

## Barley Lane School

*Hard work, humility, kindness*

### Safeguarding Portfolio TWO: managing specific risks for example absconding

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## What to do if you're worried about a child (professionals' version)

Keeping children and young people safe and promoting their happiness and wellbeing is a shared responsibility for all of us: teachers, governors, support staff, parents, carers and visitors of all kinds.

Worries come in all shapes and sizes from those gut feelings we sometimes have through seeing something that troubles us to children telling us they are at risk. Some risks are very serious some less so but they all need to be reliably shared to keep our young people safe: the question is how to do that?

In school as a team we meet twice a day every day before the school day starts and when it ends and we always ask the question "are there any worries or concerns about the children's welfare and safety?" We remind each other too of the range of risks including those we must make safe each day.

We also have a "school operational lead" trained in CP to share with and seek support as the day unfolds...this could mean a very serious risk needs to be made safe or a disclosure managed quickly and correctly and the "lead" is there to help and make sure we do the right things and share with the right people and in practice get the right advice.

The team uses an electronic system called CPOMS to log and record things in writing and what is critical is staff not only talk about concerns but promptly use CPOMS and the "safeguarding" tag to alert our safeguarding team (see below) and to note in writing what has been shared. "Systems" can go wrong so email is fine as would be a handwritten record but you must get them to the right people.

Mr Jones the headteacher is the school's lead on safeguarding and he works closely with and is supported by Carl Moore, Vicki Sessions and Helen Kidney: these are the people to share any worry or concern and don't hesitate to do so.

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Please remember to use our school briefings and debriefings not just to share and listen but to challenge the "lead" and safeguarding team about what they've done and what is happening: what progress has been made? Be curious and persistent and there is nothing to stop you as an individual going direct to social care they can be contacted at the MASH (multi-agency safeguarding hub) [mashsecure@devon.gov.uk](mailto:mashsecure@devon.gov.uk) 0345 155 1071 out of hours call 0845 6000 388

Worries or concerns about each other should be shared with Mr. Jones, Mr. Moore, Mrs Sessions or Ms. Kidney who contacts the nominated child protection officers within the local education authority (these are called LADOs and deal with serious concerns about teachers and staff including head-teachers) [childsc.localauthoritydesignatedofficersecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk](mailto:childsc.localauthoritydesignatedofficersecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk). Again, there is nothing to stop you as an individual going direct to LADOs. Any concerns about Mr Jones should be shared with the school's chair and safeguarding governor Damian Furniss [dfurniss@barleylane.devon.sch.uk](mailto:dfurniss@barleylane.devon.sch.uk)

Sometimes worries and concerns can occur to folk later or maybe they are just hard to express to people in school: the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline 0800 028 0285 line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

The Devon Children and Families Partnership website is a good place for all kinds of safeguarding related information and guidance <https://www.dcfp.org.uk>

## What to do when a child shares or needs to share they are at risk?

If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will need to let the pupil know that they must pass the information on** – staff are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which they tell the pupil this is a matter for professional judgement. If they jump in immediately the pupil may think that they do not want to listen, if left until the very end of the conversation, the pupil may feel that they have been misled into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

During their conversations with the pupils staff will:

- allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and not overreact – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting their listener
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’
- not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how hard this must be for the pupil
- **under no circumstances** ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what the pupil’s mother thinks about all this. Do remember your TED questions: Tell me.... Explain..... Describe.....
- at an appropriate time tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ or ‘I can’t believe what I’m hearing’ may be the staff member’s way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- tell the pupil what will happen next. The pupil may agree to go to see the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day.
- report verbally to the DSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves
- write up their conversation as soon as possible on the **record of concern form** and hand it to the designated person
- seek support if they feel distressed

### Notifying parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure. However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from MASH.

### Enquiry to MASH

The DSL will make an enquiry to MASH if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that an enquiry is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

Any member of staff may make a direct enquiry to children’s social care if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect a child.

*Never look down on anybody unless you are helping him up. Jesse Jackson*

## Child protection: child sexual exploitation 2021-22

Our children and young people are often vulnerable sometimes risky and whilst they may present as streetwise they are children and need our vigilance and support and guidance to be and stay safe. We have a range of guidance and ways of working focussed on keeping them safe for example if they climbed on a roof or brought something to school they shouldn't; what are we doing about CSE?

- Every member of staff is clear they have a responsibility for the wellbeing, happiness and health and safety of the children and young people and that child protection and safeguarding their highest priority; they know they must be alive to risks and do something about them.
- We are all equally clear that risks are real and that bad things do happen and we are vigilant about any sense of "it couldn't happen here"; quite the opposite we are all powerfully aware many of us from direct experience that bad things do happen and we are not sceptical about CSE or radicalisation (the same approach is applied) or indeed abuse of all kinds be it sexual, physical, emotional or neglect
- We are trained but equally powerful is the daily dialogue about child protection and we see this as analogous to or like learning to play a musical instrument if we don't go on to use and practice new skills and knowledge they will be lost.
- The agenda for every morning briefing is prescriptive and begins; *"Are there serious concerns about any child's safety? (insights and knowledge, gut feelings too about actual or potential and serious and likely urgent threats to a child's safety and welfare) abuse: physical, sexual (CSE), emotional, neglect, radicalisation?"*
- There are weekly best-practice sessions many dedicated to safeguarding where staff can develop their insights and concerns and reflect on their practice in child protection.
- We risk assess specifically for CSE and radicalisation and daily sharing informs these assessments and they are revisited each half-term to look for patterns and trends meaning risks rise and fall and our vigilance and or interventions will reflect this as children are judged more or less at risk.
- Risk assessment identifies a range of risks for example, "pupil's boundaries unsafe with peers and or younger children and often vulnerable also around unknown adults" or "vulnerable to manipulation and control from malign others."
- We are powerfully aware of the risks children and young people can present to each other and in our setting those risks are greater and there is a whole school approach to risk management set out in appendix 1 below.

- We seek help from colleagues in social care and Early Help to support the children and their families and these are powerful “protective factors” things that lessen the risks.
- Every child is accounted for every day; every absence explained and persistent absence supported and challenged because an absent child could be at risk? Absconding is a related risk we are powerfully aware of and we have a prescribed and prompt and rigorous response to it.
- And in school above all other things we seek to build safe supportive and positive relationships with the children and young people so we hear and listen to them and they speak freely to us about their lives and we are well placed to see or hear or sense if something is wrong and there is powerful evidence of this including successful criminal prosecution of an abuser in the wider community.
- We supervise the children and young people with vigilance and we hope tact alert always to their behaviours and feelings across the day; we work hard to be alive to changes in their behaviour that could indicate something is wrong.
- In our daily interactions with them we strive to be “good parents and carers” and offer guidance and support alongside their formal lessons in PSHE and Science for example where sex and relationships are learned about.
- Across school life every day we seeking successes for them as people and learners that build their confidence and self-esteem and their understanding of the world so they can develop the self-worth and self-confidence to know what is safe and acceptable and what is unsafe and unacceptable because tragic events tell us it is “vulnerable” children who lack these qualities and who are not well supervised who are targeted.

**Specific child on child (peer on peer) risk management** (*we also have a standalone policy with additional guidance*)

- In our specialist setting as our SEMH risk document describes *“our student body by its nature contains and presents a whole range of known and unknown (latent risk) and also emerging and shifting risks because being multiply and diversely risky is a core and common feature of the children and young people in our care”* and we have the euphemistic term “Verona” for peer on peer sexual abuse and this at the very the sharp end of a continuum that includes persistent low level but insidious and corrosive sexual harassment again something identified as a known risk in some of our young people and in short as is often the case our work insists we are vigilant in ways mainstream schools are not.
- Our stated and published core ethos and values include a *“friendship”* that is unpicked and explained as *“respect\*-empathy-forgiveness-compassion-**protection**”* and our people are selected and retained and developed only if they are committed to and live out these values.
- Our preoccupation with anticipation, proactivity and so prevention scaffolded and facilitated by an obsessiveness about rigorous visible and intelligent supervision that is perpetually tweaked and refined and if necessary overhauled (attend any briefing/debriefing) what we describe simply as *“the massive significance always of putting children and their supervision first”*

- As Ofsted pointed out *“The key to the safe environment stems from the strong and trusting relationships that exist between pupils, their families and staff.”* And here is the oil that makes the whole mechanism, the engine of safety and wellbeing work effectively: your investment in and commitment to, your authentic care and compassion for the children and young people and their families this is what makes you vigilant and makes you matter and influential in their lives and so more likely to notice or to be disclosed to or shared with and you are empowered by that trust and respect to act and to make a difference.

Relentlessly cherish, protect and sustain and develop these and you create a context, a community where belonging and being safe and happy can and will thrive and so bullying and harassment of all kinds will struggle to get a foothold...

### **Absconding or unexplained absence**

Absconding is a characteristic of a small but persistent minority of our children and young people over time and it happens and when it does we have set out below what has proven pragmatic best practice but what of potential absconds and near misses how best to be preventative?

- We share twice daily at briefing and debriefing and we must remind ourselves who our risk summary documents tell us are at risk of absconding and who else might be?
- Where risks are high or a recent abscond triggers it we physically prevent them from exiting building and we apply periods where access to the school grounds is limited and sometimes withheld as is access to off-site activities.
- We note the behaviours of known but invariably mercurial “absconders” and consider risks that day in school and beyond and monitor them as they arrive and across the day for signs and signals of possible attempts to abscond
- We also look for and are alive to risky combinations and those youngsters who encourage others to abscond.
- We habitually and reliably ask the operational lead about children who have not arrived in class.
- We maintain the basic levels of security: locked outside doors and gates and are alive to access in and out of school grounds and buildings that could be exploited.

If a student leaves the school grounds: for the purposes of speed the person discovering the absence or the first person able to act (for example a teacher is likely to remain in class) either manages the process to its conclusion or passes it over speedily to the lead senior member of staff (in practice the head or operational lead)

If it is initially unclear whether they have actually left the school grounds:

- Briefly and promptly tour the school buildings and grounds
- If you cannot locate them be super-cautious and assume they have gone
- Do not allow more than 10 minutes to elapse between your first suspicion and your call to the police and parents.

If they are about to abscond or are nearby:

- If possible convince them to return by talking and persuading.
- Seek support and make a dynamic risk assessment: if you can safely physically stop and return the would-be absconder do so within the PRICE practice.
- Do not compromise the health and safety of staff or students with an inappropriate or poorly judged physical intervention.

- Do not compromise the safe running of the school and the care, control and safety of the wider school community by leaving the school premises or advising others to do so you must assess risk here and a vulnerable child **will require “shadowing”** (tracking the student as they abscond) a more knowing youngster for example with a bus pass and a history of heading straight home may not.

If it is clear they have absconded or a student does not arrive at or return to school as planned or agreed (movement is frequent and varied in our setting) and initial enquiries offer no sensible and safe explanation **within 10 minutes**.

- Telephone the police and inform them (ensure the actual or potential vulnerability of all our students is made explicit and if they are CiC)
- Telephone the parents/carers pertinent professionals and inform them
- Take any reasonable, practicable action you can, drive a likely route or go to where they were last seen

Once a student has left the school premises and the opportunity to intervene quickly, safely and decisively has been lost an important dynamic risk assessment must be made: you will have to make an informed and reasonable judgement on how exactly to proceed.

- Is the youngster at great risk? What time of day is it? What are the weather conditions like? Where are they likely to go and how hazardous is that journey? Consider the state of mind, age, maturity and competence of the youngster. What could have or did prompt the absconding?
- If he is to be pursued will a physical intervention be difficult and dangerous? Are there sufficient staff to both support a pursuit and intervention and to manage the remaining students in school safely and has this been planned for?
- Should, can the youngster be followed and shadowed until the Police can intervene?
- Are the needs of the other students greater and should the matter now be left to the police?

If you can safely do so “shadowing” on foot and or driving the route are sensible practicable actions that allow the possibility of negotiation and the student’s safe return; please note the child’s safety is paramount and if to recover a child he needs to be returned home then do so.

## **Roof climbing**

*Roof climbing has been such a rare occurrence in school (one event in the last five years) that guidance for staff not necessary beyond the already well established dialogue about risk we have each morning and afternoon and the ongoing conversation as the school day unfolds; we are used to risk.*

*We have something that is very rare but very risky so when it does happen we must be clear what to do whatever sensible practical precautions and preventative work has been done.*

- Calmly and assertively and repeatedly remind them of the dangers and both encourage and instruct them to stop. Repeat this at least three times seeking to be assertive, supportive and conciliatory in tone.
- You should immediately call for support and then dynamically risk-assess and if you can prevent them getting on the roof or swiftly and safely get them down then hold the child to keep them safe: in practice that is likely to be an improvisation in good faith.
- Key to this will be your judgment and confidence in doing so, can you hold the child decisively and safely and this will be about basic stuff like their size and your fitness and athleticism and strength;

do not move outside your own limitations as an ill judged hold escalatory and likely to increase risk as with all our interventions a quick and safe win is essential. If you can hold safely do so as the roof a very unsafe place.

- If they are on roof instruct them and support them as described above and make sure they are aware it is about their safety not about being in trouble.
- Call for support and at this point consider are you adding to risk? Were you a part of any original difficulty? A neutral MOS for example PR as a first aider likely better placed to monitor as children are often angry with us as the staff who care for but also discipline them. A discreet and reassuring presence is what is required and if you know or they identify a preferred MOS get them promptly. Ask them?
- Call or make sure the police are called immediately as if matters de-escalate we can update them and if matters grow in risk and danger they are on their way and they can access their specialist negotiator.
- The office team know when we call police over any issue we call parents and if practicable they may wish to attend and then be advised by police how best to contribute; that said experience tells us the police prefer and assert they should work alone.
- Maintaining the rest of the school is challenging but managing movement and access to the event necessary to not only make safe the incident but such things electrify and frighten the children in equal measure as they do us but we must seek to ensure the wider community remains calm and neutral so police best placed to bring a safe outcome.

## **Drug and substance misuse**

The school takes a pragmatic view given young people naturally resist being lectured and even attempts to supportively inform are sometimes perceived negatively and this coupled with the natural risk taking and rebellion that often characterises adolescence and these sometimes exaggerated in our students. Teenagers will do risky things we know that and we want to support and challenge them and protect their health and wellbeing.

It is our job as teachers and parents to support and guide and protect the children and the school can seek to inform skilfully but in reality both experience and precedents evidence that there will be periodic episodes of use and attempts to access alcohol and drugs whilst in our care both on-site and in the local community and the key questions for us are what can we do to inhibit and actively discourage this and what do we do when it happens?

- Like good parents keep a dialogue, a conversation going about the health risks one that avoids lecturing but seeks to skilfully and persistently highlight the risks and does so by explicitly stating our care and concern for them; we must avoid being didactic and hectoring or the message is ignored.
- Pragmatically and rigorously keep the use of tobacco to an absolute minimum (with zero our goal and sometimes achieved) and always off-site and in public spaces where the furtive and secretive process of taking anything more risky and illegal much harder.
- Periodically remind students that that they risk criminal prosecution and that whoever shares drugs is in law can be regarded a supplier.
- A visit from the local police and their drug sniffing dog both fascinating and a potential deterrent as is the occasional “drop in” visit by local police officers.
- Inform the Police and bring them on-site where on balance of probabilities students may be in possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia.



- If we suspect something, risk assess before we challenge students directly and politely and write to parents when there is reasonable suspicion (this in practice is often the reality as the student drug user, typically Cannabis, is skilled and secretive) of drug or substance use and there is a model letter that emphasises a constructive and supportive approach but one that makes clear the risks and what could be at stake.

*"We have advised the young people that they risk criminal prosecution and that whoever supplied it is in law regarded a drug dealer. Any student sharing and providing drugs would risk permanent exclusion. Any developing habit with Cannabis can lead to long term psychological problems so there is the critical matter of health and wellbeing."*

- In practice young people are invariably pragmatic and if we make them feel sufficiently scrutinized, uncomfortable and at risk of exposure they will step back however this highlights the risk of...doing nothing as this has the opposite effect and leaves them feeling more comfortable and secure and they will persist and increase in their activities; so we must make a skilled and calculated fuss and leave them feeling exposed.
- Serious, repeated and or blatant and on balance of probabilities proven use and distribution of drugs is likely to lead to police intervention and then potential criminal prosecution and the possibility of lengthy fixed term exclusion and ultimately the loss of a place in school; that said we will in the spirit of forgiveness and fresh starts always look for ways to recover and protect a young person's place in school.

### **Managing the risk of violence in school safely**

We must protect each other's health and safety. The entire school community cannot and is not expected to tolerate dangerous or persistent violence in any form from adults and children alike.

We do distinguish between different levels of aggressive and violent behaviour.

- We can manage spontaneous outbursts and losses of control particularly with younger students but repeated violent and explosive episodes become harder to manage safely as youngsters physically mature.
- Unprovoked and planned assaults are never acceptable. We believe there is a significant difference between two youngsters falling out and exchanging blows in anger and a premeditated assault.
- The school has always reacted promptly and strongly to assaults on staff: particularly when they have behaved wholly reasonably and fairly; the school would eventually cease to function if students did not regard such behaviour as entirely unacceptable and taboo.
- We will always consider each case on individually. Health and safety, the safe and secure running of the school and the happiness and security of all of the children and the wider school community will inform our decisions.

We must also address the possibility of aggressive or violent behaviour from visitors to the school. In these circumstances we need to consider the following

- Do not attempt to manage difficult, belligerent or potentially violent people; remain calm and neutral withdraw and inform the police promptly. Call upon colleagues immediately for support. Use your walkie-talkie.
- It is reasonable to politely ask people to leave the school site but if you believe this may be dangerously provocative or inflammatory you may decide not to.

- Protect as far as is reasonable and practicable the students in your care: removing them from potential danger or difficulty and calling immediately for support from colleagues.
- Calm withdrawal, promptly seeking support and calling the police the quickest route to safety.
- There is no expectation that staff should manage anyone outside the community of children and colleagues. If a dynamic and on the job risk assessment and instinct and judgement suggest a calm, sensible and assertive intervention could bring a speedy and happy resolution then they may choose to act but always mindful of their health and safety responsibilities to themselves and the youngsters in their care.

### **Searching youngsters and confiscating items**

Every school's student community always contains a minority of students who will attempt to bring on site inappropriate and unsuitable, even unsafe, substances and items.

The school rarely searches instead relying on their co-operation to hand over risky and or inappropriate items.

If risks mean we must and we can safely, swiftly and decisively intervene and search for and confiscate any item or substance that presents an immediate and serious risk to the health and safety of the school community, students, staff, neighbours and visitors then we will without their co-operation

If a lack of co-operation prevents us quickly making things safe and it adds to risk through stridency and aggression the police will be involved.

Searches should then be rare because in our setting they are risky and motivated only by the determination to keep everyone safe; a search may be prove necessary in the following circumstances and in the following ways.

- Firstly we are not addressing things like mobile phones and other gadgets here nor tobacco as these can be dealt with without the potentially risky and escalatory business of searches but through working with children and parents and using reward and sanction and vigilance; they do not present an immediate risk of serious harm...
- That said sophisticated mobile phone technology means it may be necessary in some circumstances where the risk of harm greater to search and confiscate phones; for example cyber bullying is happening "live" or children and young people are accessing and sharing extreme sites that present an immediate risk of psychological harm and these distinct from accessing music or texting that are nuisance factors and not allowed but not worthy of a risky and potentially escalatory search and confiscation.
- Senior staff must be both informed and involved and the likely risks and outcomes of any intervention fully but speedily reflected on and explored and planned for (dynamic risk assessment) and the value of a short, sharp informed conversation that leads to decisive intervention is clear if risk of harm high.
- There should be no forcible searches and confiscation unless there is a burning health and safety issue for example staff believe the child might be about to ingest a drug or act out violently with a weapon and in these cases the police should be called to support even if staff judge they have the confidence and skill set to get a quick safe win.
- Please consider prior to any potential search or any escalation to police intervention if there is reasonable suspicion but compliance from the child cannot be achieved then parents can be

informed and the child taken off-site and an FTE applied **but if the initial risk is serious and or made worse by the student's behaviour or there is an element of illegality/criminality the police should be involved immediately.**

- For example a child with no history of risky or violent behaviour carrying a small Swiss Army Knife he won't hand over but can be safely returned home then we have that option but a child with a lock knife and a more aggressive and risky history leaves no wriggle room; in all but the most pressing and immediately high risk situations staff and children must have some space to resolve matters peaceably and staff some discretion and thinking space and wriggle room to make the safest most pragmatic decision.
- If then, on balance of probabilities, staff reasonably suspect that an illegal or inappropriate and risky and damaging substance or item has been brought on-site or a phone/gadget is being riskily misused and there is a pressing and genuine threat to the welfare, wellbeing and health and safety of the school community for example alcohol, drugs, a knife or improvised weapon, accessing and or sharing pornography or extreme violence then searching and confiscation are reasonable and proportionate however...
- The search may be reasonable but it should still normally proceed only after the youngster has had an opportunity to be reasoned with and given the opportunity to voluntarily handover the risky substance or item **but this reasonable and stepped approach can and should be immediately usurped and the police called urgently if for example it involved a weapon or a drug or staff suspect phones are being used in abusing or grooming.**
- Any intervention whatever its outcome must be documented on a serious incident form

## **Working with the Police Service**

There are occasions as above when it will be necessary to seek the support of the police:

To remove or respond suitably to any person within or beyond the school community who presents a serious threat to the safety and security of the school's extended community and this sadly may include parents.

- To recover safely students who have absconded or are missing (please see guidelines on absconding)
- To address high risk and potentially illegal/criminal student behaviours for example the use of drugs or extreme destructiveness and violence, being in possession of a weapon.
- To support us in keeping children safe for example a restraint to prevent harm to another child, is becoming too protracted and risky and distressing for student and staff.
- To remove from site excluded students refusing to comply with that exclusion
- To work alongside Social Care in addressing emerging child protection cases

We must apply our experience, knowledge and common sense to our work and make sensible judgements in any other unforeseen circumstance or event that may require intervention or support from the police.

Parents will be informed promptly if their son is likely to be subject to police intervention and given the opportunity to be on-site and accompany and support their child. In the absence of a parent the school should seek to support the student.

Once the police are involved the school places its trust in their judgment and professionalism in tackling issues appropriately but remains a critical friend.

## **On-line safety**

The internet is an essential element in 21<sup>st</sup> century life for education, business and social interaction. The school has a duty to provide children with high quality internet access as part of their learning experience. The purpose of internet use in the school is to equip our young people to use it competently, usefully and safely and to make teaching and learning always good and increasingly outstanding because the internet can make both teaching and learning accessible, innovative, exciting and engaging.

### **Principles for safe use of the internet**

- Pupils will use the internet in school with suitable graded supervision
- Pupils will be specifically supported and informed about the risks and how to stay safe on-line through both PSHE and IT and in an ongoing conversation across the curriculum and community with the staff team.
- The school will provide suitably filtered and monitored access to the internet for pupils (in practice not allowing mobile phone access critical here given the sophistication and ever growing capability of smart phones)\*
- Staff will exercise reasonable and practicable rigour and precaution to ensure that pupils access only appropriate material.
- Any emerging risks and concerns will be shared with DSL who will seek advice from MASH for example staff express concerns about on-line grooming or radicalisation and the team will be mindful of these risks in their daily briefings and debriefings under the Safeguarding prompt.

### **Online activities which are encouraged include:**

- The safe use of the internet by pupils to investigate and research and learn
- To make the curriculum and learning more accessible, engaging and exciting.
- The ongoing and dynamic development of pupils' diverse competence in ever developing ICT skills
- Using the internet to safely stay in touch and make safe and appropriate connections with others.

**Risky and inappropriate on-line activity:** these will require permanent vigilance and sensible professional judgment.

- Accessing pornography
- Accessing sites where violence and harm are portrayed.
- Accessing sites where images and text likely to damage and pervert a young person.
- Accessing sites where extremist views could distort and damage a young person's emerging beliefs and values and consequently behaviours.
- Accessing sites where contact with unknown others is potentially unsafe and there is a risk of grooming
- Accessing sites to purchase and or download items.
- Using IT to post and distribute material that hurts, disrespects and diminishes others.

### **Barley lane operates several additional internet safety measures:**

- A classroom & student on line and internal network activity monitoring system
- IT engineer manages all student computers and actively locks out the ability to import any files, cds / dvds, images etc from exterior sources i.e. media sticks, mobile phones etc
- The school internet is supplied only by DCC proxy server there is no access to the "open internet" allowing the school to use SWGFL internet blocking technology. facilitating control of any inappropriate sites at county and local school level .

*\*The school's pragmatic position on mobile phones is set out in the home school agreement as it allows independent travellers who access school on foot or bike or public transport for their personal safety to have a phone but they must switch it off and not access or use it during the school day.*

## Appropriate use

The proliferation of “technology” computers, laptops, tablets and phones all with internet access and a multiplicity of functions and capabilities create safeguarding risks and challenges for everyone in the school community; what follows is specifically about how the team uses this equipment and capability.

There are available albeit wordy and complex models but it is hard to discern quickly and simply what is expected of people? It seems to us that there are broad principles that can be applied across this technology and its functions and possibilities that keep everyone safe?

## School staff

- Use is clearly and obviously appropriate to school and the work and activities of the school team for example a school camera used to take photos to evidence or celebrate pupil learning.

In contrast a school camera used to take informal shots of children with no clear and valid purpose that are then stored on other equipment.

- Use is reasonable, respectful and inclusive for example parents are alerted and invited to a school open evening via social media.

In contrast a teacher uses their social media account to express extremist and inflammatory views.

- Use is reasonable and logical for example a school laptop downloads a BBC i-player documentary on a credible subject say “radicalisation” and it is age appropriate and used in class.

In contrast a school laptop loaded with box sets of comedies quite clearly for personal use and of no educational value.

- Use is ethical and safe for example sensitive safeguarding information must be held and held securely on a laptop (using and keeping equipment and its contents safe and secure an essential bottom line expectation)

In contrast and quite obviously extreme or violent or pornographic material is accessed and stored

- Personal use of any equipment is readily and easily explicable and safe and also infrequent for example a school phone may have to be used to call home occasionally or a personal email account sometimes accessed out of hours on a school laptop.

In contrast the habitual use of school equipment for personal reasons that cannot be reasonably explained and or justified.

- Staff must consider too the safe and appropriate and responsible use of technology and the internet and social media in their personal lives; for example social media activity should be habitually at the highest level of security and confined to their families, friends, peers and other adults.

In contrast readily accessible accounts and careless use of language or extreme opinions and engaging with students via social media (see our code of conduct) are all clearly unsafe and “inappropriate”.

Throughout it should be wholly possible for the school’s IT and or school’s business manager to conduct unannounced “audits” of use and for any anomalies/concerns to be explored and explained.

It should be inferred then that reasonably where use is not demonstrably appropriate, reasonable, logical, ethical, safe and any personal use is not readily explicable and safe and infrequent competency or conduct will be triggered.

## **Students**

Monitored, supported and guided (and if necessary challenged and restricted) by staff, students:

- Do not need and will not have access to personal phones, laptops, tablets and so on (independent travellers to school will hand in their phones to the office on arrival and students attending college will follow the protocols in those respective institutions)
- They will be guided and supported through PSHE and IT about the risks the internet brings from cyber bullying through internet addiction to grooming and radicalisation.
- Will access the internet freely but usefully and safely on suitably screened and monitored school equipment (see internet safety guidance) and take incrementally greater responsibility for safe choices as they mature.
- Any email or social media activity in school will be limited and monitored and respectful and pertinent to their learning or safe and appropriate social interaction.
- Any activity beyond school that damages the wellbeing and happiness of others via social media, email or text will be dealt with pragmatically in school by supporting children and parents in “blocking” and alerting providers to any cyber bullying but also if such activity spills over into school life we will apply consequences in school.
- Who misrepresent and disrespect and damage staff on-line can expect the school to respond in whatever reasonable and practicable and proportionate way it can and that will include seeking specialist and legal advice and possible legal action.

## **Parents and carers**

- By accepting a place in our school they will support and abide by our home school agreement and the expectations of students set out in this document most notably and pertinently the “no mobile phone/gadget expectation”.
- They will take reasonable and practicable steps to keep their children safe on-line and the school will provide accredited on-line training on internet safety to support parents in this.
- They will not abdicate responsibility and place demands on the school to manage their child’s internet access and activity at home when it is clearly wholly impracticable to do so and it is their responsibility.
- They will take reasonable steps to restrict access and to prevent and to sanction on-line bullying at home.
- Parents and carers who misrepresent and disrespect and damage staff or the school on-line can expect the school to respond in whatever reasonable and practicable and proportionate way it can and that will include seeking specialist and legal advice and possible legal action.

**Managing student risk in our setting\*** :the biggest risks to health and safety in our school are rooted in the complexity and challenge of the student body (peer on peer) and our own inevitable frailties as people and our most important and pressing health and safety work is done to keep them safe

\*The complex and mercurial nature of our young people and the shifting chemistry of their relationships with each other and the sometime turbulence of their lives and the latent quality of unknown and emerging risks in their nature and in their lives make the notion of “dynamic risk assessment” critical to keeping everybody safe.

This is a practicable and reasonable response to the anticipation that risk will be an ever moving target and to have nearly seventy individualised risk assessments not only bureaucratic but unworkable as staff would be overloaded with information and unable to act safely and decisively.

Student Risk	Managing that risk safely
<p>The student body by its nature as “stated” SEMH contains and presents a whole range of known and unknown (latent risk) and also emerging and shifting risks because being multiply and diversely risky is a core and common feature of the children and young people in our care</p> <p>There is also a risky “chemistry” in their interactions and relationships centrally with each other and all those they encounter from teachers through visiting professionals to delivery drivers and the neighbours....</p> <p>These risks are dynamic they shift and slide, rise and fall constantly in all the children as so many factors home and school can and do impact upon them</p> <p>Such potential for risk and difficulty can seem overwhelming and unmanageable; how can we, how should we respond?</p>	<p><b>Culture and ethos: bringing the right values and attitudes to our work.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand and apply the notion of personal responsibility for maintaining one’s own and the health and safety of others.</li> <li>• Understand too that we can only do what is reasonable and practicable about things we can reasonably anticipate.</li> <li>• A culture of no blame and one also where risk and its management are spoken of freely and frequently is essential</li> <li>• The application of <b>dynamic risk assessment is critical</b>; we are ever alert to emerging risk and take reasonable steps to manage risks in that context of personal responsibility</li> <li>• Particular to our own school culture is the benchmarking against what we would want for our own children that is the highest levels of care and vigilance and protecting against becoming institutionalised and desensitized.</li> <li>• A robust and relentless culture of praise, affirmation, compassion and forgiveness that promotes good and therefore less risky behaviours in the children and young people.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rhythm and routine: making sure the framework and prompts for sharing risk and reflecting and acting are in place.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The daily accessing of the dedicated safeguarding email account as risks emerge and our responses set out...</li> <li>• The daily ritual of our morning briefing and afternoon debriefing sessions each morning Tue-Thu and Mondays and Fridays for our more developed operational reflection and planning and the sharing of best practice respectively...</li> <li>• ... where every day the set agenda triggers sharing and discussion and plans for the safety and wellbeing of the children and the immediate operational risks and challenges plus any emerging burning issues: <b>what do we need to do reliably well, differently or better today?</b></li> <li>• Whilst logistically more awkward because of staff working patterns we can and do regroup at the end of the day to share, reflect and plan and will continue to do so.</li> <li>• We have all accessed e-mail, text and mobile messages to share also and the conventional boundaries of the working day should not restrict our sharing and in practice we all often share significant insights, anxieties or practical operational information after the school day and then coalesce them at the following morning’s briefing</li> </ul> <p><b>A way of working: once the day begins the dynamic and shifting and surprising nature of our work needs perpetual thinking about and constant intelligent tweaking.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once the working day begins we must be rigorous in our professional housekeeping and if the conventional work-place deals with emerging trip hazards then we must be alive to who steps off a taxi in a risky frame of mind intent on dispute or how events and consequent tensions and risks unfold as the day progresses and so our working day begins and continues as the children are the risk as is our capacity for frailty and poor judgment so we must be vigilant about both.</li> <li>• The “walkabout” system is critical with staff offering not just practical help but a reference point for sharing with the nominated in-charge a member of the SLT there specifically to provide the capacity to absorb, think about and act on emerging risk and difficulty from small operational tweaks to more significant interventions.</li> <li>• Related to this is the massive significance always of putting children and their supervision first, no trips to make tea no brief stop-overs at the staff room as it is exactly in these nooks and crannies of staff frailty and absence that the student can do most mischief and harm and is most at risk.</li> <li>• Being prompt, punctual and visible; where we should be, when we should be, all these are essential to safety in our setting as are simple practical things like having a charged walkie-talkie on the right frequency, a school mobile that is similarly charged and a brain switched to super vigilance mode that expresses and shares emerging risk freely</li> <li>• If the daily morning briefings with their set agenda and prompts for risk awareness and management provide structured talking and sharing and action then once the day starts our established, ongoing and multiple and diverse professional conversations are critical and it is in habitually, obsessively and in time instinctively sharing with each other every significant nuance of the children’s behaviours, state of mind and physical movements that we keep everybody safe.</li> </ul>

