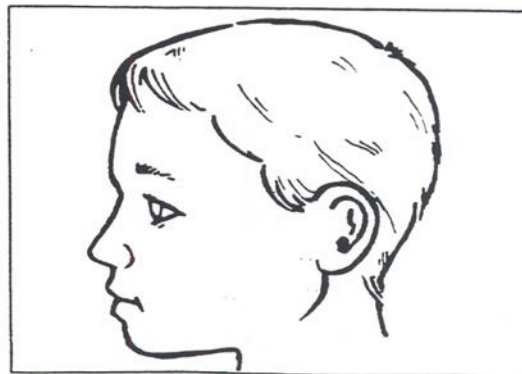
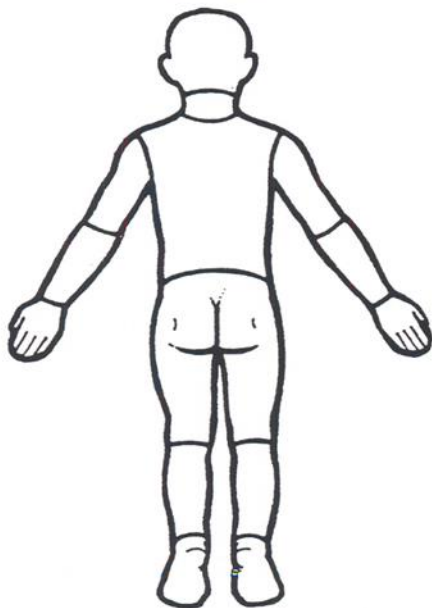
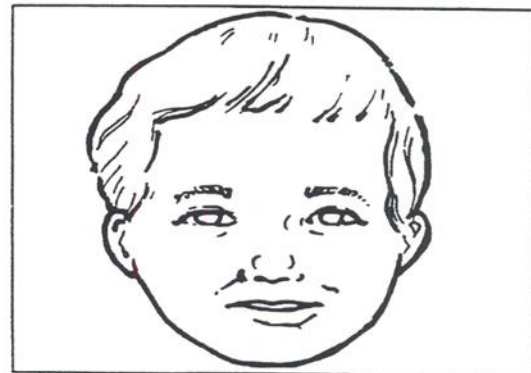
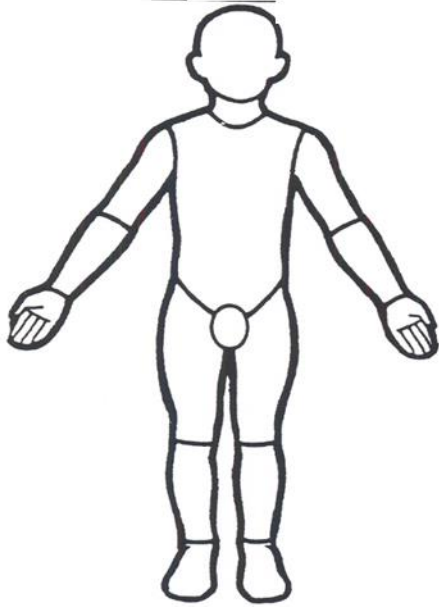
Staff, volunteers and regular visitors are required to complete this form and pass it to Tim Wakefield or Caroline Erskine-Murphy if they have a safeguarding concern about a child in our service.

Information Required	Enter Information Here
Full name of child	
Date of birth	
Class/tutor group/form group	
Your name and position in the service	
Nature of concern/disclosure <i>Please include where you were when the child made a disclosure, what you saw, who else was there, what did the child say or do and what you said.</i> <i>[Ensure that if there is an injury this is recorded (size and shape) and a body map is completed]</i> <i>[Make it clear if you have raised a concern about a similar issue previously]</i>	
Time & date of incident:	
Name and position of the person you passing this information to?	
Your Signature	
Time and date form completed	
Time form received by DSL	
Action Taken by DSL	

Information Required	Enter Information Here
Referral made to police [yes/no, date and time]	
Referral made to Wolverhampton Safeguarding Board [yes/no, date and time]	
Referral Made to Other Agency [yes/no, date and time, name of organisation]	
Parents Informed [yes/no, date and time]	
Feedback given to pastoral team [yes/no, date and time]	
Feedback given to teacher [yes/no, date and time]	
Feedback given to child [yes/no, date and time]	
Feedback given to person who recorded disclosure [yes/no, date and time]	
Further Action Agreed	
Full Name of DSL	
Signature of DSL	
Date of Signature	

Body Map

Older Child



Indicate clearly where the injury was seen and attach this to the referral form

Appendix 2: Safeguarding Induction Sheet for new or supply staff and regular visitors or volunteers.

We all have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, and at our service we take this responsibility seriously.

If you have any concerns about a child or young person in our service, you must share this information immediately with our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or one of the alternate post holders.

Do not think that your worry is insignificant if it is about hygiene, appearance or behaviour – we would rather you told us as we would rather know about something that appears small than miss a worrying situation.

If you think the matter is very serious and may be related to child protection, for example, physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect, you must find one of the designated professionals detailed below and provide them with a written record of your concern. A copy of the form to complete is attached to this and others can be obtained from Tim Wakefield or Caroline Erskine-Murphy.

Please ensure you complete all sections as described.

If you are unable to locate them ask a member of the service office staff to find them and to ask them to speak with you immediately about a confidential and urgent matter.

Any allegation concerning a member of staff, a child's parent/carer or a volunteer should be reported immediately to the CEO. If an allegation is made about the CEO you should pass this information to the Deputy Safeguarding Lead. Alternatively, you can contact the LADO. [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](#) is also available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00am to 8:00pm, Monday to Friday or via e-mail: help@nspcc.org.uk.

The people you should talk to in service are:
CEO and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Tim Wakefield
Location of office: The Switch Centre
Contact Number: 01902552288/07809701821

Deputy Designated Lead: Caroline Erskine Murphy
Location of office: The Switch Centre
Contact Number: 01902552288

At Switch Midlands we strive to safeguard and promote the welfare of all of our children and young people.

