



SENSES Learning Hub

SAFEGUARDING & WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

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STATEMENT OF INTENT

SENSES Learning Hub is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, both physical and emotional, of every student both inside and outside of the provision premises.

This policy sets out a clear and consistent framework for delivering this promise, in line with safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance.

It will be achieved by:

- Creating a culture of safer recruitment by adopting procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might pose a risk to children.
- Teaching students how to keep safe and recognise behaviour that is unacceptable.
- Identifying and making provision for any student that has been subject to abuse.

- Ensuring that staff members understand their responsibilities under safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance, are alert to the signs of child abuse and know to refer concerns to the DSL.
- Ensuring that any new staff members and volunteers are only appointed when all the appropriate checks have been satisfactorily completed.

1. DEFINITIONS

The terms “**children**” and “**child**” refer to anyone under the age of 18. For the purposes of this policy, “safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children” is defined as:

Protecting students from maltreatment.

Preventing the impairment of students’ health or development.

Ensuring that students grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Taking action to enable all students to have the best outcomes.

Consent

For the purposes of this policy**, ‘consent*** is defined as having the freedom and capacity to choose to engage in sexual activity. Consent may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, and can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. A person only consents to a sexual activity if they agree by choice to that activity, and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. Children under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity. The age of consent is 16.

Sexual Violence

For the purposes of this policy, ‘**sexual violence**’ refers to the following offences as defined under the Sexual Offences Act 2003:

Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if they intentionally penetrate the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with their penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Assault by penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally penetrate the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of their body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Sexual assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if they intentionally touch another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally cause another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a 3rd party.

Sexual Harassment

For the purpose of this policy, **‘sexual harassment’** refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline, inside or outside of the provision. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a student’s dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and create a hostile, offensive, or sexualised environment. If left unchallenged, sexual harassment can create an atmosphere that normalises inappropriate behaviour and may lead to sexual violence, sexual harassment can include, but is not limited to:

- Sexual comments, such as sexual stories, lewd comments, sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and sexualised name-calling
- Sexual “jokes” and taunting
- Physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes, and displaying images of a sexual nature
- Online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. This includes:
- The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos
- Sharing unwanted explicit content
- Up-skirting
- Sexualised online bullying
- Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media
- Sexual exploitation, coercion and threats.

Up-skirting

For the purposes of this policy, **‘up-skirting’** refers to the act, as identified in the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, of taking a picture or video under another person’s clothing, without their knowledge or consent, with the intention of viewing that person’s genitals or buttocks, with or without clothing, to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Up-skirting is a criminal offence. Anyone, including students and staff, of any gender, can be a victim of up-skirting.

Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images and/or videos

For the purpose of this policy, the ‘consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images and/or videos’, colloquially known as ‘sexting’, is defined as the sharing between students of sexually explicit content, including indecent imagery. For the purposes of this policy ‘indecent imagery’ is defined as an image which meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Nude or semi-nude sexual posing
- A child touching themselves in a sexual way

- Any sexual activity involving a child
- Someone hurting a child sexually
- Sexual activity that involves animals

2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

[L126] This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to the following:

[L128] - Legislation

[L129] - Children Act 1989

[L130] - Children Act 2004

[L131] - Children and Social Work Act 2017

[L132] - Education Act 2002

[L133] - Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, where applicable

[L134] - Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, as amended

[L135] - Sexual Offences Act 2003

[L136] - Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015

[L137] - Equality Act 2010

[L138] - Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

[L139] - Modern Slavery Act 2015

[L140] - UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

[L141] - Data Protection Act 2018, as amended

[L142] - Data (Use and Access) Act 2025

[L143] - Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019

[L144] - Domestic Abuse Act 2021

[L145] - Online Safety Act 2023, where applicable

[L146] - Crime and Policing Act 2026

[L147] - Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026

[L148] - Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, as amended

[L151] Statutory Guidance

[L153] - DfE (2026) 'Keeping children safe in education 2026' – in force from 1 September 2026

[L154] - DfE (2026) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026'

[L155] - Home Office, DfE and DHSC (2020) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation'

[L156] - HM Government (2013) 'The Right to Choose: government guidance on forced marriage' and associated multi-agency practice guidance

[L157] - Home Office (2023) 'Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales' – in force from 31 December 2023

[L158] - DfE (2018) 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006', where applicable

[L159] - DfE (2026) 'Working or volunteering in regulated activity with children' – including the removal of the supervision exemption from 1 September 2026

[L160] - DfE (2026) 'Information sharing duty statutory guidance', once commenced and applicable

[L163] Non-statutory guidance

[L165] - DfE (2015) 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners'

[L166] - DfE (2024) 'Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners', pending replacement by the statutory information sharing duty guidance

[L167] - DfE (2017) 'Child sexual exploitation'

[L168] - DfE (2017) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges', as supplemented by current KCSIE 2026 guidance

[L169] - DfE (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people', including current terminology and guidance on digitally altered or AI-generated images

3. EQUALITY STATEMENT

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising and disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers that they may face.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Safeguarding and child protection is everyone's responsibility. This policy applies to all staff and volunteers and applies to off-site activities too. All staff have a responsibility to:

- Read and understand Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026, effective from 1 September 2026. All staff, including staff who do not work directly with children, should be familiar with Part 1.

[\[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66d7301b9084b18b95709f75/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2024.pdf\]](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66d7301b9084b18b95709f75/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2024.pdf) **(The current KCSIE 2026 guidance is available from GOV.UK.)**

- Read and understand the relevant annexes of KCSIE 2026, including Annex A (further information) and Annex B (the role of the DSL).
- Consider at all times what is in the best interests of the student
- Provide a safe environment in which pupils can learn
- Maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'.
- Be aware of the provision's systems which support safeguarding, including any policies, procedures, information and training provided upon induction.
- Be aware of the identity of the DSL and deputy DSL
- Undertake regular safeguarding training.
- Be aware of, and understand, the process for making referrals to the local authority children's social care service and relevant safeguarding partners.
- Make a referral to local authority children's social care and/or the police immediately if at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child. Staff may make a referral directly if necessary and must inform the DSL as soon as possible.



Be aware of the different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child on child abuse, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM and radicalisation.

Be aware of and understand the procedure to follow in the event that a child confides they are being abused, exploited or neglected.

Maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality.

Be aware of safeguarding issues that can put students at risk of harm.

Be aware of behaviours linked to issues such as drug-taking, alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education, and sharing indecent images, and other signs that students may be at risk of harm.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has a duty to:

SENSES Learning Hub DSL's are: Dawn Oughtibridge and John Fox

Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare safeguarding and child protection matters.

Contribute to the assessment of children, an/or support other staff to do so.

Refer cases to CSCS where abuse and neglect are suspected, to the Channel and Prevent Multi-Agency Panel (PMAP) where radicalisation concerns arise, to the DBS where a person is dismissed or has left due to harm or risk of harm to a child, to the police where a crime may have been committed in line with the NPCC guidance.

Promote supportive engagement with parents in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Undertake regular training

Keep detailed, accurate and secure records of safeguarding concerns, referrals, decisions and the reasons for those decisions, in accordance with KCSIE 2026 and applicable data protection law.

5. RECOGNISING ABUSE AND NEGLECT AND TAKING ACTION

Abuse

Abuse is defined as a form of maltreatment of a child which involves inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family, institutional or community setting by those known to them or by others, eg: via the internet. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by one or multiple adults or other children.

Physical Abuse



Physical abuse is defined as a form of abuse which may involve actions such as hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse can also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is defined as the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. This may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child the opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, such as interactions that are beyond their developmental capability, overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, including cyberbullying, causing the child to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, but it may also occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is defined as abuse that involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, and regardless of whether the child is aware of what is happening. This may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration, or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by people of any gender and age.

Neglect

Neglect is defined as the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of a child's health or development. This may involve a parent or carer failing to provide a child with adequate food, clothing or shelter; failing to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger; failing to ensure adequate supervision; or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

All staff at SENSES Learning Hub will exercise professional curiosity and consider the possibility of extra-familial harm, including risks arising in peer groups, intimate relationships, the community and online.

All staff at SENSES Learning Hub will be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect. They will be aware that neglect and other safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be given a specific label, and multiple issues often overlap one another; therefore, staff will be vigilant and always raise concerns with the DSL. All staff will be aware that safeguarding incidents

and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside of the provision and/or can occur between children outside of these environments; this includes being aware that students can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. All staff will be aware of the appropriate action to take following a student being identified as a potential risk of abuse and, in all cases, will speak to the DSL if they are unsure.

All staff will be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, including online abuse, cyberbullying, and the sharing of indecent images.

If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or is in immediate danger:

Making a referral to children's social care and/or the police immediately if it is believed a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger. Anyone can make a referral. Staff are aware that the DSL must be informed as soon as possible, if they have made a direct referral.

The Safeguarding points of contact for all concerns relating to children in Barnsley, Kirklees and Wakefield authorities can be found at the end of this document.

If a child makes a disclosure to you:

You should –

- Listen to them and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words; stick to the facts.
- Pass this information to the DSL immediately.

6. FGM

For the purpose of this policy, FGM is defined as the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or any other injury to the female genital organs.

FGM is illegal in the UK and is a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences.

FGM is also included in the definition of 'honour-based' violence (HBV), which involves crimes that have been committed to defend the honour of the family and/or community alongside forced marriage and breast ironing.

Where a teacher discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18, or is informed by a girl under 18 that FGM has been carried out on her, the teacher must report

this to the police personally and without delay, subject to the statutory duty and guidance. The DSL must also be informed as soon as possible.

Indicators that may show a heightened risk of FGM include the following:

- The socio-economic position of the family and their level of integration into UK society
- Any girl with a mother/sister who has been subjected to FGM
- Any girl withdrawn from PSHE

Indicators that may show FGM could take place include the following:

- When a female family elder is visiting from a country or origin
- A girl may confide that she is to have a 'special procedure' or a ceremony to 'become a woman'
- A girl may request help from a teacher/member of staff if she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk
- A girl, or her family member, may talk about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent.

Indicators that FGM may have already taken place include the following:

- Difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom/toilet
- Spending long periods of time away from a lesson during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
- Prolonged or repeated absences from the provisions
- Withdrawal or depression

7. FORCED MARRIAGE

For the purpose of this policy, a 'forced marriage' is defined as a marriage that is entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties, and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into the marriage. Forced marriage is classed as a crime in the UK.

As part of HBV, staff will be alert to the signs of forced marriage including, but not limited to, the following:

- Becoming anxious, depressed and emotionally withdrawn with low self-esteem
- Showing signs of mental health disorders and behaviours such as self-harm or anorexia
- Displaying a sudden decline in their educational performance, aspirations or motivation
- Regularly being absent from school
- Displaying a decline in punctuality
- An obvious family history of older siblings leaving education early and marrying early

If staff members have any concerns regarding a child who may have undergone, is currently undergoing, or is at risk of forced marriage, they will speak to the DSL and local safeguarding procedures will be followed.

8. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)

For the purpose of this policy, 'child sexual exploitation' is defined as a form of sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power or coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person into sexual activity, for either, or both, of the following:

In exchange for something the victim needs or wants

For the financial advantage or increase status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

CSE does not always involve physical contact, as it can also occur online. It is also important to note that a child can be sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual.

SENSES Learning Hub staff members are aware of and will act on any of the key indicators which include but are not limited to the following:

- Going missing for periods of time or regularly going home late
- Regularly missing lessons
- Appearing with unexplained gifts and new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Undergoing mood swings or drastic changes in emotional wellbeing
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant
- Displaying changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs or alcohol

Any case of CSE or suspected case will be reported to the DSL who may then refer to the LA.

9. HOMELESSNESS

Referrals will be made to the Local Housing Authority so that concerns over homelessness can be raised as early as possible. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include the following:

- Household debt
- Rent arrears
- Domestic abuse
- Anti-social behaviour
- Any mention of a family moving home because "they have to"

Referrals to the LHA do not replace referrals to CSCS where a child is being harmed or at risk of harm.

10. COUNTY LINES CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

For the purpose of this policy, 'County lines criminal activity' refers to drug networks or gangs grooming and exploiting children to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban areas, rural areas and market and seaside towns.

The provision has strong connections with commissioning schools/LA and will be informed of any student at the provision who has missing episodes who may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs.

SENSES Learning Hub staff members who suspect a student may be vulnerable to, or involved in, this activity will report all concerns to the DSL.

Indicators that a student may be involved in county lines activity include the following:

- Persistently going missing or being found out of their usual area
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes or mobile phones
- Excessive receipt of texts or phone calls
- Relationships with controlling or older individuals or groups
- Leaving home without explanation
- Evidence of physical injury or assault that cannot be explained
- Carrying weapons
- Becoming isolated from peers or social networks
- Self-harm or significant changes in mental state
- Parental reports of concern

11. SERIOUS VIOLENCE

Indicators that a child is at risk from, or is involved with, serious violent crime include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Increased absence from school
- A change in friendships
- New relationships with older individuals or groups
- A significant decline in academic performance
- Signs of self-harm
- A significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault
- Unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions

Risk factors that could increase a child's vulnerability to becoming involved in serious violent crime include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A history of committing offences
- Substance abuse
- Anti-social behaviour
- Truancy

- Peers involved in crime and/or anti-social behaviour

If a staff member suspects that a student may be vulnerable to, or involved in, serious violent crime, will be reported to the DSL immediately.

12. STUDENTS WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN PRISON

Students will be offered pastoral support as necessary by the commissioning school and the provision will work with the guidance from the commissioning school.

13. STUDENTS REQUIRED TO GIVE EVIDENCE IN COURT

Students required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or ones they have witnessed, will be offered appropriate pastoral support by the commissioning school and the provision will work with the guidance of the commissioning school.

14. RADICALISATION

For the purpose of this policy, ‘**radicalisation**’ refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies.

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of the provisions wider safeguarding duties.

SENSES Learning Hub actively assess the risk of students being drawn into terrorism.

Staff members will be alert to changes in students’ behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

Any concerns over radicalisation will be discussed with parents of the child, unless the provision has reason to believe that the child would be placed at risk as a result of this action.

Indicator of vulnerable students

Distancing themselves from their cultural/religious heritage

Uncomfortable with their place in society

Indicators of a personal crisis include the following:

- Family tensions
- A sense of isolation
- Low self-esteem
- Disassociation from existing friendship groups
- Searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging

Indicators of vulnerability through personal circumstances includes the following:

- Migration

- Local community tensions
- Events affecting their country or region of origin
- Alienation from UK values
- A sense of grievance triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination

Indicators of vulnerability through unmet aspirations include the following:

- Perceptions of injustice
- Feelings of failure
- Rejection of civic life
- Indicators of vulnerability through criminality:
- Experiences of dealing with the police
- Involvement with criminal groups

Staff members will refer any concerns immediately to the DSL.

The DSL will consider whether a situation may be so serious that an emergency response is required, and if so, call 999. However, concerns are most likely to require a police investigation as part of the Channel programme.

15. TEEN PREGNANCY

Under DfES guidelines, teachers are not legally bound to inform parents of any disclosure by students of a teen pregnancy, nor do they have any specific duty of confidentiality to the child. At SENSES Learning Hub, we will seek consent from the student for any disclosure to parents/carers and take steps to ensure that wherever possible, the young person is persuaded to talk to their parent/carer.

Although sex under 16 in the UK is illegal, prosecutions are rare as long as both people consented and there is no evidence of exploitation. Children under the age of 13 are legally deemed incapable of consenting to sexual activity and therefore all incidences of sexual behaviour involving children under 13 should be considered as a potential criminal or child protection matter and will be reported as such.

16. A CHILD MISSING FROM EDUCATION

A student who is absent or missing from education may be at increased risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, trafficking or radicalisation. SENSES Learning Hub will respond to repeated or prolonged absence as a potential safeguarding concern and will work with the commissioning school/LA in accordance with local attendance and children-missing-from-education procedures.

Staff will monitor students that go missing from the provision on repeat occasions and all occasions will be reported to the commissioning school/ LA.

17. A STUDENT DOES NOT ARRIVE AT THE PROVISION

If a student does not arrive at the provision, then the following procedure is implemented:

- Contact parent/carer to see if there is a valid reason for absence
- Inform commissioning school/LA of absence

18. STUDENTS WITH SEND

SENSES Learning Hub recognises that students with SEND can face additional safeguarding challenges and understands that further barriers may exist when determining abuse and neglect.

When reporting concerns or making referrals for students with SEND, the following factors will always be taken into consideration:

- Certain indicators of abuse, such as behaviour, mood and injury, may relate to the student's disability without further exploration; however, it should never be assumed that a child's indicators relate only to their disability.
- Students with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- Communication barriers may exist, as well as difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

The DSL will liaise with the commissioning school/LA team as well as the student's family where appropriate, to ensure that needs are effectively met.

19. EARLY HELP / FAMILY HELP

Family Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. SENSES Learning Hub will work with commissioning schools, local authorities and other agencies to identify children who may benefit from community-based Family Help or targeted early help. Any student may benefit from early help, but in particular, staff will be alert to the potential need for early help for students who:

- Are disabled, have certain health conditions or have specific additional needs
- Have SEND
- Have mental health needs
- Are young carers
- Show signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines.
- Are frequently missing or go missing from education, home or care.
- Are at risk of exploitation, modern slavery or trafficking, including criminal or sexual exploitation.
- Are at risk of being radicalised into terrorism or exploited.
- Have family members in prison, or are affected by parental offending.
- Are in a family circumstance presenting challenges for them, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health problems, or domestic abuse.
- Misuse drugs or alcohol
- Have returned home to their family from care.
- Are at risk of Honour Based Abuse, such as FGM or forced marriage.
- Are privately fostered.
- Are persistently or severely absent from education, including repeated or prolonged absence and absence from part of the school day.

- Show early signs of abuse and/or neglect in other ways.

The DSL will take the lead; liaising with other agencies.

20. CONCERNS ABOUT A STAFF MEMBER, TEACHER, VOLUNTEER, CONTRACTOR OR TRAINEE TEACHER

If there are concerns about a member of staff, supply staff, trainee teacher, volunteer, contractor or other adult working with children, or an allegation is made that may indicate a risk of harm, speak to either Dawn Oughtibridge (Director) or John Fox (Director) without delay. If the concerns/allegations are about a director of the company or any of the directors are unavailable, speak to the other DSL/Director.

Where you believe there is a conflict of interest, or the concern/allegation relates to a Director, report it directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in accordance with local procedures.

21. ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF

All allegations that may meet the harm threshold will be managed in accordance with KCSIE 2026 Part Four, local authority LADO procedures and the organisation's Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy. Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold will be considered under the low-level concerns arrangements and Staff Code of Conduct.

Where the statutory conditions for a DBS referral are met, SENSES Learning Hub will make a referral to the DBS, including where an individual is removed from regulated activity or would have been removed had they not left.

22. ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST ANOTHER STUDENT

Abuse will never be tolerated or pass off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for pupils.

We recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse; however, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. This includes bullying, physical abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment, sexual violence, domestic abuse in young people's own intimate relationships, and online abuse.

Most cases of student's hurting other students will be dealt with under our behaviour policy, but this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviours:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put students in the provision at risk
- Is violent
- Involves students being forced to use drugs or alcohol

- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, up-skirting or inappropriate pictures or videos

If a student makes an allegation of abuse against another student:

- You must record the allegation and tell the DSL
- The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- We take proactive action to minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse by:
- Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour
- Vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders; sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing and initiation or hazing type violence.

Making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes, including digitally altered or AI-generated images

If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos, you must report this to the DSL immediately.

You must not:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself
- Delete the imagery
- Ask the student(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, student(s) involved or their, or other, parents/carers.
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any student involved.

You should explain that you need to report the incident, and reassure the student(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with the appropriate staff members to determine:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to student(s)
- If a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care
- If it is necessary to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the young person(s)
- What further information is required to decide the best response.
- Has the image been shared widely and via what platforms.

The DSL will make an immediate referral to the police and/or children's social care if:

- The incident involves an adult
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent.
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any student in the images or videos is under 13
- The DSL has reason to believe a student is at immediate risk of harm



The DSL will inform parents/carers and commissioning school at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the student at risk of harm.

Reporting system for students

Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the child's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take.

We recognise the importance of ensuring students feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns and/or allegations. The students can speak directly to any member of staff with their concerns and they will be reassured that their concern will be treated with sensitivity and taken seriously. No promise of confidentiality will be given.

23. ONLINE SAFETY AND USE OF MOBILE TECHNOLOGY

We adhere to our Social Media Policy which includes mobile technology.

All students are made aware of online risks and are taught how to stay safe online through the curriculum and relevant safeguarding/PSHE activity.

The use of personal electronic devices by staff and students is closely monitored throughout the day. All phones are handed in during learning hours but children can have access to their mobile devices during break/lunch and down time at the discretion of staff.

Photographs and videos of students are only taken with prior signed consent from students and parent/carers. These images are only used for Princes Trust units and our own website with consent.

The provision will ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place to protect students from illegal, inappropriate and harmful content, including child sexual abuse material and unlawful terrorist content. Filtering and monitoring will be reviewed at least annually and following significant changes or identified risks, with safeguarding concerns arising from monitoring reported to the DSL.

The sending of inappropriate messages or images from mobile devices is strictly prohibited. Any staff members who do not adhere to this will face disciplinary action.

Up-skirting (as described in definitions) will not be tolerated by SENSES Learning Hub and any incidents will be reported to the DSL who will then decide on the next steps to take, which may include police involvement.

Staff will report any concerns about students' or other staff members' use of personal electronic devices to the DSL.

If staff suspect any student has taken an image or video of another student without their consent, we will ask parents to support removing these from any devices.

24. RECORD KEEPING

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained securely for as long as required by law, the organisation's retention schedule and safeguarding needs, with access restricted to those with a legitimate professional need.

Safeguarding records will be retained in accordance with the organisation's retention schedule, applicable data protection law and any specific legal, regulatory or safeguarding requirements. The former blanket reference to retaining records for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse has been removed.

25. LONE WORKING

Lone Working Policy Statement

At SENSES Learning Hub, the safety and well-being of our staff and students are of paramount importance. As a small alternative educational provision with two staff members, we recognize that lone working may occasionally be required. This policy outlines the measures in place to protect staff members while ensuring the safety and security of all individuals on the premises.

1. Staff Requirements and Training
 - All staff members hold enhanced DBS checks and are trained in safeguarding procedures.
 - Staff are provided with regular refresher training on safeguarding and lone working protocols to maintain awareness and preparedness.
2. Communication and Accessibility
 - All staff are required to carry a charged mobile phone at all times to ensure immediate communication in the event of an emergency.
 - Staff should have emergency contact numbers saved on their devices and ensure these contacts are readily accessible.
3. Visibility and Monitoring
 - Each room within the building is equipped with clear windows and doors, allowing full visibility from the outside and helping to monitor activities effectively.
 - Staff should be aware of each other's location and schedule, ensuring a shared understanding of work routines and any lone working arrangements.

4. Emergency Procedures

- In the event of an emergency, staff must contact their colleague or designated emergency contact immediately and, if necessary, follow standard emergency procedures for the safety of students and themselves.
- Staff members should familiarize themselves with the location of exits, first aid kits, and emergency supplies within the building.

5. Risk Minimization and Reporting

- Lone working is minimized where possible, with efforts made to arrange schedules that ensure at least two staff members are on-site.
- Any incidents, safety concerns, or near misses during lone working situations should be reported immediately to management, who will review the incident and take any necessary action to prevent recurrence.

By adhering to this policy, SENSES Learning Hub commits to fostering a safe, supportive environment for staff and students alike. We will regularly review and update this policy to ensure it remains effective and responsive to the needs of our team and the students in our care.

26. SAFER RECRUITMENT

The provision will use safer recruitment procedures consistent with KCSIE 2026, including appropriate application forms, scrutiny of employment history and gaps, references, identity checks, right-to-work checks where applicable, qualification/prohibition checks where relevant, DBS checks and consideration of safeguarding information. References should be obtained before appointment wherever practicable and should be verified appropriately; open testimonials will not be accepted as a substitute for suitable references. Information about past disciplinary actions or allegations will be considered carefully when assessing an applicant's suitability for a post.

Probes into any gaps in employment will be made or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently.

An enhanced DBS check, with a children's barred list check where the role is regulated activity, will be completed in accordance with KCSIE 2026, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Crime and Policing Act 2026. From 1 September 2026, the supervision exemption for relevant regulated activity is removed, so roles involving frequent or close work with children must be reviewed accordingly.

Volunteer roles will be assessed to determine the appropriate level of DBS check. From 1 September 2026, volunteers who undertake relevant regulated activity will be subject to the updated regulated activity rules and, where eligible, an enhanced DBS check including the children's barred list.

27. SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD (SCR)

SENSES Learning Hub maintains a central safeguarding/recruitment record for staff, volunteers, contractors and other relevant adults. Where a statutory Single Central Record is applicable to the organisation, it will be maintained in accordance with KCSIE 2026.



Details of an individual will be removed from the SCR once they no longer work/attend the provision.

This policy has been reviewed against Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, which comes into force on 1 September 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, the Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales (2023), the Crime and Policing Act 2026, the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 and current Department for Education safeguarding guidance. Where new statutory duties have a commencement date or further implementation guidance is awaited, SENSES Learning Hub will follow the applicable law and updated local authority procedures from the date they take effect.

28. TRAINING

Upon starting, new staff members will attend an induction which will cover our policies and procedures, and cover the roles and responsibilities of all other team members.

All staff will receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction and regular updates at least annually, including online safety, filtering and monitoring, child-on-child abuse, allegations/low-level concerns, Prevent and the specific safeguarding risks relevant to SENSES Learning Hub. DSLs will undertake training appropriate to their role and responsibilities and will refresh their training at least every two years, with ongoing updates and local safeguarding information as required.

We will actively seek training based on incidents or conversations that may happen.

Local authority and national Safeguarding Information:

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council - Children's social services.

Contact Number: (01226) 772423

<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/children-families-and-education/safeguarding-families-in-barnsley/safeguarding-children-in-barnsley/>

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Kirklees Council

Contact Number: 01484 225161

<https://www.kirkleessafeguardingchildren.co.uk/>

Wakefield Council

Contact Number: 03458503503

<https://www.wakefield.gov.uk/children-and-families/safeguarding/>

Review Log

Review date	Completed by who
12.03.25	John Fox and Dawn Oughtibridge
09.08.25	John Fox and Dawn Oughtibridge
11.09.26	John Fox and Dawn Oughtibridge