Strong partnerships
Strong community
Strong schools

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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Signed by Trust/Committee Chair   *Karen Dovaston*

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1. CONTEXT

1.1 Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility.

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child'.

'School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children and prevent concerns from escalating'. (Keeping Children Safe in Education – DfE, September 2020)

1.2 This Child Protection Policy is for all staff, parents, governors, volunteers and the wider school community. It forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for SECAT. It should be read in conjunction with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020)- Part one of which is provided to all staff, including Annex A to staff who work directly with children;
- The school Behaviour Policy;
- The school Staff Behaviour Policy (sometimes called a Code of Conduct);
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG, 2015):
- the safeguarding response to children missing from education; and
- the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Annex B of KCSIE).

The Policy should also be read in conjunction with other related policies, including: Safer Recruitment Policy, Physical Intervention Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Educational Visit Policy, E-safety Policy, Acceptable Use Protocols.

1.3 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, which includes everyone under the age of 18, is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020) as:

- 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.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 SECAT takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care. "The welfare of the child is paramount" (Children Act 1989).

2.2 Section 175 *(157 for Independent schools)* of the Education Act 2002 places a statutory responsibility on the governing body to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils of the school.

2.3 This policy applies to all pupils, staff, parents, governors, volunteers, students and visitors to SECAT.

2.4.1 There are three main elements to our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy:

- **Prevention**
  - By ensuring that we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of all staff and volunteers who work with children;
  - Through establishing and maintaining a safe and positive environment and the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils;
  - By raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- **Protection**
  - by following agreed procedures and ensuring all staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.
- **Support**
  - to pupils who have/may have been abused or neglected (in line with his/her Child Protection Plan, if appropriate).

2.5 This school recognises it is an agent of referral and not of investigation.

3.   TRUST COMMITMENT

SECAT is committed to keeping children safe and aims to:

Create a culture of vigilance where the welfare of our pupils is promoted and where timely and appropriate safeguarding action is taken.

- Establish and maintain an environment where pupils feel safe and secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Ensure that pupils know that there are adults within the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- Ensure pupils receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. This includes identifying emerging problems and those children who may benefit from early help.
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities which equip pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to develop healthy and safe relationships.
- Include in the curriculum material which will help pupils develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.
- Protect children from harm and to ensure that they are taught in a way that is consistent with the law and our values and to promote respect for all others.
- Facilitate understanding of wider issues within the context of learning about the values on which our society is founded and our system of democratic government.
- Provide a curriculum which actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Promote tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), races, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientations.
- Make parents/carers aware of the school policies and practice for safeguarding and ensure that, wherever possible, every effort will be made to establish open and honest effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from partner agencies.
- Promote positive mental health and resilience. Positive mental health is the concern of the whole community and we recognise that schools play a key part in this. SECAT wants

to develop the emotional wellbeing and resilience of all pupils and staff, as well as provide specific support for those with additional needs. We understand that there are risk factors which increase someone's vulnerability and protective factors that can promote or strengthen resiliency. The more risk factors present in an individual's life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are required to counter balance and promote further growth of resilience.

It is vital that we work in partnership with parents to support the well-being of our pupils. Parents should share any concerns about the well-being of their child with school, so appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented.

4.   STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

4.1   There is government guidance set out in <u>Working Together (HMG, 2018)</u> on how agencies must work in partnership to keep children safe. This guidance places a shared and equal duty on three Safeguarding Partners (the Local Authority, Police and Health) to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area under multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

In Southend these arrangements sit under the Southend Safeguarding (Child) Partnership (SS(C) P), previously LSCB. The statutory partners are Southend Borough Council, Essex Police and the Clinical Commissioning Group covering Southend.

4.2   Section 175 of the <u>Education Act 2002</u> *(Section 157 for Independent schools)* places a statutory responsibility on the governing body to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils of the school.

4.3   In Southend, all professionals must work in accordance with the <u>SET procedures (2019)</u> (Southend Essex and Thurrock Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures, 2019). SECAT also works in accordance with the following legislation and statutory guidance and advice (this is not an exhaustive list):

<u>Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020)</u>
<u>Working Together (HMG, 2018)</u>
<u>Education Act 2002</u>
<u>Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE, May 2018)</u>
<u>Children Act 1989</u>
<u>Children Act 2004</u>
<u>Children and Social Work Act 2017</u>
<u>Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015)</u>
<u>Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (s.74 - Serious Crime Act 2015)</u>
<u>Serious Crime Act 2015</u> (Home Office, 2015)
<u>Sexual Offences Act (2003)</u>
<u>Data Protection Act (2018)</u>
<u>Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006</u>
<u>Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education (May 2019 v2)</u>

Behaviour and discipline in schools (DfE January 2016) Advice for headteachers and school staff

Searching, screening and confiscation Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (DfE, January 2018)

Use of reasonable force Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (DfE July 2013)

Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE, July 2017)

Preventing youth violence and gang involvement (Home Office, 2015)

Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines guidance (Home Office, 2018)

Children Missing Education - statutory guidance for local authorities (DfE, 2016)

Teaching on-line safety in schools (DfE, 2019)

5.   ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1   All adults working with, or on behalf of, children have a responsibility to protect them and to provide a safe environment in which they can learn and achieve their full potential.   However, there are key people within schools and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures.   The names of those in SECAT with these specific responsibilities (the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) are shown on the cover sheet of this document.

5.2   The Governing Body (&/or Proprietors) ensures that the policies, procedures and training in SECAT are effective, and comply with the law at all times.   It ensures that all required policies relating to safeguarding are in place and that the child protection policy reflects statutory and local guidance and is reviewed at least annually.

5.3   The school publishes its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy on the school website alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020)

5.4   The Designated Safeguarding Governor (named on the front cover of this document) takes leadership responsibility for safeguarding arrangements in SECAT. The Governing Body ensures that, as well as the Designated Safeguarding Governor, there is a named Designated Safeguarding Lead and at least one Deputy Safeguarding Lead in place (also named on the front cover of this document).

5.5   The Governing Body ensures the school contributes to inter-agency working, in line with statutory and local guidance.   It ensures that information is shared and stored appropriately and in accordance with statutory requirements.

5.6   The Governing Body ensures that all staff members undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction and that it is then regularly updated.   All staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to keep our children safe.

5.7   The Governing Body ensures that our pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. From September 2020, SECAT will work in accordance with new government regulations which will make the subjects of Relationships Education (for all primary pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for all secondary pupils) and Health Education (for all pupils in state-funded schools) mandatory.   We ensure that that appropriate filters and

monitoring systems for online usage in school are in place. The school actively promotes online safety on its website and signposts to information that will help keep children safe online.

5.8 The Governing Body and School Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring the school follows recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. It adheres to statutory responsibilities to check adults working with children and has recruitment and selection procedures in place (see the school's 'Safer Recruitment' policy for further information). It ensures that volunteers are appropriately supervised in school.

5.9 The Headteacher works in accordance with the requirements upon all school staff. In addition, (s)he ensures that all safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body are followed by all staff.

5.10 The Designated Safeguarding Lead in our schools has ultimate lead responsibility for child protection. Their role includes managing child protection referrals, working with other agencies, undertaking specific safeguarding training and raising awareness of all child protection policies and procedures. They ensure that everyone in school (including temporary staff, volunteers and contractors) has access to these procedures and that they are used appropriately. They act as a source of advice and support for other staff on child protection matters and ensure that timely referrals to are made to Children's Services (MASH+ (Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub) or for Early Help Family Support Assessment, as appropriate) in accordance with current SET procedures. They work with the Local Authority and other agencies as required and ensure that information is shared appropriately.

5.11 If, for any reason, the Designated Safeguarding Lead is unavailable, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s), who are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead will act in their absence.

5.12 All Staff in SECAT have a responsibility to provide a safe learning environment in which our children can learn. Any child may benefit from early help and all staff members are aware of the local early help process and our role in it. They are also aware of signs of abuse and neglect so they are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection. All staff members are aware of and follow school processes (as set out in this policy) and are aware of how to make a referral to Social Care and/or the Police, if there is a need to do so. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately and speak with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy). They should not assume that others have taken action.

6. PROCEDURES

6.1 SECAT work with key local partners to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help assessment when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans which provide additional support through a Child in Need or a Child Protection plan.

6.2 All staff members have a duty to identify and respond to children who may be in need of help or protection.

6.3 Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse,

suspects that abuse may have occurred, or is concerned about a child's welfare, **must** report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or, in their absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, so that discussion can take place regarding whether any support for the child can be managed internally via the school's own pastoral support process, or if an early help assessment is indicated, or a referral to Children's Social Care and/or the Police. The school may seek advice from Social Care about a concern, if we are unsure how to respond.

6.4 The contact details for the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead/s are prominently displayed in the school to ensure that all members of the school community have access to safeguarding support.

In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff. If, for any reason, nobody is available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Any individual may refer to Social Care/Police where there is suspected or actual risk of harm to a child.

6.5 All action is taken in accordance with the following guidance and advice:

- The SET procedures (2019) (Southend, Essex and Thurrock) Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures, a copy of which is available at SECAT House and published on line *http://www.safeguardingsouthend.co.uk/*

- The Early Help Family Support Practitioner Toolkit (Threshold Document), which can be downloaded from http://*www.southendchildren.org*

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020) and Disqualification under the Childcare Act, 2006 (DfE, Aug 18)

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG, 2018)

- The Prevent duty Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (DfE, Aug 2015)

- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales' (HMG, April 2019)

- Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation (HMG, Oct 18)

- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG, 2015)

- Information sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (HMG, July 2018)

6.6 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or the Deputy) will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse, or allegations, to Children's Social Care (MASH + (Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub)), Southend Borough Council (contact numbers are on the cover sheet of this document) and in accordance with the procedures outlined in the SET procedures (2019).

6.7 If the child is in immediate danger, or at risk of immediate harm, concerns will be referred by telephone to Children's Social Care and/or the Police. A telephone referral to Children's Social Care must be confirmed in writing within 48 hours, using the EHFSA form to provide the information required.

6.8 The Early Help Family Support Assessment (EHFSA) should be used to support a child Protection referral. (The EHFSA form and guidance is available on www.southendchildrenspartnership.org.uk and on the Southend Safeguarding (Child) Partnership (SS(C)P) website and Southend Learning Network. A completed EHFSA form contains all the information required for a child protection referral and should be sent to MASH+. Essential information will include the pupil's name, address, date of birth, family composition, the reason for the referral, whether the child's parents are aware of the referral, the name of person who initially received the disclosure, plus any advice given. This written confirmation must be signed and dated by the referrer.

6.9 The Trust will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Social Care with the parents or carers, unless to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On these occasions, advice will be taken from Children's Social Care or Essex Police about when it is appropriate to share information with parents/carers. Parents and Carers are informed about SECAT's duties and responsibilities under child protection procedures on admission, in the school brochure and on the school website.

6.10 If a member of staff continues to have concerns about a child and feels the situation is not being addressed, or does not appear to be improving, the staff member concerned should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will press for re-consideration of the case to ensure that the child's situation improves.

6.11 Whilst all staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) with regard to any concerns about Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher has a statutory duty to report this personally to the Police. See 12.12, below, and Annex A Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020) for more details.

6.12 When new staff, volunteers or regular visitors join SECAT they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They are given a copy of SECAT Child Protection Policy, advised who our Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy/ies) is/are and informed of their role and how to share concerns with them. Staff are also given a copy of the Staff Code of Conduct/Staff Behaviour Policy, the School Behaviour Policy and made aware of the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education. Staff are also given a copy of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020) which includes Annex A: Further information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues (for staff who work directly with children) and access to 'What To Do If You're Worried a Child is Being Abused' (HMG, March 2015), which gives helpful advice about how to respond to child protection concerns or disclosures.

7.   TRAINING AND SUPPORT

7.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any Deputies) will undergo updated Child Protection training specifically for Designated Safeguarding Leads at least every two years, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020) In addition to formal

training, the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) will keep up to date with safeguarding developments and refresh their knowledge and skills regularly, but at least annually.

7.2 The Headteacher, all staff members and Governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, which is regularly updated. In addition, all staff members receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required, and at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Records are kept of all child protection training.

7.3 The Trust will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any Deputies) also undertakes training in inter-agency working and other matters, as appropriate.

7.4 The Headteacher, in the first instance, will provide support and supervision to staff involved in child protection issues.

7.5 All staff are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are referred to in the Staff Code of Conduct/Staff Behaviour Policy.

8.   PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

8.1 Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to anyone about a safeguarding concern (including parents / carers or pupils) or promise to keep a secret. In accordance with statutory requirements, where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities.

8.2 Information on individual child protection cases may be shared by the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with other relevant staff members. This will be on a 'need to know' basis only and where it is in the child's best interests to do so. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be held treated confidentially.

9.   RECORDS AND MONITORING

9.1 Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. SECAT is clear about the need to record any concern about a child or children within SECAT, the status of such records and when these records should be shared with other agencies.

9.2 Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. Whilst the Data Protection Act (2018) places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm. Similarly, human rights concerns, such as respecting the right to a private and family life would not prevent sharing information where there are safeguarding concerns. The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse or neglect.

9.3   Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse, or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen (if appropriate using a body map to record), putting the event in context, and giving the date, time and location. The source of the information should be recorded, as well as a note of other people involved, for example, as witnesses, and there should be a clear distinction between fact and professional opinion. All records will be dated and signed, detailing the name and position of the person making the record, and will include the action taken. This information is then presented to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy), who will decide on appropriate action and record all discussions and decisions made, and the reason for those decisions.

9.4   Any records related to Child Protection are kept in an individual child protection file for that child, which is separate from the pupil file. All child protection records are stored securely (i.e., in a locked filing cabinet) and confidentially and are accessible through the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy). Digital records will be password protected. Child protection records will be retained for 25 years after the pupil's date of birth, or until they transfer to another school/educational setting.

9.5   In line with statutory guidance, if a pupil transfers from SECAT to another school / educational setting (including colleges), their child protection records will be forwarded to the new educational setting without delay, separate from their main pupil file. Care will be taken to ensure confidentiality is maintained and the transfer process is as safe as possible. *We keep a copy of the child protection file we have confirmation from the receiving school that they have it. Once we have this confirmation, our copy is shredded, other than copies of the specific records that are pertinent to SECAT (i.e., not CP Conference reports that are held elsewhere), there is a specific reason for us to keep it, which will be recorded (for example, we still have siblings in the school and the records relate to them too, or there is an ongoing complaint or request for access to records).*

We will also keep a record of having received confirmation from the receiving school *and* [if relevant] *of the date when we shredded our copy.*

When a pupil joins SECAT, we will request child protection records from the previous educational establishment (if none are received).

9.6   For records of allegations involving a member of staff, please see paragraph 13.7 below.

10.   INTERAGENCY WORKING AND ATTENDANCE AT CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES, CORE GROUP MEETINGS OR CHILD IN NEED MEETINGS

10.1   It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that the school is represented at, and that a report is submitted to, any statutory meeting called for children on the school roll, or previously known to them. Where possible and appropriate, any report will be shared in advance with the parent(s) / carer(s).   A report will be made available to a Child Protection Conference Chair, 48 working hours in advance of the Conference, and shared with the parents/carers before the day of the Conference.   The member of staff attending the meeting will be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the school has and be prepared to contribute to the discussions and, in the case of a Conference, to express a view, at the end of the meeting, as to whether the child(ren) should be made subject to a Child Protection Plan.

10.2   If a child is made subject to a Child Protection Plan, or a Child in Need, or Care Plan, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that the child is monitored regarding their school

attendance, emotional well-being, academic progress, welfare and presentation. If the school is part of the Core Group, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that the school is represented and provide appropriate information and contribute to the plan at these meetings. Any concerns about the Child Protection plan and/or the child's welfare will be discussed and recorded at the Core Group Meeting, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of significant harm. In this case the Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the child's Key Worker **immediately** and then record that they have done so and the actions agreed.

If there is an unexplained absence of, or injury to a child subject to a Child Protection Plan, the child's Key Worker must be notified **immediately.**

11.   SUPPORTING PUPILS AT RISK

11.1   SECAT is committed to ensuring that our pupils receive the right help at the right time.
Staff are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children and prevent concerns from escalating.

11.2   SECAT may be the only stable, secure and safe element in the lives of children at risk of, or who have suffered, harm. Nevertheless, whilst at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant, or they may be withdrawn, or display abusive behaviours towards other children. We will seek advice and support from other agencies as appropriate.

11.3   We recognise that some children may potentially be at risk of greater harm and require additional help and support. These may be children with a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan, those in Care, or previously in Care, or those requiring mental health support. We work with Social Care and other appropriate agencies to ensure there is a joined-up approach to planning for these children and that they receive the right help at the right time.

11.4   SECAT will endeavour to support all pupils through:
- The curriculum; to encourage our pupils to stay safe and to develop healthy relationships, self-esteem and self-motivation.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- The implementation of the school's behaviour management policies.
- A consistent approach from all staff which will endeavour to ensure that our pupils know that some behaviour is unacceptable, but that s/he is valued.
- Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies that support the pupils and their families.
- A commitment to develop open, honest and supportive relationships with parents, always with the child's best interest as paramount.
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.
- Recognition that children with behavioural difficulties and special educational needs and/or disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. Therefore, staff who work in any capacity with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.
- Recognition that, in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children are vulnerable and may be in need of support or protection.

11.5   Promoting positive mental health and resilience in school:

Positive mental health is the concern of the whole community and we recognise that schools play a key part in this. SECAT aims to develop the emotional wellbeing and resilience of all pupils and staff, as well as provide specific support for those with additional needs. We understand that there are risk factors which increase someone's vulnerability and protective factors that can promote or strengthen resiliency. The more risk factors present in an individual's life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are required to counter balance and promote further growth of resilience.

It is vital that we work in partnership with parents to support the well-being of our pupils. Parents should share any concerns about the well-being of their child with school, so appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented.

12.   TYPES OF ABUSE & SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

12.1   Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020) defines abuse in the following way:
'*Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.*'

12.2   'Keeping children safe in education' refers to four categories of abuse:
- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual and
- Neglect.

12.3   SECAT is aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so we are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection. All staff are aware that environmental factors may impact on a child's welfare and safety and understand safeguarding in the wider context (contextual safeguarding). We understand that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely 'stand-alone' events and that, in most cases, multiple issues will overlap. Staff are aware of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm and understand that behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting put children in danger.

12.4   SECAT recognises that there are a number of specific safeguarding issues about which staff need to be aware, including: children missing from education*, children missing from home or care, child sexual exploitation (CSE)*, domestic violence, drugs, E safety, fabricated/induced illness, faith abuse, female genital mutilation (FGM)*, forced marriage, gangs and youth violence, violence against women and girls (VAWG), mental health*, children with special educational needs and disabilities*, private fostering*, prevention of radicalisation*, teenage relationship abuse, trafficking, peer on peer abuse*, which may include bullying (including cyberbullying),on-line abuse, gender-based abuse, sexting or sexually harmful behaviour. Further information regarding some of these issues (as indicated *) can be found below and these issues are also addressed in Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020).

12.5 Whilst the school will ensure that staff avail themselves of opportunities to raise their awareness and gain knowledge regarding these areas, we recognise that expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support in relation to these issues. Government guidance is available on the GOV.UK website and links are provided from Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020) Other organisations also provide specialist information such as:

NSPCC https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/

TES https://www.tes.com/teaching-resources

MindEd https://www.minded.org.uk/course/view.php?id=402

12.6 Peer-on-peer abuse –

SECAT recognises that some children may abuse their peers and any incidents of peer-on-peer abuse will be managed in the same way as any other child protection concern and will follow the same procedures.

Peer-on-peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This may include bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse, sexual violence / sexual harassment, 'up-skirting' 'sexting' or initiation / hazing type violence and rituals. We do not tolerate any harmful behaviour in school and will take swift action to intervene where this occurs. We use lessons and assemblies to help children understand, in an age-appropriate way, what abuse is and we encourage them to tell a trusted adult if someone is behaving in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. Peer-on-peer abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. SECAT understands the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with peer-on-peer abuse. *See each Academy appendix.*

The school will use the guidance set out in:

Preventing and tackling bullying Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (DfE, July 2017)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

Sexting in school and colleges Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people (UKCCIS, 2017).

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE, May 2018)

12.7 Mental health -

Our staff are aware 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. We understand that, where children have suffered abuse or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Where we have concerns this may impact on mental health, we will seek advice and work with other agencies as appropriate to support a child and ensure they receive the help they need.

12.8 Children with special educational needs and disabilities –

SECAT understands that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children.

This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- That they may be more prone to peer group isolation than others;

- The potential to be disproportionally impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing signs;
- Communication difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

12.9 Children missing from education –

All children, regardless of their age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs they may have are entitled to a full-time education.   SECAT recognises that a child missing education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and will follow the school procedures for unauthorised absence and for children missing education. It is also recognised that, when not in school, children may be vulnerable to or exposed to other risks, so we work with parents and other partners to keep children in school whenever possible. Parents should always inform us of the reason for any absence. Where contact is not made, a referral may be made to another appropriate agency (Missing Education and Child Employment Service, Social Care or Police). Parents are required to provide at least two emergency contact numbers to the school, to enable us to communicate with someone if we need to.

SECAT complies with Children missing education (DfE, September 2016) and Southend on Sea Borough Council Early Help and Family Support Children Missing Education Guidance (January 2019). SECAT must inform the Local Authority of any pupil who has been absent for a continuous period of 10 days or more without a good reason, and the school has satisfied all avenues of enquiry and is unsuccessful tracing the pupil.

SECAT also complies with the regulations regarding Elective Home Education (Regulation 12 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended 2016) and Southend's guidance http://www.southendlearningnetwork.co.uk/Services/4834
SECAT notifies the Elective Home Education Team via secure email to ehe@southend.gov.uk at the earliest opportunity and, when relevant, immediately provides a copy of the parents written notification to home educate and the date they came off roll.

Arrangements and/or appendices relating to prevention of and response to CME can be found on each academy's website.

12.10 Child sexual exploitation (CSE) –

Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse which can happen to boys and girls from any background or community. '*It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 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 or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology'*. (Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG, 2018))

It is understood that a significant number of children who are victims of CSE go missing from home, care and education at some point. SECAT is alert to the signs and indicators of a child becoming at risk of, or subject to, CSE and will take appropriate action to respond to any concerns. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the named CSE Lead in school on these issues and will work with other agencies as appropriate

SECAT is committed to raising awareness of CSE and will use the guidance set out in Child sexual exploitation Definition and a guide for practitioners (DfE, February 2017)

We have an identified CSE Champion Emma Rose, Senior Pastoral Lead at Shoeburyness High School who has received training in this area and attends the LSCB Champions' Forum. SECAT uses the SSCP Risk Assessment Toolkit http://cse-toolbox.uk/ and reports any information to Essex Police on a report form, as well as referring to MASH+ or for Early Help Family Support Assessment, as appropriate.

12.11 <u>Child criminal exploitation & serious violence</u>
Child criminal exploitation is a geographically widespread form of harm which is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity (county lines is when drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas and seaside towns). SECAT works with key partners locally to prevent and respond to child criminal exploitation.

All staff are aware of indicators which may signal that children are at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that a child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

12.12 <u>Contextual safeguarding</u>
Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside SECAT and/or can occur between children outside school. All staff are aware of contextual safeguarding and the fact that they should consider whether wider environmental factors present in a child's life are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. To this end, we will consider relevant information when assessing any risk to a child and share it with other agencies to support better understanding of a child and their family.

12.13 <u>Domestic abuse</u>
Domestic abuse can take many forms, including psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional. SECAT recognises that exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious, long-term emotional and psychological impact on children. We work with other key partners and will share relevant information where there are concerns that domestic abuse may be an issue for a child or family or be placing a child at risk of harm.

12.14 <u>So-called 'honour-based violence' (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)</u>
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse.
As of October 2015, the <u>Serious Crime Act 2015</u> (Home Office, 2015) introduced a duty on teachers (and other professionals) to notify the police personally of known cases of female genital mutilation where it appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. SECAT will operate in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to this issue, and in line with 'Multi-Agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation' (HMG, April 2016) and existing local safeguarding procedures.

Our staff are alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), or already having suffered FGM. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Staff should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have

already taken place, can be found in the SET procedures (2019) and in the above guidance that can be found on the GOV.UK website.

A Forced marriage is one entered into without the full consent of one or both parties. It is where violence, threats or other forms of coercion is used and is a crime. Our staff understand how to report concerns where this may be an issue.

12.15 Prevention of radicalisation

As of July 2015, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015) placed a new duty on schools and other education providers. Under section 26 of the Act, schools are required, in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

It requires schools to:

- teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life and must promote community cohesion;
- be safe spaces in which children / young people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas;
- be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues.

CHANNEL is a national programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

SECAT works in accordance with local procedures for PREVENT and with other agencies, sharing information and concerns, as appropriate. Where we have concerns about extremism or radicalisation, we will seek advice from appropriate agencies and, if necessary, refer to Social Care and / or the Channel Panel.

The Prevent duty (DfE, Aug 2015) and the Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales' (HMG, April 19) .

12.16 Private Fostering

As a Trust we must make sure that privately fostered children are properly and safely cared for. Local Authorities are under a legal duty to ensure the welfare of a privately fostered child is being promoted and safeguarded and are therefore required to undertake assessments of proposed or actual private fostering arrangements. As such, we will always inform the Local Authority when we are notified about such an arrangement or become aware of one.

"A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (that is to say without the involvement of a Local Authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. Private foster carers may be from the extended family such as a cousin or great aunt. However, a person who is a relative under the Children Act 1989, i.e., a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of full or half or by marriage) or step-parent will not be a private foster carer. A private foster carer may be a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child, or someone previously unknown to the child's family who is willing to privately foster a child."

12.17 Looked After Children (LAC)
SECAT has Designated Teachers for pupils who are LAC. The Designated Teacher attends LAC Reviews, PEP meetings and liaises with the child's Social Worker and Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) and with the Local Authority Virtual School Headteacher, who is responsible for the progress of children looked after. A previously looked after child remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe.

13. ALLEGATIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN

13.1 All staff members are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are outlined in the Staff Code of Conduct/Staff Behaviour Policy.

13.2 It is essential that the high standards of concern and professional responsibility adopted with regard to alleged child abuse by parents are similarly displayed when allegations are made about members of staff.

13.3 The Trust works in accordance with statutory guidance and the SET procedures (2019) in respect of allegations against an adult working with children (in a paid or voluntary capacity). Section 7 of the current SET procedures provides detailed information regarding this.

13.4 The Trust has processes in place for reporting any concerns about a member of staff (or any adult working with children). Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff will be referred to the Headteacher (or the Deputy Headteacher in their absence), as they have responsibility for managing employment issues. Where the allegation concerns an agency member of staff, the Headteacher (or Deputy) will liaise with the agency, while following due process.
Where the concern involves the Headteacher, it should be reported direct to the Chair of Governors, who will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

13.5 The SET procedures require that, where an allegation against a member of staff is received, the Headteacher, senior named person, or the Chair of Governors must inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day. For people working with children in Southend, the LADO is Allison Francis, who can be contacted on 01702 534539 (Child Protection Adviser, Sharon Langston 01702 534591) safeguardingforchildren@southend.gov.uk**.**

13.6 The LADO has overall responsibility for oversight of the procedures for dealing with allegations against staff members. Wherever possible, contact with the LADO should be made immediately, as she will then advise on how to proceed and whether the matter requires Police involvement. This will include advice on speaking to pupils and parents and HR. The Trust will manage these procedures alongside the school's disciplinary process, if appropriate, in liaison with the Trust's HR Advisor.

13.7   In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020) details of allegations that are found to have been malicious should be removed from personnel records. However, for all other allegations, the record should be retained at least until the accused has reached normal pension age, or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

However, cases in which an allegation was proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious should not be included in employer references.

14. USE OF REASONABLE FORCE

The term 'reasonable force' covers a broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. The Department for Education believes that the adoption of a 'no contact policy' at a school can leave staff unable to fully support and protect their pupils and students. There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people, such as guiding a child to safety or breaking up a fight. 'Reasonable' means using no more force than is needed. SECAT works in accordance with statutory and local guidance on the use of reasonable force and recognises that where intervention is required, it should always be considered in a safeguarding context.

15. WHISTLEBLOWING

15.1 Whistleblowing is 'making a disclosure in the public interest' and occurs when a worker (or member of the wider school community) raises a concern about danger or illegality that affects others, for example pupils in the school or members of the public.

15.2 All staff must be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues in line with the Trust's Whistleblowing policy.

15.3 We want all members of staff and the wider community to feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and feel confident that any concern will be taken seriously by the school leadership team. However, for any member of staff who feels unable to raise these concerns internally, or where they feel their concerns have not been addressed, they may contact the NSPCC whistleblowing advice line on: 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk.
Parents or others in the wider school community with concerns can contact the NSPCC general helpline on: 0808 800 5000 (24 hour helpline) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

16. USE OF THE SCHOOL PREMISES BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS

16.1 Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, using the school premises, the Governing Body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection.

17. ADDITIONAL SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS DURING COVID-19

17.1 When schools were instructed to close, we assessed the needs of all our pupils and put in place plans to support them and their families during the summer term. These plans included an education offer and arrangements to support pupils with their safety and wellbeing. Where appropriate, the plans included actions and interventions from other agencies, as we continued to work with partners to provide an appropriate level of support. These plans were regularly reviewed to ensure they reflected current need and were updated accordingly to ensure appropriate support is in place.

17.2 We have now moved to full opening and our usual Child Protection Policy applies. However, as a response to COVID-19 and to ensure we are compliant with government guidance and Health and Safety law, other arrangements are in place and we have communicated this to all parents.

17.3 We have a robust risk assessment in place and will continue to regularly review this and update it as required. This review process will consider whether our current plans and protective measures are:

- effective
- working as planned
- updated appropriately considering any issues identified and changes in public health advice

17.4 If, as a result of future local lockdown arrangements, the school is subject to further closure, our previous arrangements for monitoring and supporting pupils will be reinstated.

We recognise there are a number of policies that are relevant to safeguarding and promoting children's welfare. These include the following:

Policy or Procedure

Anti-Bullying (including internet and mobile 'phone bullying)

Attendance

Behaviour management/student discipline

Children missing from Education

Disability and Equality

Drugs and Substance Misuse

Educating Children with medical needs

Equality Compliance

E Safety

Extended School activities

First Aid

Health and Safety

Looked After Children

Management of Allegations made against Staff

PHSE curriculum

Racial Equality

Recruitment and Selection

Residential trips and schools visits, including exchange visits

Sex & Relationships Education

Staff Handbook (Guidance on Conduct including the use of mobile 'phones and social media)

Use of Positive Handling and Restraint/Physical Intervention

Visitors' Policy

Use of Photographs/video

Whistleblowing

Work Placement/Work Experience

Acknowledgement:

We acknowledge the Essex County Council model Child Protection Policy which contributed to the development of this model policy.

Model Policy Revised: October 2020