

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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POLICY TO BE REVIEWED September 2022

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Fairhouse Primary School



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CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR FAIRHOUSE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Introduction

Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. 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.

(Keeping Children Safe in Education – DfE, 2021)

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

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2021)
- the school Behaviour policy;
- the school Staff Behaviour policy (sometimes called Staff Code of Conduct);
- the safeguarding response to children missing from education
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead (Annex B of KCSIE)

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (*everyone under the age of 18*) is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 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
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Our school has a whole-school approach to safeguarding, which ensures that keeping children safe is at the heart of everything we do and underpins all systems, processes and policies. It is important that our values are understood and shared by all children, staff, parents / carers, governors and the wider school community. Only by working in partnership, can we truly keep children safe.

2. Statutory framework

There is government guidance set out in [Working Together \(DfE, 2018\)](#) 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. These arrangements sit under the [Essex Safeguarding Children Board](#) (ESCB). In Essex, the statutory partners are Essex County Council, Essex Police and five of the seven Clinical Commissioning Groups covering the county.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (*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.

In Essex, all professionals must work in accordance with the [SET Procedures](#). Our school also works in accordance with the following legislation and guidance (*this is not an exhaustive list*):

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DfE, 2021\)](#)

[Working Together \(DfE, 2018\)](#)

Education Act (2002)

[Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex](#) (ESCB)

[Counter-Terrorism and Security Act \(HMG, 2015\)](#)

[Serious Crime Act 2015](#) (Home Office, 2015)

Children and Social Work Act (2017)

[Children Missing Education - statutory guidance for local authorities \(DfE, 2016\)](#)

Sexual Offences Act (2003)

Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006

[Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners \(HMG, 2018\)](#)

[Data Protection Act \(2018\)](#)

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

[Searching, screening and confiscation](#) (DfE, 2018)

Children Act (1989)

Children Act (2004)

[Preventing and Tackling Bullying \(DfE, 2017\)](#)

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (S. 74 - Serious Crime Act 2015)

[Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges \(DfE, 2021\)](#)

[Promoting positive emotional well-being and reducing the risk of suicide \(ESCB, 2018\)](#)

[Preventing youth violence and gang involvement \(Home Office, 2015\)](#)

[Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adult - county lines guidance \(Home Office, 2018\)](#)

[Teaching on-line safety in schools \(DfE, 2019\)](#)

[Education Access Team CME / Home Education policy and practice \(ECC, 2018\)](#)

[Understanding and Supporting Behaviour - good practice for schools \(ECC, 2021\)](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

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 our school with these specific

responsibilities (the designated safeguarding lead and deputy designated safeguarding lead) are shown on the cover sheet of this document. However, we are clear that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that everyone who comes into contact with children has a role to play.

The governing body

The governing body ensures that the policies, procedures and training in our school are effective and comply with the law at all times. It ensures that all required policies relating to safeguarding are in place, that the child protection policy reflects statutory and local guidance and is reviewed at least annually.

The governor for safeguarding arrangements is named on the front cover of this document. This governor takes strategic responsibility at governing body level for safeguarding arrangements in our school. The governing body ensures there is a named designated safeguarding lead and at least one deputy safeguarding lead in place (also named on the front cover).

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.

The governing body ensures that all adults in our school who work with children undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction as appropriate 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.

The governing body ensures our pupils are taught about safeguarding (including online safety) through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. We work in accordance with government regulations which make the subjects of Relationships Education (for primary age pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for secondary age pupils) and Health Education (for all pupils in state-funded schools) mandatory.

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.

The Headteacher

The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers (which includes headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties. The Headteacher works in accordance with all statutory requirements for safeguarding and is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are followed by all staff.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy / Deputies)

The designated safeguarding lead in school has ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. Their role includes managing child protection referrals, working with other agencies, ensuring all staff are appropriately trained and raising awareness of all safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures. They ensure that everyone in school (including temporary staff, volunteers and contractors) is aware of these procedures and that they are followed at all times. They act as a source of advice and support for other staff (on child protection matters) and ensure that timely referrals to Essex Children's Social Care (Children and Families Hub) are made in accordance with current SET procedures. They work with the local authority and the ESCB as required and ensure that information is shared appropriately.

The deputy/deputies designated safeguarding lead is / are trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead. If for any reason the designated safeguarding lead is unavailable, the deputy/deputies designated safeguarding lead will act in their absence.

All school staff

Everyone in our school has 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 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 if there is a need to do so. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they must act on them immediately and speak with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) – they do not assume that others have taken action.

4. Types of abuse / specific safeguarding issues

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2021) describes 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 another child or children”

Keeping Children Safe in Education refers to four categories of abuse:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Neglect

Our staff will always reassure children who report abuse / victims of abuse that they are taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. We will never make a child feel ashamed for reporting abuse, nor make them feel they are causing a problem.

All staff in our school are 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 of environmental factors which 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.

In addition, staff are aware of other types of abuse and safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. We understand that behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and / or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education and consensual / non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images can be signs that children are at risk.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse, which can happen to boys and girls from any background or community. It may occur over time, or be a one-off occurrence. In Essex, the definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) from the Department of Education (DfE, 2017) has been adopted:

"Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when 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".

It is understood that a significant number of children who are victims of CSE go missing from home, care and education at some point. Our school 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 will lead on these issues and work with other agencies as appropriate. This [one page process map](#) sets out arrangements for CSE in Essex.

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. Our school 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 ([Education Access Team](#), 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.

Our school must inform the local authority of any pupil who has been absent without school permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

We work in accordance with the Essex Protocol for children who go missing during the school day (see Appendix C), to ensure that there is an appropriate response to children who go missing.

Contextual safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and behaviours can be associated with factors outside our school. All staff are aware of contextual safeguarding and the fact 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.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. Domestic abuse is not limited to physical acts of violence or threatening behaviour, and can include emotional, psychological, controlling or coercive behaviour, sexual and/or economic abuse. Our school 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.

So-called 'honour-based violence' (including Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage)

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 Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015) introduced a duty on teachers (and other professionals) to notify the police of known cases of female genital mutilation where it appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. Our school will operate in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to this issue, and in line with local safeguarding procedures.

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.

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.

Positive mental health is the concern of the whole community and we recognise that schools play a key part in this. Our school 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.

Online safety

We recognise that our children are growing up in an increasingly complex world, living their lives on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but we recognise it also presents challenges and risks. Any pupil can be vulnerable online, and their vulnerability can fluctuate depending on their age, developmental stage and personal circumstance. We want to equip our pupils with the knowledge needed to make the best use of the internet and technology in a safe, considered and respectful way, so they are able to reap the benefits of the online world.

The range of online risks could be categorised as:

content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, suicide, racist or radical and extremist views;

contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes;

conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying

commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and / or financial scams

All staff in our school are aware of the risks to children online and we seek to help children keep themselves safe online in a range of ways - further information about our approach to online safety is available in our Online Safety / Use of Technology Policy.

Peer on peer abuse

Our school 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 instead be withdrawn, or display abusive behaviours towards other children. Our school recognises that some children may abuse their peers and that this may happen in school, or outside of it. 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. We will seek advice and support from other agencies as appropriate.

Our school recognises that, even though peer on peer abuse / harmful sexual abuse may not be reported, it is likely that it is occurring and we are clear there is a zero tolerance to inappropriate or abusive behaviour. We understand the barriers which may prevent a child from reporting abuse and work actively to remove these.

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, challenging inappropriate behaviours when they occur – we do not normalise abuse, nor allow a culture where it is tolerated.

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. Our school understands the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse. We will never make a child feel ashamed for reporting abuse, nor that they are creating a problem by doing so.

Our school also has an Anti-bullying policy and a Harmful Sexual Behaviour /Peer on Peer Abuse Policy.

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.

Our school operates 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.

Serious violence

All staff are aware of the risk factors and 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 well-being, 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.

5. Children potentially at risk of greater harm

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.

Our school understands that children with special educational needs (SEN) and / or disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These 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 disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing signs
- Communication difficulties in overcoming these barriers

6. Procedures

Our school works 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 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).

All staff members have a duty to identify and respond to suspected / actual abuse or disclosures of abuse. Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure or allegation of abuse, or suspects that abuse may have occurred **must** report it immediately to the designated safeguarding lead (or, in their absence, the deputy designated safeguarding lead).

All action is taken in accordance with the following guidance;

- Essex Safeguarding Children Board guidelines - the SET (Southend, Essex and Thurrock) Child Protection Procedures (ESCB, 2019)
- [Essex Effective Support](#)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2021)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2018)
- 'Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex' (ESCB)
- PREVENT Duty - Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015)

Any staff member or visitor to the school must refer any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead or deputy designated safeguarding lead. Where there is risk of immediate harm, concerns will be referred by telephone to the Children and Families Hub and / or the Police. Less urgent concerns or requests for support will be sent to the Children and Families Hub via [Essex Effective Support](#). The school may also seek advice from Social Care or another appropriate agency about a concern, if we are unsure how to respond to it. Wherever possible, we will share any safeguarding concerns, or an intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care, with parents or carers. However, we will not do so where it is felt that to do so could place a child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. If it is necessary for another agency to meet with a child in school, we will always seek to inform parents or carers, unless we are advised not to by that agency. On occasions, it may be necessary to consult with the Children and Families Hub and / or Essex Police for advice on when to share information with parents / carers.

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, all staff understand they should press for re-consideration of the case with the designated safeguarding lead.

If, for any reason, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not available, this will not delay appropriate action being taken. Safeguarding contact details are displayed in the school to ensure that all staff members have unfettered access to safeguarding support, should it be required. Any individual may refer to Social Care where there is suspected or actual risk of harm to a child.

When new staff, volunteers or regular visitors join our school they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place, the name of the designated safeguarding lead (and deputy/deputies) and how to share concerns with them.

7. Training

In line with statutory requirements, the designated safeguarding lead (and deputy/deputies) undertake Level 3 child protection training at least every two years. The Headteacher, all staff members and governors receive appropriate child protection training which is regularly updated and in line with advice from the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB). In addition, all staff members and other adults working with children in our school receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Records of any child protection training undertaken is kept for all staff and governors.

The school ensures that the designated safeguarding lead (and deputy) also undertakes training in inter-agency working and other matters as appropriate

8. Professional confidentiality

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 referral to and subsequent investigation by appropriate authorities.

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.

9. Records and information sharing

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school and when these records should be shared with other agencies.

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 real safeguarding concerns. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse or neglect. Generic data flows related to child protection

are recorded in our Records of Processing Activity and regularly reviewed; and our online school privacy notices accurately reflect our use of data for child protection purposes.

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, will record it as soon as possible on our on-line system known as My Concern, , noting what was said or seen (if appropriate, using a body map to record), giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and digitally signed and will include the action taken. This is then presented to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), who will decide on appropriate action and record this accordingly.

Any records related to child protection are kept on an individual child protection file for that child (which is separate to the pupil file). These are stored electronically on our My ~concern system, or for historical or transferred records, kept securely in a locked file. All child protection records are stored securely and confidentially and will be retained for 25 years after the pupil's date of birth, or until they transfer to another school / educational setting.

In line with statutory guidance, where a pupil transfers from our school to another school / educational setting (including colleges), their child protection records will be forwarded to the new educational setting. These will be marked 'Confidential' and for the attention of the receiving school's designated safeguarding lead, with a return address on the envelope so it can be returned to us if it goes astray. We will obtain evidence that the paperwork has been received by the new school and then destroy any copies held in our school. Where appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead may also make contact with the new educational setting in advance of the child's move there, to enable planning so appropriate support is in place when the child arrives.

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

10. Interagency working

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). 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.

If a child is subject to a Care, Child Protection or a Child in Need plan, the designated safeguarding lead will ensure 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 the school is represented, provides appropriate information and contributes 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.

11. Allegations about members of the workforce

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 Behaviour policy / Code of Conduct. The school works in accordance with statutory guidance and the SET procedures (ESCB, 2019) in respect of allegations against an adult working with children (in a paid or voluntary capacity).

The school 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 must 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.

The SET procedures (ESCB, 2019) 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 duty Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the Children's Workforce Allegations Management Team on **03330 139 797** within one working day. However, wherever possible, contact with the LADO will be made immediately as they 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 school does not carry out any investigation before speaking to the LADO.

Staffing matters are confidential and the school operates within a statutory framework around Data Protection.

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

The section is based on 'Section 2: Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Amend or add to this as applicable to reflect your own approach.

This section applies to all concerns (including allegations) about members of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, which do not meet the harm threshold set out in section 1 above.

Concerns may arise through, for example:

- Suspicion
- Complaint
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school
- Pre-employment vetting checks

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner to safeguard the welfare of children.

Definition of low-level concerns

The term 'low-level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, **and**
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language

Sharing low-level concerns

We recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately.

We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns
- Empowering staff to self-refer
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system

Responding to low-level concerns

If the concern is raised via a third party, the headteacher will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

- Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously
- To the individual involved and any witnesses

The headteacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the school's code of conduct policy.

Record keeping

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any action taken and the rationale for decisions and action taken.

Records will be:

- Kept confidential, held securely and comply with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR
- Reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold as described in section 1 of this appendix, we will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority
- Retained at least until the individual leaves employment at the school

Where a low-level concern relates to a supply teacher or contractor, we will notify the individual's employer, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

References

We will not include low-level concerns in references unless:

- The concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the designated officer at the local authority and is found to be substantiated; and/or
- The concern (or group of concerns) relates to issues which would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance

12. Use of reasonable force

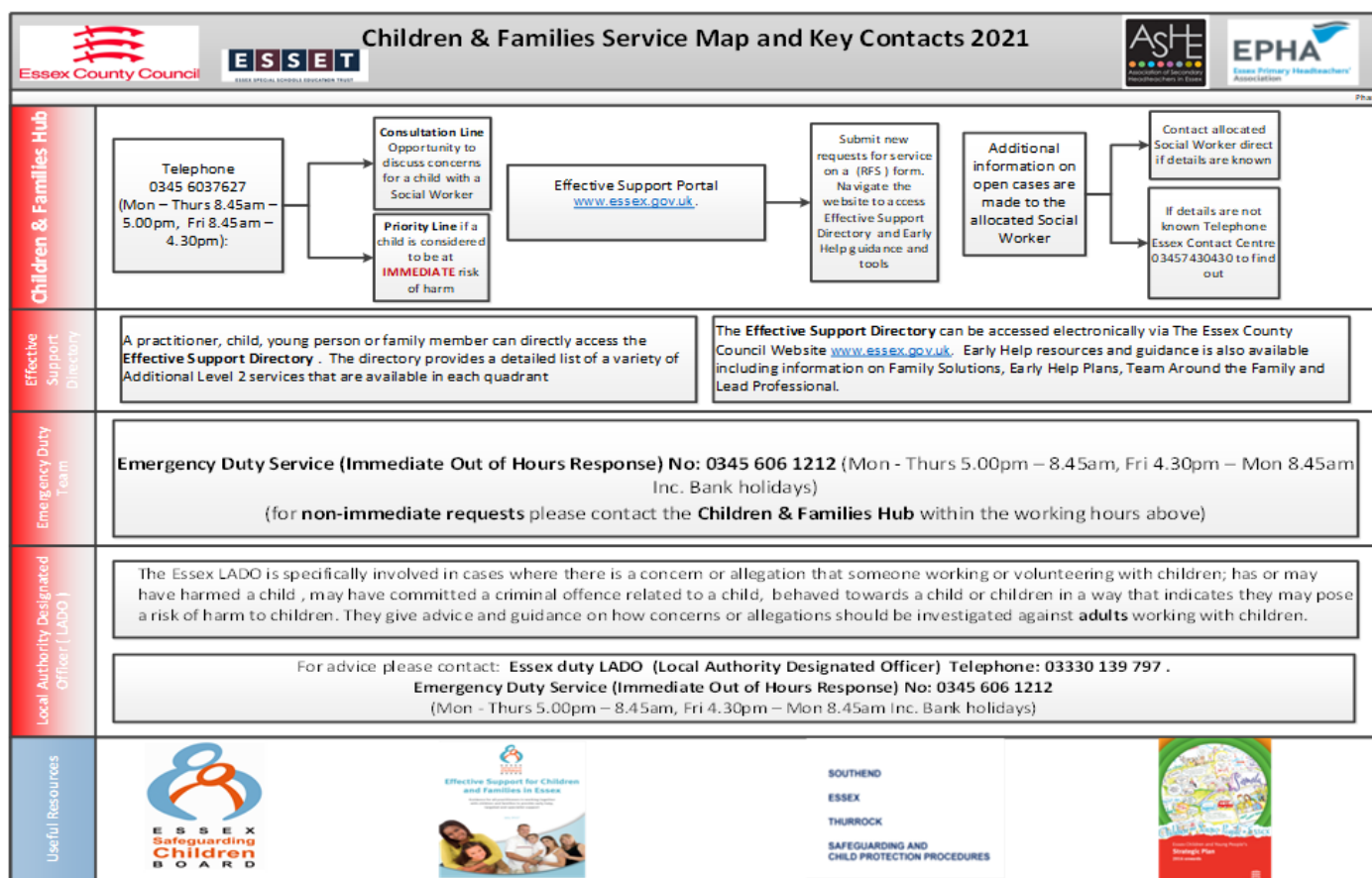
The term 'reasonable force' covers a broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people, such as guiding a child to safety or breaking up a fight. 'Reasonable' means using no more force than is needed. Our school works in accordance with statutory and local guidance on the use of reasonable force (see section 2) and recognises that where intervention is required, it should always be considered in a safeguarding context.

13. Whistleblowing

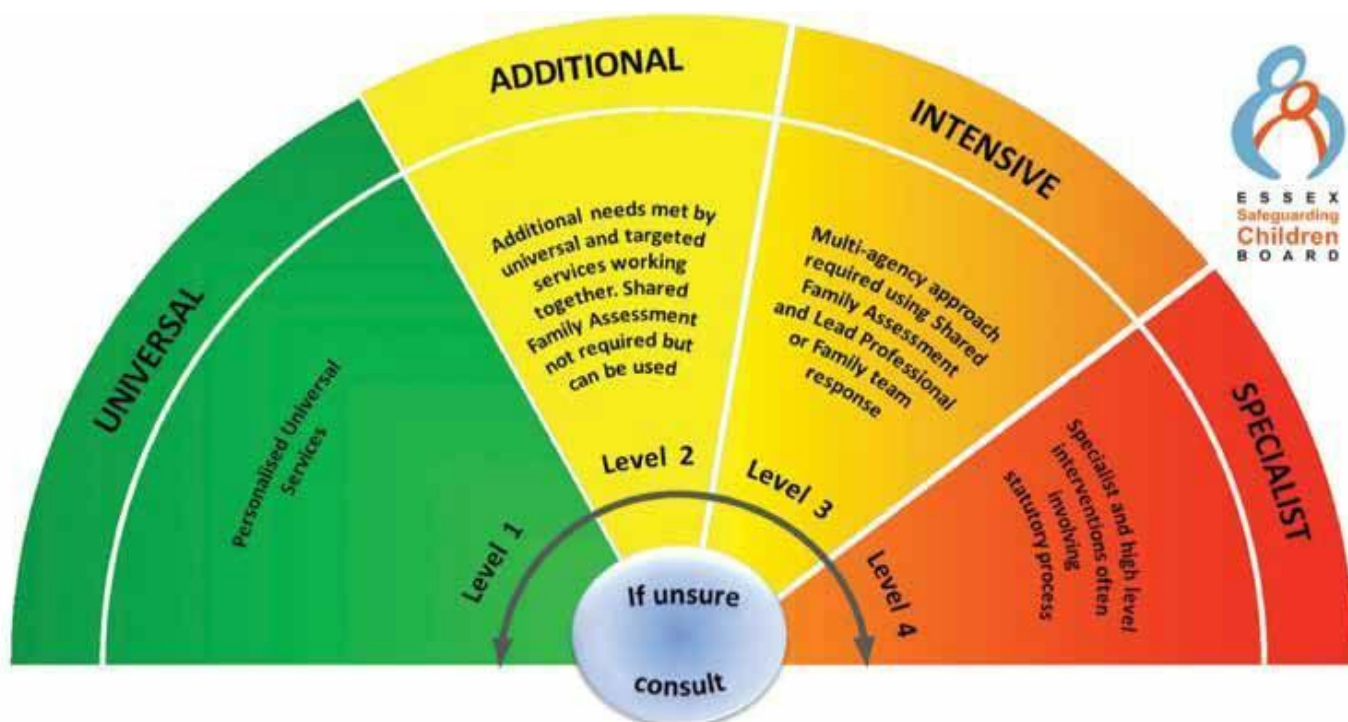
All members of staff and the wider school community should be able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and feel confident any concern will be taken seriously by the school leadership team. We have 'whistleblowing' procedures in place and these are available in the school Whistleblowing Policy. However, for any member of staff who feels unable to raise concerns internally, or where they feel their concerns have not been addressed, they may contact the [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-we-do/our-services/whistleblowing/) on: 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) or by email at: 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.

Appendix A: Children and Families Service Map and Key Contacts



Appendix B: Essex Windscreen of Need and levels of intervention



All partners working with children, young people and their families will offer support as soon as we are aware of any additional needs. We will always seek to work together to provide support to children, young people and their families at the lowest level possible in accordance with their needs

Children with **Additional** needs are best supported by those who already work with them, such as Family Hubs or schools, organising additional support with local partners as needed. When an agency is supporting these children, an Early Help Plan and a Lead Professional are helpful to share information and co-ordinate work alongside the child and family.

For children whose needs are **Intensive**, a coordinated multi-disciplinary approach is usually best, involving either an Early Help Plan or a Shared Family Assessment (SFA), with a Lead Professional to work closely with the child and family to ensure they receive all the support they require. Examples of intensive services are children's mental health services and Family Solutions.

Specialist services are where the needs of the child are so great that statutory and/or specialist intervention is required to keep them safe or to ensure their continued development. Examples of specialist services are Children's Social Care or Youth Offending Service. By working together effectively with children that have additional needs and by providing coordinated multi-disciplinary/agency support and services for those with intensive needs, we seek to prevent more children and young people requiring statutory interventions and reactive specialist services

Appendix C: Missing Child Protocol

The safety of our pupils is our priority whilst they are in our care at school. This policy sets out our procedures for dealing with the unlikely event of a child going missing.

Definition of Missing

The definition of missing used in Essex is ‘anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until located and his or her well-being confirmed’.

(College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice Guidance)

Introduction

This guidance sets out the procedures to follow when children go missing from schools and other educational settings, hereafter referred to as educational settings.

Missing children are among the most vulnerable in our community. Sometimes children go missing from educational settings; when this occurs, it is important that action is taken quickly to address this, and in line with local procedures.

This document should be read in conjunction with the educational setting's Child Protection Policy, and the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Child Protection Procedures (SET Procedures).

- [Essex Schools Infolink](#) – for the model Child Protection Policy and other resources
- [Essex Safeguarding Children Board](#) – for the SET Procedures and other resources

A child going missing could be a ‘one-off’ incident that, following investigation, does not need further work. However, a child going missing frequently could be an indicator of underlying exploitation or other forms of child abuse.

Educational settings should consider missing episodes like any other child protection concern and take action as appropriate, for example, by contacting parents/carers, the Children & Families Hub consultation line, and in an emergency, the priority line or the police. It may be appropriate to use the Early Help Procedures (including holding a Team Around the Family meeting) to address the issues and prevent escalation. Advice should be sought and concerns should be escalated if there is no improvement.

Where children missing frequently are open to Children's Social Care, a Missing Prevention Plan may be in place. Where this is the case, the educational setting may be set actions as part of the Missing Prevention Plan and should receive a copy if consent has been provided.

1. Responsibilities

It is the Head teacher's responsibility to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of this policy, what is expected, the procedures to follow and to ensure that the policy is reviewed on a timely basis. It is the responsibility of all staff to read the policy and act at all times according to its guidance.

Staff are responsible for completing Attendance Registers. They must be completed accurately and promptly according to guidelines. Registers **MUST** be complete by 9.10 am and again by 1.10 pm each day.

If a member of staff takes a pupil, group or class out of school they are responsible for informing parents and staff at the school office (also in accordance with the Educational Visits Policy)

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure they provide correct and updated contact information on a timely basis and know the procedures for handover of their child at the beginning and end of sessions.

If a parent takes a pupil out of school during the day, they must sign them out at the office through our Inventory system. The school office must ensure that this is done by parents/guardians or must do this on their behalf.

It is the responsibility of Governors to ensure they are aware of the school's procedures and to challenge / support the school in its review of this policy.

2. Procedures Aimed at Reducing Risk of a Missing Pupil

Start of the school day:

- The school should ensure parents are fully aware of the points at which responsibility for the care of their child passes from staff to them and vice versa.
- All staff and pupils enter the school using the main entrances at the front of the school. Early Years and Key Stage 1 children enter via the KS1 gate and must be escorted round to the classroom doors by parents/guardians. We do not accept responsibility for children until they are handed to the class teacher at the door and they are inside. Key stage 2 children enter the school via the KS2 entrance and we take responsibility for them once they enter the side KS2 gate, inside the school's grounds. Parents are not permitted from this point in the morning due to safeguarding purposes.
- Teachers must be in their classroom from 8:40 am.
- A member of staff (usually SLT) must be on the school gate at KS2 at 8.40 am, as soon as the gate is opened.
- There should also be one member of staff (usually SLT) on the Ks1 playground, typically on the front gate.

During lesson time:

- Staff mark registers promptly and accurately at the start of each session (morning and afternoons). Fire registers **MUST** be completed at this point with the total number of children present and the names of pupils absent. This should be displayed on the classroom door and updated if this information changes during the session.
- All staff must ensure that the external gates to any outside area are closed at all times with particular attention when pupils are playing outside.
- If pupils leave the classroom security to work in other parts of the school, the class teacher must ensure that adequate supervision is maintained at all times and all pupils are accounted for on return to the classroom. If a pupil leaves to go to the toilet, staff must be aware and ensure that they return in a timely manner in order to ensure they are safe.
- If a child leaves the class without permission, then it is the responsibility of the staff supervising them to ensure that they are followed or that alarm is raised in order to seek support.
- Updated contact information for parents and carers is sought and maintained by the office staff.

During playtime:

- 2 Duty staff should be on the playground before pupils come out.
- External gates remain closed. Staff patrol all areas in the playground throughout the session, keeping particular focus on fences/perimeters.

During lunchtime:

As above - lunch time playground staff must be on the playground before the pupils come out. Dining hall staff must be in the dining hall before the children go into the dining hall. HT/AHT/DHT are available at lunchtime.

During home time:

- All Early years and KS1 children wait in the classroom (or corridor) with the class teacher/supervisor until they are dismissed by the supervising adult to the parent/carer with permission to collect.
- All pupils in KS2 are escorted onto the designated area of the KS2 playgrounds where they wait with the class teacher/supervisor until they are dismissed to their parent/carer with permission to collect.
- Children in year 5 and 6 can walk home alone **ONLY** if their parent/carer has given written permission for them to walk home alone. It is the class teacher's/supervisor's responsibility to know and check who has this.
- It is the class teacher's/supervisors responsibility to know who is being collected by agreed collectors (such as ABC Treehouse etc) and for those children to be sent (or escorted in the case of EYFS/KS1) to the school office to await collection. The school office will oversee the collection of these pupils from the front office.
- It is the class teacher's/supervisor's responsibility to know which children are attending after school clubs within school and to ensure the safe arrival of those children at their club. The person leading the club must be in the agreed meeting place **BEFORE** the children are due to arrive.

- Pupils must only be dismissed to the person/people who have permission to collect them. Where a different person arrives to collect them, who does not have permission to collect, the child must be escorted to the front office by staff where a telephone call can be made to the parents to check.
- All parents give school a “password” which should be known by those who are collecting. This is stored in the front office.

Educational visits:

- Thorough risk assessments and adequate staff / pupil ratios (at least following national guidance and often in excess of this) are provided when pupils leave the school premises.
- Parents must be informed if their child leaves the site at all for any visit, even local. Parents must give permission for their child to be taken on a further visit, especially if it requires transport.
- Mobile telephones are to be taken on every visit and mobile contact numbers shared amongst supervising staff with details kept at school.
- Critical incident cards must also be taken with members of staff
- Where children and staff leave the site for a visit, they must sign out of the school office using the inventory system. Where a large number of children leave at one point, a register must be handed to the office with details of exactly who is leaving the school site. The school office must update the registers to reflect this.

After School Clubs:

- Teachers should be informed of which children are expected to attend each club each day.
- It is the responsibility of the teacher/supervisor to ensure the child attends if they are expected.
- If the child says they are not going, the teacher must ensure the child (or them self) relay the message to the school office where a member of office staff can call home to confirm this. In addition, the club register for that evening can be updated and the club lead would not expect their attendance.
- A register of expected pupils should be given to the club organiser/lead.
- At the beginning of the club, a register must be taken, against those expected. Any children on the list who have not attended, must be accounted for – check with the school office.
- Children must be booked into after school clubs in advance, through our Clubbly system.

3. Procedures In The Event of a Child Going Missing

In the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing while at school:

1. If a teacher suspects that a child is missing from a lesson or activity, they contact the HT/DHT and school office immediately. The HT/DHT and any learning support assistants will carry out a thorough search of the building, including outside areas, toilets and storage areas.
2. The following lists held in the school office will be checked:
 - Attendance Registers
 - Off site record
 - Lists of those attending other schools or events (eg Transition activities/competitions)
3. If necessary, staff will promptly but calmly round up all pupils to the hall and a designated member of staff will supervise the children. The safety and care of other pupils is paramount so the security of the school and the number of staff remaining to supervise the other pupils in the school must be adequately maintained while the search continues.
4. Staff will count and name check all the pupils present against the register while the group are assembled in one place.
5. A thorough check of all exits will be made, to ensure all gates/doors were locked or bolted and there are no other ways a pupil could have left the school. If something is discovered this needs to be drawn to the attention of the HT/DHT immediately.
6. If the child has not been found after 10 minutes from the initial report of them as missing then parents should be notified. The Headteacher or next most senior member of staff on site will also contact the police at this time. Where there is a social worker allocated to the child, they should also be informed.
7. Staff must write down a description of what the child was wearing and any distinguishing features.
8. If the missing child has any special medical or learning needs then these need to be noted to be disclosed to police or other agencies.
9. The Class Teacher is spoken to to gain further information and asked to confirm if he/she attended the previous sessions.
10. A thorough search of the school buildings continues and is carried out by senior members of staff with the help of other members of staff available.
11. Particular attention is paid to:
 - Rarely used rooms
 - Toilets
 - All classrooms
 - School hall
 - School grounds

In the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing while off school premises:

- The Group Leader must ensure the safety of remaining pupils. At least two adults must stay with them.
- One or more adults should immediately start searching for the child.
- The Visit Leader should contact school to alert them. If the child is not found within 5 minutes, the Group Leader must contact police by telephoning 999.

4. Once the child has been found:

If the child is found by educational setting staff, or if the child returns to the premises of their own accord, the police must be notified immediately by dialling 101 or 999 if the matter is an emergency. It is important that this action is prioritised, as the child will remain classified as a missing person until seen by the police.

A full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file by the member of staff who was responsible for the child at the time that they disappeared, and an investigation into the incident will be carried out by the Head Teacher.

- The incident report will detail:
 - The date and time of the incident
 - Which staff/children were in the group to which the missing child belonged
 - When the missing child was last seen
 - The estimated time that the child went missing.
 - Circumstances surrounding the child's disappearance – what was the child doing/saying prior to going missing.

If the incident warrants police investigation, all staff are required to co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Social Care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.

A separate incident Report form should be completed.

The schools insurance company should be informed.

Following the event, a review will be made of security procedures and all relevant parties will be informed of the findings, implications and outcomes of the review.

Essex Police

On receiving a report of a missing child, Essex Police will classify the child as missing and will respond based on the level of risk involved.

Essex Police will conduct a vulnerability interview for all children who have been missing and have returned. It may be that the child refuses to engage or speak with police. On these occasions the parents/carers can assist by reporting to officers their observations on the child's return, e.g. did the child shower, have gifts, appear unwell or under the influence of any substance, etc. The

setting may also be able to contribute to this process and should provide the police with any relevant information or observations.

Each child that returns from missing will be offered a 'missing chat' (an independent return from missing interview) by a person not involved in their care. This will be facilitated by the Local Authority with responsibility for the child. Missing chats are offered to all children from Essex who go missing.

Useful contacts:

Shane Thomson, ECC Missing Co-ordinator: shane.thomson@essex.gov.uk

Lucy Stovell, ECC Missing Chats: lucy.stovell@essex.gov.uk

Other Policies Linked to this Policy

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy & Procedure.
- School Security Policy.
- Attendance Policy.
- Educational Visits Policy.
- Critical incident policy
- First aid policy
- Walking home alone policy