Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy



Gecko Community

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1. Legislation / Guidance that informs this document

- Children Act (Gov. UK 1989)
- Children Act (Gov. UK 2004)
- General Data Protection Regulation - GDPR (May 2018)
- Human Rights Act (Gov. UK 1998)
- Education Act (Gov. UK 2002)
- Education and Skills Act (Gov. UK 2008)
- Sexual Offences Act (Abuse of Trust) (Gov. UK 2003)
- Female Genital Mutilation Act (Gov. UK 2003)
- Information Sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children,

young people, parents and carers (Gov.UK July 2018)

● Counter-terrorism and Security Act (Gov.UK 2015)

● Keeping Children Safe in Education - KCSiE (Gov.UK Sept 2026)

● Revised Prevent Duty Advice for Schools (Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales Gov.UK (July 2015)

● Children Missing Education (Gov.UK Sept 2016)

● Teacher misconduct: the prohibition of teachers (Gov.UK October 2015) ● Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (Gov.UK July 2018)

- Keeping children safe in Education 2026
- Care Resolution Protocol https://www.wiltshirescb.org.uk/news/wscb-case-resolution-protocol-18/

NB Throughout this policy KCSiE is dated as September 2026.

2. Other Gecko Community policies to be read in conjunction with this one

- Safer Recruitment
- Whistleblowing
- Esafety
- Attendance
- Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Staff
- Wellbeing
- Behaviour for Learning
- Anti-Bullying
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Data Protection
- Missing Students

3. Statement of Intent

Gecko Community is committed to meeting all legislative requirements with regard to 'keeping children safe' and complying with all relevant guidance and, therefore, ensuring that all Gecko Community students are safe at all times, both physically and emotionally.

Gecko Community staff will always consider the 'best interests of the child' in all areas of practice. We will consult with child protection leads where necessary and check in after lessons.

It is our statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. We work to ensure that the practice of all staff is of the very highest standard, and that, should there be concerns regarding a student's welfare or safety as a result of events in their home or their community, staff feel confident as to how to respond to those concerns. Staff are all safeguarding trained and specialism trained in order to best protect the social and emotional health of our students. All staff are on the DBS update service.

Further we seek to ensure that no student is exposed to materials or persons that are likely to lead to that young person becoming radicalised. Gecko Community is clear that radical / extreme views may come from a range of sources: staff aim to protect Gecko Community students from any source that encourages extreme views, acts of violence or destruction.

Child Protection is the legal responsibility of every individual who works for Gecko Community

4. Introduction

The Gecko Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) fully recognises the responsibility it has under section 157/175 of the Education Act 2002 to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. We also are fully aware and follow the 2026 Keeping Children Safe in Education guidelines.

This responsibility is more fully explained in the statutory guidance for schools and colleges Keeping Children Safe in Education, updated September 2026. We will ensure that all staff are made aware of their duties and responsibilities under part one of this document.

Safeguarding Information for All Staff

- Staff will be required to read ,at least **Part One** of **Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2026** along with 'Annex A' of that document, then sign to say that they have read, understood and will implement their safeguarding responsibilities.This will be recorded on a document saved in the Policies folder.
- Emphasis on a child-centred approach and coordinated multi-agency working.
- Staff must know how to identify concerns, share information, and act promptly.

Staff must also read:

- Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children, July 2026, Working together to safeguard children 2026
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for Practitioners, March 2015.Stat guidance template
- Gecko Community's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing Policy.

Through their day-to-day contact with students and direct work with families all Gecko Community staff have a responsibility to:

- identify concerns early to prevent them from escalating;
- provide a safe environment in which children can learn;
- identify children who may benefit from early help;
- know what to do if a child tells them s/he is being abused or neglected;
- follow the referral process if they have a concern.
- Keep Safeguarding Lead aware of concerns, as soon as they arise and not attempt to handle them without speaking to the Deputy Safeguarding Lead, Mel Duncan.

This policy sets out how managers at Gecko Community will discharge their statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are provided for by the CIO. The policy applies to all staff, paid and unpaid, working anywhere within the organisation, including the Executive Team.

The policy is consistent with Somerset and BANES' Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB); Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership procedures as well as Wiltshire Safeguarding protocol.

There are four main elements to the policy:

PREVENTION through the teaching and pastoral support offered to students and the creation and maintenance of a whole school protective ethos.

PROCEDURES for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse. The definitions of the four categories of abuse are attached (see appendix A).

SUPPORTING CHILDREN particularly those who may have been abused or witnessed violence towards others, or those who have been diagnosed with PSTD.

PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN Processes are followed to ensure that all staff engaged to work for Gecko Community are 'suitable' for the task ie they pose no threat to the welfare, health or safety of young people referred to the organisation.

This policy is available to parents on request and is posted on the CIO's website. It is only available in English (language), but should a parent or carer require linguistic support to access the policy, the DSL will liaise with the local authority to ensure appropriate support is made available.

5. Prevention

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to protect children.

The organisation will therefore:

- establish and maintain an environment where children feel safe in both the real and the virtual world - all students are encouraged to talk openly and are listened to;
- ensure children know that there are adults in the organisation that they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate;
- included in the activities and opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse both in the real and the virtual world;
- support students in developing their social confidence by permitting contact between students, such as through messaging and playing online games, outside of Gecko time via Gecko email that is monitored and can be accessed immediately and by the DSL.
- allow students to contact staff members outside of Geckol hours, such as through online games, which is also monitored by the DSL.
- ensure all students know who to turn to for help should they need it;
- include in the curriculum material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to child care and parenting skills;
- ensure that specific guidance regarding safeguarding, including online safety is included within PSHE (personal, social and health education) and RSE (relationships and sex education ... mandatory from September 2020).
- Support individual needs and interests in order to allow students to feel safe and heard
- Allow students to attend through a medium they feel safe in, be it typing, video, or video without camera.

The teaching of 'online safety' will run throughout the work of all staff through the curriculum offered and advice to and ongoing conversations with students are the best ways to make use of all the benefits of technology without placing themselves at risk of harm.

Through appropriate training the organisation will ensure that all staff are aware of the need to recognise when children are in need or at risk, are able to distinguish between the two categories,and understand what course of action should be taken when a child is deemed to come into either category. Staff liaise with each other, students, parents and Safe Guarding Lead weekly.

6. CIN (child in need)

“If staff members have any concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger), they will need to decide what action to take. Where possible, there should be a conversation with the designated safeguarding lead to agree a course of action, although any staff member can make a referral to children’s social care. Other options could include referral to specialist services or early help services and should be made in accordance with the referral threshold set by the Local Safeguarding Children Board”.

7. Child at Risk

If a child is deemed to be at risk of *immediate* harm*,* then the DSL must be notified and s/he must make an immediate referral to social care or to the police: should the DSL not be immediately available, the person aware of the situation must make the referral.

8. Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2026, definitions:

A child in need:

“is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989”.

Child at Risk:

A child at risk is one who is in immediate danger of harm. In some examples it may be that we believe a student is about to harm a third party and would follow the protocol of a child at risk, outlined above.

Neglected children:

The Graded Care Profile 2(GCP2) by the NSPCC and used nationally guides our protocol for identifying a child at risk.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026) guidance:

“All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children’s social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments”.

There is additional information about children who may especially benefit from early help...

“Any child may benefit from early help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan);

- is a young carer;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or home;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse; and/or
- has returned home to their family from care
- Is experiencing multiple suspensions or at risk of permanent exclusion;
- Is in alternative Provision and Pupil Referral Units;
- Has a parent or carer in custody.

Options include:

- managing any support for the child internally via the school or college's own pastoral support processes;
- an early help assessment;
- a referral for statutory services, for example as the child is in need or suffering or likely to suffer harm."

- Elective Home Education (EHE)

  Where a child has an EHCP the local authority will need to review the plan whilst working closely with parents if parents or carers are considering removing their child from the school to educate them at home.

Children who are absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeated occasions.

Prevention of Child on Child Abuse

We recognise that Child on Child abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This can include, but is not limited to:

- bullying, (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying),
- discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other prejudice based incidents,
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise cousin physical harm (this may include an online lament which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- serious physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon,
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual

harassment, which may be stand alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse

- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as focusing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes
- Upskirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

All forms of child on child abuse are unacceptable and will be taken seriously. The organisation will therefore:

- create a protective ethos in which peer on peer abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment will not be tolerated (NB not being tolerated does not imply that perpetrators will be punished or excluded, rather the nil tolerance will be exemplified as described within Gecko Community's 'Behaviour for Learning' policy);
- provide training for staff about recognising and responding to peer on peer abuse, including raising awareness of the gendered nature of peer abuse, with girls more likely to be victims and boys perpetrators;
- ensure that staff do not dismiss instances of peer on peer abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment as an inevitable part of growing up;
- provisions within the Equality Act allow Gecko to take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils or students with certain protected characteristics in order to meet their specific need. Gecko could, for example, consider taking positive action to support girls if there was evidence they were being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment. There is also a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and young people.
- include within the curriculum, information and materials that support children in keeping themselves safe from abuse, including abuse from their peers and online;
- provide high quality relationship and sex education (RSE), including teaching about consent;
- ensure that staff members follow the procedures outlined in this policy when they become aware of peer on peer abuse.

Where instances of child on child abuse occur, staff will ensure that both the child(ren) seen as victim(s) and those seen as perpetrators will receive support. As per Gecko Community's Anti-Bullying and Behaviour for Learning policies, staff will seek to reach mutually beneficial outcomes through conflict resolution procedures enabling all parties to modify their behaviour and to contribute positively to the Gecko community.

Filtering and Monitoring

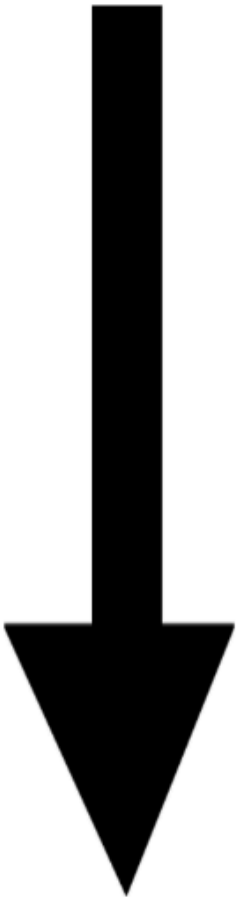
The designated safeguarding lead should take lead responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place. This includes:

- identifying and assigning roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems.
- reviewing filtering and monitoring provision at least annually
- block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teach and learning
- have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet Gecko's safeguarding needs.

9. Procedures

Gecko Community's lead for safeguarding and child protection is: Emily Hartley-Heaven emily.hartley-heaven@geckocommunity.org.uk

Deputy Lead is Mel Duncan mel.duncan@geckocommunity.org.uk



Safeguarding flowchart

- If someone's life is in danger, call 999.

The student's addresses are in each student's folder. On their referral form.

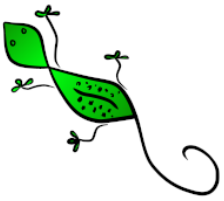
- If you have a concern that is urgent - ring Emily on 07753 191991.
- If she doesn't pick up, then call Mel on 07895 265452. If she doesn't pick up, call Piers on 07717 334197.

- If you have a concern that is not urgent -

Message Emily by email/chat/text and say you have a safeguarding concern and need to Meet

OR

Write on the Concern form (a new one - make a copy) and message Emily by email/chat/text to say you have filled in a new form



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Concern Form Part A

Part A is to be completed by the adult who first has a concern and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay. .
Part B is to be completed by the DSL

Time and date:
Student's name:
Staff writing report, name and role:
Details of event: (Use the body- map to show any marks or injuries.)

Concern Form Part B

To be completed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (D/DSL)

Name of D/DSL reviewing the concern					
Safeguarding support already in place Tick and add name where known at time of report					
None	**ESA or Support Assessment**	**Child in Need**	**Child Protection Plan**	**Looked After**	**Previous social care involvement**
Name and role of allocated worker					
Data analysis: if the concern relates to child on child abuse, state which:	*This includes any reports and concerns, including those outside the school and online:* ● bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying) ● abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers ● physical abuse ● sexual violence ● verbal abuse – sexual comments			● sexual harassment – in person, online ● causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent – coercive behaviour ● consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos ● upskirting ● initiation/hazing type violence and rituals ● sexualised behaviour	

Name of person taking actions	**Actions/next steps** **Please detail conversation and rationale for decisions – include whether concerns were or were not shared with parents/carers, children's services or another agency and if not outline reasons why.**	**Date of action**

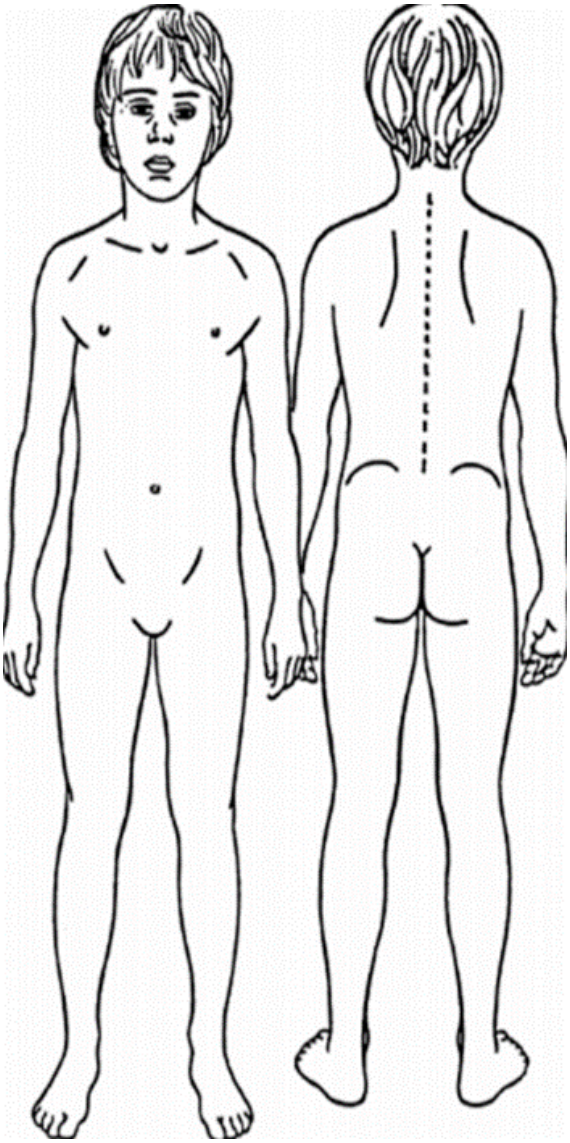
What would the child like to happen next?

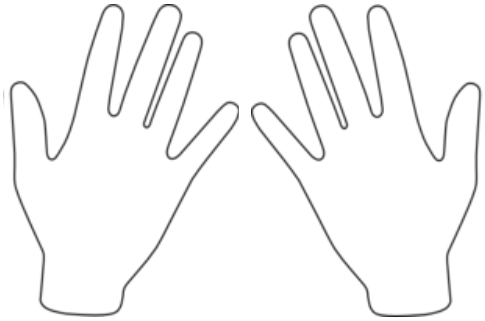
Has the child's wishes been considered when deciding action to be taken?	Yes	No
If no, please indicate why not **A summary of actions must be shared with the person who raised the concern**		

Summary of action discussion - please include any 'gut feeling elements' in the discussion and also the potential impact on the child.		**Date**	

If actions agreed **Signature of person (overleaf) who raised the concern**		
If actions *not* agreed **A file note added to the child's file with a summary of discussion and the outcome/s.** **Signature of person who raised the concern overleaf**	**File note document number**	

Body Map





Gecko Community staff will work with each relevant LSCB and follow procedures required by them. We work alongside several service providers as we are now national education providers.

Executive Team of the CIO will:

- appoint a senior member of staff, from the Executive Team of Gecko Community, to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL);
- ensure that the DSL takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection... whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, (Designated Personnel, DP), the lead responsibility for child protection remains with the DSL and cannot

be delegated;

● ensure that the roles of DSL and DP are explicit in the role holders' job descriptions;

● ensure that the DSL has the appropriate status and authority within Gecko to carry out the duties of the post;

● give the DSL the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters (see Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2026, Annex B);

● ensure that the DSL and deputies have undertaken the required training and that this training is updated **at least every two years**;

● ensure that in addition to the formal training set out above, the DSL and DPs refresh their knowledge and skills (eg via bulletins, meetings or further reading) **at least annually**;

● ensure that the DSL has access to peer support;

● ensure that every member of staff, paid or unpaid, and the members of the Executive Team know(s) who the designated personnel are and the procedures for passing on concerns - this will be a key element of our induction process;

● ensure that the DSL or DP are available (during Gecko hours, during term-time) to discuss any safeguarding concerns - should there be some unavoidable reason (eg multiple illness) why there is not a trained person on site, staff should contact the head office who will ensure that a person trained to DSL level makes contact with the appropriate member of staff;

● ensure that all staff are aware that they may make direct contact with the appropriate LSCB;

● nominate an member from the Executive Team for safeguarding and child protection and ensure that person undertakes appropriate training,

● ensure every member of staff and the Executive Team knows:

    ○ the name of the designated person/s and their role;

    ○ how to identify the signs of abuse and neglect;

    ○ how to pass on and record concerns about a student;

    ○ that they have an individual responsibility to be alert to the signs and

    indicators of abuse and for referring child protection concerns to the DSL/DP;

    ○ that they have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn;

    ○ where to find the inter – agency procedures on the relevant LSCB website;

    ○ their role in the early help process;

    ○ the process for making referrals to children's social care;

● ensure all staff members undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction... this will

include reading, and signing to say they have read, understood and will implement the requirements of the documents listed on page 2 of this policy;

● ensure that staff training is regularly updated and that, in addition to this training, all staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates as required **but at least annually**;

● ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies (NB staff will be directed to guidance in paragraph 82, section 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 should they feel that any concerns they have have not been appropriately responded to, this includes an updated link to an NSPCC helpline);

● ensure that parents / carers are informed of the responsibility placed on Gecko staff in relation to child protection by setting out these duties on the website and informing the parents / carers during initial interviews;

In any situation wherein any student is educated 'off site', Gecko Community *and the provider will have clear procedures about managing safeguarding concerns between them. Written confirmation that the alternative provider has carried out appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working at the establishment will be sought by Gecko Community.*

Liaison with Other Agencies

As described in Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026, there are revised requirements for multi-agency working. "Schools and colleges and Alternative Provisions have a pivotal role to play in multi agency safeguarding arrangements. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that the school, college and Alternative Provisions contribute to multi.agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children. It is especially important that schools, colleges and Alternative Provisions understand their role in the new safeguarding partner arrangements."

New safeguarding partners and child death review partner arrangements are to be in place by 29 September 2019. Locally, the three safeguarding partners (the local authority; a clinical commissioning group for an area within the local authority; and the chief officer of police for a police area in the local authority area) will make arrangements to work together with appropriate relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs.

The three safeguarding partners have a shared and equal duty to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. To fulfill this role they must set out how they will work together and with any relevant agencies. Relevant agencies are those organisations and agencies whose involvement the three safeguarding partners consider may be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children with regard to local need. The three safeguarding partners must set out in their published arrangements which organisations and agencies they will be working with and the expectations placed on any agencies and organisations by the new arrangements.

The DSL will ensure that they are fully conversant with the plans of the new safeguarding partners.

Gecko Community will:

● work to develop effective links with relevant services to promote the safety and welfare of all students;

● co-operate as required, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children, July 2018, with key agencies in their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and providing written reports at child protection conferences and core groups;

Missing Children:

- Staff at Gecko Community teach children who are usually no longer in the classroom setting. Some may be on roll, others are withdrawn or EOTAS. It is therefore vital that we are aware of these student's whereabouts and action immediately if they do not attend or appear missing.

  Staff guidelines when sessions are missed:

- Email and message on chats the student before sessions start as a first warning
- If a student does not arrive to session:
- After 10 minutes call parents to alert them that their child is not in session, email as well.
- If a reason is not given or there is no response, a follow up call is then made and an email sent.
- Registers are taken for all sessions and gaps in attendance investigated by Safeguarding Lead Emily Hartely-Heaven.
- Staff to alert Emily Hartley-Heaven if patterns of absence are concerning or out of character for students
- notify the relevant Social Care Unit immediately if:

  ❏ it should decide to withdraw placement at Gecko for a student who is subject to a child protection plan (whether fixed term or permanently);

  ❏ there is an unexplained absence of a student who is subject to a child protection plan;

  ❏ there is any change in circumstances to a student who is subject to a child protection plan.

● ensure that, when a student who is subject to a child protection plan moves to another provider, information is transferred to the new provider immediately. The DSL will also ensure that all involved agencies and the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LCSB) and Wiltshire SVPP are informed (where relevant).

Record Keeping

Gecko Community will:

- keep clear, detailed, accurate, written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Social Care immediately.
- these records will be held on the secure Gecko Community Google account
- ensure all relevant child protection records are sent to the receiving school or establishment when a student moves schools in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2026, and the 'Education Child Protection Record Keeping Guidance' - the DSL will consider whether it would be appropriate to share information with the new school/college in advance of a child leaving;
- make parents/carers aware that such records exist except where to do so would place the child at risk of harm;
- ensure all actions and decisions are led by what is considered to be in the ***best interests of the child.***

Confidentiality and information sharing

The General Data Protection Regulation, 2018, does not prevent Gecko staff from

sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

Gecko Community will:

- ensure staff and volunteers adhere to confidentiality protocols and that information is shared appropriately;
- ensure staff are aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children (as set out in Information Sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, July 2018);
- ensure that if a member of staff receives a Subject Access Request (under the GDPR 2018) from a student or parent, they will refer the request to the DSL or a member of the Executive Team;
- ensure staff are clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- disclose information about a student to other members of staff on a 'need to know' basis.
- aim to gain consent to share information and be mindful of situations where to do so would place a child at increased risk of harm - information may be shared without consent if a person believes that there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner;
- record when decisions are made to share or withhold information, who information has been shared with and why (see Working Together to Safeguard Children, July 2018);

● seek advice about confidentiality from outside agencies if required (see Information Sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, July 2018).

Communication with Parents/Carers

Gecko Community will:

● ensure that parents/carers are informed of the responsibility placed on Gecko Community and staff in relation to child protection by setting out its duties on the organisation's website;

● undertake appropriate discussion with parents/carers prior to involvement of another agency, unless the circumstances preclude this action;

● seek advice from Social Care if Gecko Community believes that notifying parents could increase the risk of harm to the child - particular circumstances where parents **may not** be informed include any disclosure of sexual abuse or physical abuse where the child has an injury;

● record what discussions have taken place with parents or if a decision has been made not to discuss it with parents and record the reasons why - records may subsequently be disclosable to relevant partner agencies if child protection proceedings commence.

Dealing with Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children

Gecko Community recognises that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. Sexual violence may include rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault. Sexual harassment refers to 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature', such as sexual comments, sexual taunting, upskirting or physical behaviour such as deliberately brushing against someone. Online sexual harassment may include non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos,making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments and messages, and sexual exploitation, coercion and threats.

Gecko Community will:

● be clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment will not be tolerated;

● provide training for staff on how to manage a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment;

● make decisions on a case-by-case basis;

● reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, offer appropriate support and take the wishes of the victim into account when making decisions;

● implement measures to keep the victim, alleged perpetrator and, if necessary, other children and staff members, safe;

● record any risk assessments and keep them under review;

● give consideration to the welfare of the victim(s) and perpetrator(s) in these situations;

● liaise closely with external agencies, including police and social care, when required.

Further guidance can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education - September 2026, Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges, May 2018, and Sexting in schools and colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people published by the UK

Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS).

10. Supporting Children

Gecko Community recognises that **any** child may be subject to abuse and neglect. Gecko Community staff must support all children by:

- providing curricular opportunities to encourage positive self-esteem and self-efficacy;
- creating an ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive and safe environment and values the whole community;
- applying Gecko Community's Behaviour for Learning policy effectively - staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the student's sense of self-worth;
- ensuring that all students know that some behaviours are unacceptable, hence not tolerated, but that they will always be treated respectfully by staff regardless of their behaviour;
- liaising with other agencies that support young people such as Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Sexual Behaviour Services or early help teams;
- developing productive and supportive relationships with parents/carers.

Gecko Community recognises that **any** child may benefit from early help, but staff are encouraged to consider the wider environmental factors present in a child's life which could pose a threat to their welfare or safety (contextual safeguarding). Staff are required to be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for the following 'categories' of young people.

Children with Disabilities, Additional Needs or Special Educational Needs

Gecko Community recognises that, statistically, children with additional needs, special educational needs, emotional and behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. Staff will be encouraged to be particularly aware of the likelihood of abuse in the lives of these children.

As part of the PSHE and RSE curriculum staff will teach children personal safety skills commensurate with their age, ability and needs. Children will be taught personal safety skills such as 'telling' and who to tell, good and bad touches and how to manage risk. The content of lessons will be shared with parents/carers so that these skills can be supported at home.

Gecko Community is an Autism and Neurodivergent specialist provider. Therefore Gecko Community all undertake specialist training in Autism by Happy Faces and The Autistic Advocate, Kieran Rose. All new staff attended The Inside of Autism training in 2021 with another session booked for staff starting 2022. More information can be found here: http://theautisticadvocate.com

Young Carers

Gecko Community recognises that children who are living in a home environment which requires them to act as a young carer for a family member or a friend who is ill, disabled or misuses drugs or alcohol can increase their vulnerability and that they may need additional support and protection.

Staff will seek to identify young carers and offer additional support internally. They will liaise with external agencies as appropriate and refer to Social Care if such referral appears appropriate / supportive.

Children at Risk of Criminal Exploitation

Criminal exploitation of children is a form of abuse. It may take many forms, but invariably involves adults or other children encouraging / forcing / bribing children to engage in criminal activity on their behalf e.g. drug networks or gangs exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas. Exploitation can occur even if the activity appears to be consensual.

Staff will be trained to be aware of child criminal exploitation to include developments in 'County Lines' activity, and will follow the procedures outlined in this policy if concerns of criminal exploitation arise.

The DSL will complete the LSCB Child Exploitation Checklist and refer to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) if there is a concern that a young person may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

Gecko Community recognises that young people who go missing can be at increased risk of child criminal exploitation and/or trafficking and has procedures in place to ensure appropriate response to children and young people who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions (see below). Children Frequently Missing Education

When a child 'goes missing', particularly repeatedly, that should act as a warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities including abuse, neglect, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, and risk of FGM (female genital mutilation) or forced marriage. Staff are trained to recognise signs of these factors.

Gecko Community monitors attendance of individual students closely, as outlined in its Attendance Policy, and analyses patterns of absence to aid early identification of concerning patterns of absence.

Gecko Community aims to hold more than one emergency contact for each student to provide additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a child missing education is identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

When a child is missing from education, Gecko Community follows Children Missing Education guidance. Gecko Community will inform the Education Welfare Service and Social Care if a missing child is subject to a Child Protection Plan or there have been ongoing concerns.

Fabricated / Induced Illness (FII)

FII is a rare form of child abuse. It occurs when a parent or carer, exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the child.and understands that it is a form of child abuse. Gecko Community will:

- ensure that the designated safeguarding lead is trained to recognise and respond appropriately should suspicions arise, no matter how far-fetched they appear;
- promote awareness of FII through training and access to resources;
- ensure that the signs and indicators are known and recognised by staff and that unexplained absences are recorded and explored further;

● ensure that, where appropriate, pupils are encouraged to seek help and support about concerns they may have;

● ensure that all staff are aware that any suspicions should be reported to the designated safeguarding lead;

● understand that sharing information with parents or carers may not be appropriate and ensure that decisions of this nature are made by Children's Social Care or the police.

Children Misusing Drugs or Alcohol

The discovery that a young person is misusing legal or illegal substances or reports of their substance misuse are not necessarily sufficient of itself to initiate child protection proceedings, but Gecko Community will consider such action when there is evidence or reasonable cause to:

- believe the young person's substance misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual abuse;
- believe the young person's substance related behaviour is a result of abuse or pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults;
- or where:
- the misuse is suspected of being linked to parent/carer substance misuse;
- the misuse indicates an urgent health or safeguarding concern;
- the child is perceived to be at risk of harm through any substance associated with criminality.

Children at Risk of Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Sexual exploitation can take many different forms from a seemingly 'consensual' relationship to serious organised crime involving gangs and groups. Potential indicators of sexual exploitation will be addressed within staff training, including raising awareness with staff that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not show any external signs of abuse and may not recognise it as abuse. Staff will follow the procedures outlined in this policy if concerns of child sexual exploitation arise.

The DSL will complete the LSCB Child Exploitation Checklist and refer to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) if there is a concern that a young person may be at risk of sexual exploitation.

Young people who go missing can be at increased risk of sexual exploitation, hence Gecko Community has procedures in place (described above) to ensure appropriate response to children and young people who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions.

Children Living with Substance Misusing Parents/Carers

Misuse of drugs and/or alcohol is strongly associated with significant harm to

children, especially when combined with other features such as domestic violence. Should staff become aware that any of the following factors are present:

- use of the family resources to finance the parent's / parents' dependency, characterised by inadequate food, heat and clothing for the children;
- exposure of the young person to unsuitable caregivers or visitors eg customers or dealers;
- the effects of alcohol on parents/carers leading to an inappropriate display of sexual and/or aggressive behaviour;
- drug and / or alcohol use by parents/carers leading to emotional unavailability, irrational behaviour and reduced parental vigilance;
- disturbed moods on the part of parents/carers as a result of withdrawal symptoms or dependency;
- unsafe storage of drugs and/or alcohol or injecting equipment in the home;
- drugs and/or alcohol having an adverse impact on the growth and development of an unborn child then referral will be made to the

  appropriate LSCB.

Children Living with Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is defined as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional.

Where there is domestic abuse in a family, the children will always be affected; the longer the violence continues, the greater the risk of significant and enduring harm, which they may carry with them into their adult life and relationships. Domestic abuse can also affect children in their personal relationships as well as in the context of home life.

Staff will be trained to be vigilant to signs of domestic abuse and will always refer to appropriate agencies should they consider that there is evidence of such abuse taking

place. The DSL will either engage in specific training regarding domestic abuse or ensure another member of staff is appropriately trained.

Gecko Community will vigilantly monitor the welfare of children living in domestic abuse households, offer support to them and contribute to any Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) safety plan as required.

Children at risk of 'Honour- Based' Violence (HBV) including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage

The term 'honour-based' violence encompasses incidents which have been committed to protect or 'defend the honour' of a family and/or community, including breast ironing,female

genital mutilation and forced marriage. It is a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats of another form or coercion is not used. As with existing forced marriage law, this applied to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

DSLs will ensure that all staff are made aware of the possible signs and indicators that may alert them to the possibility of HBV through training. Staff are required to treat all forms of HBV as abuse and follow appropriate procedures.

FGM is a procedure involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. FGM is illegal in the UK. Where there is any indication that a child is at risk of FGM, or where FGM is suspected to have been carried out, staff will take action in accordance with the child protection procedures outlined in this policy. Staff will report concerns to the DSL, who will make appropriate and timely referrals to Social Care. In such cases parents will not be informed before advice is sought and the case will still be referred to Social Care even if it is against the student's wishes.

In accordance with the Female Genital Mutilation Act, it is a statutory duty for teachers in England and Wales to report 'known' cases of FGM in children (ie those under the age of 18) to the police. Teachers should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve Social Care as appropriate, but the teacher will personally report to the police that they believe that an act of FGM has been carried out.

Children 'looked after' by the local authority

Gecko Community recognises that looked after children may be more vulnerable to abusive behaviour from others and may have additional needs resulting from their life experiences. Gecko Community will liaise with local authority virtual schools for looked after children and work with local authority staff to ensure children are supported and 'kept safe' wherever possible. Gecko Community will work with carers as they would

with all parents to ensure 'wrap around' support.

Children who have returned home to their family from care

Gecko Community recognises that a previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable. Gecko Community will vigilantly monitor the welfare of previously looked after children, keep records and notify Social Care as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board 'Inter - Agency Procedures.'

Children showing signs of Abuse and/or Neglect

Abuse or neglect will almost certainly have an adverse impact on those children who experience it. This may last into adulthood unless there is appropriate intervention and support. School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Children who have experienced abuse or neglect may subsequently behave in ways that are challenging and defiant or passive and withdrawn. Gecko Community recognises that children may develop abusive behaviours and that these children may need to be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

The organisation will provide training for staff to ensure that they have the skills to identify and report cases, or suspected cases, of abuse in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy. The definitions of the four categories of abuse are given in appendix A of this policy.

Children at Risk of Radicalisation

Gecko Community recognises that children may be vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation and that protecting children from this risk forms part of the organisation's safeguarding response.

Gecko Community management will ensure that all DSLs and safeguarding team have undertaken Prevent awareness training and that all staff receive training about their Prevent duty.

Through appropriate training we will ensure that staff are alert to changes in children's behavior which could indicate they need help or protection. Concerns that a child is at risk of radicalisation must be referred to the DSL in the usual way. If appropriate, the DSL will make a Channel referral.

Further information is available in The Prevent Duty, Departmental Advice for Schools and Childcare Providers, June 2015, and Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales, July 2015.

Privately Fostered Children

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation for 28 days or more by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative.

Gecko Community (through the DSL) will follow the mandatory duty to inform the local authority of any 'Private Fostering' arrangements.

Children who have Family Members in Prison

Gecko Community is committed to supporting children and young people who have a parent or close relative in prison and will work with the family to find the best ways of supporting the child.

Children with family members in prison are usually at significant risk of poverty, stigma, isolation, poor mental health and poor attendance.

Gecko Community will treat information shared by the family in confidence and it will be shared on a 'need to know' basis.

Gecko Community will work with the family and the child to minimise the risk of the child not achieving their full potential.

11. Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children

Gecko Community will operate safer recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken according to part three of Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026 . Gecko Community has a separate Safe Recruitment policy that should be read in conjunction with this policy and provides greater detail regarding the organisation's commitment to ensuring that no one working for the organisation poses any threat whatsoever to the welfare of its students.

All interviewing panels will include at least one person who has undertaken up to date safe recruitment training, and all recruitment processes will be overseen by an appropriately trained member of staff.

During recruitment, as part of the shortlisting process Gecko should consider carrying out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which Gecko might want to explore with the applicant at interview. Gecko should inform shortlisted candidates that online searches may be done as part of due diligence checks.

The following members of staff have undertaken safer recruitment training:

Emily Hartley-Heaven

Any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff will be reported straight away to a member of the Executive Team. In cases where a member of the Executive Team is the subject of an allegation, it will be reported to a different member of the Executive Team. Gecko Community will subsequently follow the procedures set out in part four of Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2026.

Gecko Community will consult with the 'Local Authority Named Senior Officer' in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and adhere to the relevant procedures set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2026.

The Local Authority Named Senior Officer will liaise with the Designated Officer for Allegations (DoFA) ensuring that all allegations are reported to the LADO within one working day. Following consultation with the LADO, the Local Authority Named Senior Officer will advise on all further action to be taken.

As required by Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2026 if an allegation is made against anyone working at Gecko Community, every effort will be made to eradicate all unnecessary delays. Gecko Community will not undertake its own investigations of allegations without prior consultation with the LADO(s), or in the most serious cases, the police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations. In borderline cases, discussions with the LADO(s) can be held informally and without naming the school or individual.

We will report promptly to the DBS any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services we have ceased to use because their practice has met the DBS referral criteria i.e. they have caused harm or posed a risk of harm to a child.

As detailed in Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2026 'ceasing to use a person's services' includes: dismissal; non-renewal of a fixed-term contract; no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency; terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee; no longer using staff employed by contractors; no longer using volunteers; resignation; and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering. Those staff compiling reports will seek to include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible. Failure to make a report when required constitutes an offense. 'Compromise agreements' cannot be used to prevent a referral being made to the DBS when it is legally required, nor can an individual's refusal to cooperate with an investigation.

Gecko Community will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff is no longer employed at Gecko and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.

Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is neither mandatory, nor automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that

children are protected.

It is recognised that a child may make an allegation against an innocent party, possibly because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen. Although all allegations will be rigorously investigated, and staff may be suspended during those investigations, the principle of innocence until guilt is proven remains paramount.

Gecko Community will ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with students and parents/carers as advised within the organisation's Code of Conduct. As part of the induction process, all staff will receive guidance about how to create appropriate professional boundaries (in both the real and virtual world) with all children.

The DSL will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with students aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings being taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of Position of Trust).

The DSL will further ensure that all communication between students and adults, by whatever method, is transparent, takes place within clear and explicit professional boundaries and is open to scrutiny.

12: Appendix A: Four categories of abuse

Physical Abuse - may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

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

It may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.

It may involve the neglect of or lack of responsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

It also includes parents or carers failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment;
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-givers;
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Emotional Abuse - is persistent emotional maltreatment so as to cause severe and adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to a child that they are:

- worthless,
- unloved,
- inadequate,

- valued only insofar as they meet another person's needs.

It may include:

- not giving the child opportunities to express their views;
- deliberately silencing them;
- 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- Gaslighting

It may also feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children including:

- interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability;
- overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning;
- preventing participation in normal social interaction.

It may involve:

- seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;
- serious bullying (including cyberbullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger;
- the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment although it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse – involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

This may involve:

- physical contact including assault by penetration (eg rape or oral sex); ● non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing;
- non-contact activities involving:
    - children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images
    - children in watching sexual activities
    - encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways
    - grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

13: Appendix B: Relevant Documents

“Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006: statutory guidance for local authorities, maintained schools, academies and free schools” (July 2018)

“Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings” (October 2015)

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

“Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges” (Sept 2025)

“The Prevent Duty, Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers” (June 2015)

“Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales” (July 2015)

“Sexting in schools and colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people” published by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) – (September 2016)

“Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges” (May 2018)

“What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners” (March, 2015)

“Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children” (July 2018)

14: Appendix C: Main responsibilities of the DSL (designated safeguarding lead person):

Manage referrals

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children’s social care as required;
- support staff who make referrals to local authority children’s social care;
- refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required;
- support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;

  Consent must be obtained before any support delivered through the Channel programme is provided
- refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required;
- refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the police as required.

Work with others

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- liaise with the Executive Team to inform them of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;

● as required, liaise with the “case manager” (as per part four KCSiE) and the designated officer(s) at the local authority for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member);

● liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies;

● act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff.

take lead responsibility for following public guidance on filtering and monitoring, and this should be explicit in the role holder’s job description.

Staff training to include expectations, applicable roles, and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.

Training requirements

The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training must be updated at least every two years. The designated safeguarding lead must also undertake Prevent awareness training.

In addition to this formal training, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via ebulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:

● understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments;

● have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and are able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;

● ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the organisation’s child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;

● are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;

● are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;

● understand and support the organisation with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;

● obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses;

● encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff.

Raise Awareness

The designated safeguarding lead should:

● ensure the organisation’s child protection policies are known, understood and appropriately

implemented;

● ensure the organisation's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with Executive Team and the overarching person for safeguarding within the organisation regarding this;

● ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this;

● liaise with the local LSCB to make sure staff are aware of training

opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.

Child protection files

When children leave Gecko Community, ensure their child protection files / records are / are transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Where a learner is on the roll of a school this would be the responsibility of that establishment.

On-line safety

The DSL should work with staff to ensure students are 'safe' online. This will include training all staff in Esafety (Gecko Community also has an Esafety policy), working with students and parents / carers to raise awareness and working with technical support staff to ensure that access to inappropriate sites through use of firewalls / filters etc is reduced to the minimum possible level.

Availability

During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is expected to be available in person, if that is not possible, the central office must be notified and arrangements made for either the organisation's safeguarding lead person or the deputy to be available for staff to contact by telephone. The designated safeguarding must arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

Vikki Mead can be contacted about safeguarding if someone has a different viewpoint or they don't agree with Emily or Mel. Everyone is given Vikki's details at the annual safeguarding training.

You can contact Vikki by email: vikki.mead@geckocommunity.org.uk

Safeguarding flowchart

- If someone's life is in danger, call 999

- The student's addresses are in each student's folder. On their referral form.

- If you have a concern that is urgent - ring Emily on 07753 191991.

- If she doesn't pick up, then call Mel on 07895 265452. If she doesn't pick up, call Piers on 07717 334197.
- Vikki Mead is the Chair of Trustees and can be contacted on vikki.mead@geckocommunity.org.uk if there is a matter that can't be discussed with either Emily or Mel or if someone has a different viewpoint or needs to escalate.

- If you have a concern that is not urgent -
    - Message Emily by email/chat/text and say you have a safeguarding concern and need to Meet **OR**
    - Write on the Concern form (a new one - make a copy) and message Emily by email/chat/text to say you have filled in a new form

Policy prepared by Emily Hartley-Heaven, Designated Safeguard Lead and Placement Coordinator.

Signed by Emily Hartley-Heaven



Emily Hartley-Heaven, October2026

Updated: October 2027

Local Authority Safeguarding Contacts

Local Authority	MASH	LADO
Bath and Somerset	01454 61 51 65, Referral line 0300 123 2224 ChildCare_Duty@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 396810 LADO@bathnes.gov.uk.
Birmingham	0121 675 4806	0121 675 1669 ladoteam@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk
Brighton & Hove	FrontDoorforFamilies@brighton-hove.gov.uk. 01273 290400 Emergency: 01273 335 905 01273 335 906	01273 292379 ladoenquiries@brighton-hove.gov.uk
Calderdale	01422 393336 Out of hours: 01422 288000 MASTadmin@calderdale.gov.uk	ladoadmin@calderdale.gov.uk
Cambridgeshire	0345 045 5203	01223 727 967 Out of hours: 01733 234 724 LADO@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Cornwall	0300 123 1116 multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk	01872 326536 LADO@Cornwall.gov.uk.

Devon	0345 155 1071 mashsecure@devon.gov.uk	01392 384964 childsc.localauthoritydesignatedofficersecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk
Ealing	020 8825 8000 choy@westminster.gov.uk	07890 940241 asv@ealing.gov.uk
Gateshead	0191 433 8031	07597 527210 Michelle Farry lado@gateshead.gov.uk
Kent	03000 41 91 91 kscmp@kent.gov.uk	03000 410888 Emergency: 03000 41 11 11. kentchildrenslado@kent.gov.uk
Lancashire	0300 123 6720 Out of hours: 300 123 6722	0161 474 5657 LADO.Admin@lancashire.gov.uk
Norfolk	0344 800 8021	01603 223473 LADO@norfolk.gov.uk
North Yorkshire	03001312131	social.care@northyorks.gov.uk
Pembrokeshire	01437 776444	
Somerset	0300 123 2224 childrens@somerset.gov.uk	0300 123 22 44 sdinputters@somerset.gov.uk
Suffolk	0345 606 1499	01472 265500 LADO@suffolk.gov.uk
Surrey	0300 470 9100 mash@surreycc.gov.uk	0300 123 1650 LADO@surreycc.gov.uk
Swindon	01793 466903 swindonmash@swindon.gov.uk	(01793) 463854 LADO@swindon.gov.uk
Wakefield	01924 306497	01977 727032

	wscp@wakefield.gov.uk	Lado.Referrals@wakefield.gov.uk
Warwickshire	01926 414144 TriageHub@Warwickshire.gov.uk	01926 742372 Lado@warwickshire.gov.uk
West Berkshire	01635 503090 Emergency: 01344 351999 edt@bracknell-forest.gov.uk	01635 503153 LADO@westberks.gov.uk
Wiltshire	0300 456 0108 Out of hours: 0300 456 0100 mash@wiltshire.gov.uk	01793 463854 LADO@swindon.gov.uk