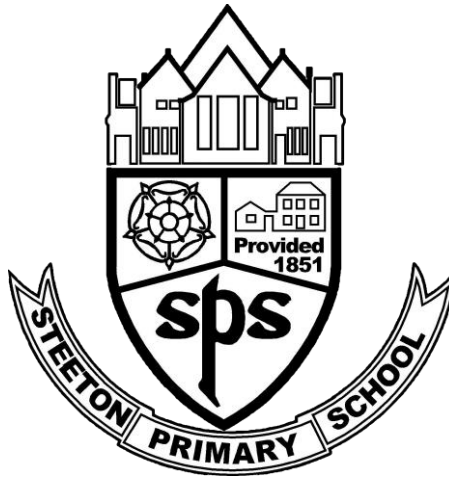




Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Learning for Life
begins with feeling safe.

Policy date	September 2026
Review date	September 2027
Policy owner	Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead
Approval	Governing Body
Applies to	All pupils, staff, visitors, volunteers and activities organised by the school

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1. Statement of Intent

At Steeton Primary School, safeguarding is the foundation upon which everything else is built. Children can only learn, thrive and prepare for life when they feel safe, valued and protected.

Safeguarding is far more than responding to child protection concerns. It is the culture we create every day through positive relationships, high expectations, professional curiosity and an unwavering commitment to putting children first.

Every adult working in our school has a responsibility to safeguard children. We expect every member of staff, governor, volunteer, visitor and contractor to understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that no concern is ever too small to report.

Children should know that they are listened to, believed and taken seriously. They should feel safe to share worries, confident that adults will act in their best interests and secure in the knowledge that school is a place where they belong.

We recognise that safeguarding is most effective when schools, families and partner agencies work together. Wherever possible, we seek to build positive relationships with parents and carers based on openness, trust and shared responsibility. Where children are at risk of harm, however, their welfare will always remain our paramount consideration.

This policy explains how Steeton Primary School fulfils its statutory safeguarding responsibilities while reflecting the values, culture and ambition that underpin our school community.

Safeguarding is not an isolated aspect of school life. It underpins every decision we make, every relationship we build and every opportunity we provide for children to flourish.

2. How Safeguarding Works at Steeton

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, but every responsibility looks different.

Every member of our school community contributes to keeping children safe through the role they play, the relationships they build and the decisions they make each day. Effective safeguarding relies upon everyone understanding their responsibilities, working collaboratively and sharing concerns without delay.

At Steeton Primary School, safeguarding is visible, accessible and embedded within everyday practice. Staff know who to speak to, children know who they can trust and leaders ensure that safeguarding remains central to every aspect of school life.

We believe safeguarding works best when everyone understands not only *what* they are expected to do, but *why* it matters.

2.1 Strategic Leadership

Safeguarding is the highest priority of the Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team.

Leaders are responsible for creating and sustaining a culture where safeguarding is understood to be everyone's responsibility and where children are always placed at the centre of decision making.

This means safeguarding is not viewed as a separate aspect of school life. Instead, it informs strategic planning, curriculum development, staffing, attendance, behaviour, inclusion, site security, recruitment, staff wellbeing and school improvement.

Leaders regularly review safeguarding practice, evaluate emerging risks and ensure that safeguarding arrangements continue to evolve in response to local, national and school-specific needs.

The Headteacher works closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure safeguarding remains a standing priority across all aspects of school improvement.

2.2 The Governing Body

The Governing Body recognises that effective safeguarding begins with strong strategic leadership.

Governors are responsible for ensuring that the school fulfils all statutory safeguarding responsibilities and that safeguarding arrangements are effective, robust and appropriately resourced.

The Governing Body will:

- ensure safeguarding remains the school's highest priority
- promote a culture where children's welfare is paramount
- ensure appropriate safeguarding policies are reviewed at least annually
- receive regular reports regarding safeguarding practice, training and emerging themes
- provide appropriate challenge and support to school leaders
- ensure sufficient staffing, training and resources are available to safeguard children effectively
- monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding through visits, discussions and review of safeguarding practice
- ensure safer recruitment processes are fully implemented
- appoint a nominated safeguarding governor who works strategically alongside school leaders
- ensure allegations against adults are managed appropriately and in accordance with statutory guidance.

Governors do not become involved in operational safeguarding cases. Their role is to assure themselves that safeguarding systems are effective and that children remain safe.

2.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) provides strategic and operational leadership for safeguarding across the school.

The DSL ensures safeguarding remains visible, understood and prioritised by everyone within the school community. They are responsible for promoting a culture where concerns are shared promptly, children receive the right support at the right time and safeguarding practice continually improves.

The DSL leads safeguarding through:

- providing advice, guidance and support to all staff
- overseeing the identification, assessment and management of safeguarding concerns
- ensuring concerns are recorded accurately and acted upon promptly
- making referrals to Children's Social Care, the Police and other agencies where appropriate
- leading Early Help and multi-agency working
- maintaining high-quality safeguarding records through CPOMS

- ensuring children are listened to and their wishes are considered when decisions are made
- monitoring vulnerable pupils and evaluating the effectiveness of support
- ensuring safeguarding remains central to school improvement
- maintaining oversight of attendance, behaviour and wider safeguarding themes
- ensuring safeguarding training remains current and effective
- keeping abreast of emerging safeguarding risks and statutory guidance
- working closely with governors to provide strategic assurance regarding safeguarding.

The DSL also promotes a culture of professional curiosity, ensuring that staff feel confident to seek advice, ask questions and challenge appropriately where concerns arise.

2.4 Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads provide capacity, continuity and resilience to the school's safeguarding arrangements.

Deputies are appropriately trained to undertake the responsibilities of the DSL and are available to provide advice, guidance and decision-making whenever required.

Having a skilled safeguarding team ensures that safeguarding expertise is always available and that children receive timely support regardless of staff absence or competing operational demands.

Deputy DSLs work collaboratively with the DSL to:

- support the management of safeguarding concerns
- contribute to Early Help and Child Protection processes
- attend multi-agency meetings where appropriate
- oversee vulnerable children
- monitor safeguarding records
- provide advice to colleagues
- contribute to safeguarding training and development
- continually review safeguarding practice across school.

Although responsibilities are shared, overall accountability for safeguarding remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

2.5 Every Adult at Steeton

Every adult working at Steeton Primary School is a safeguarding professional.

Regardless of role, every member of staff has both a legal and moral responsibility to safeguard children.

We expect every adult to:

- know children well and build positive professional relationships
- notice when something changes
- remain professionally curious
- listen carefully to children
- take every concern seriously
- record concerns promptly and accurately using CPOMS
- share concerns immediately with the safeguarding team
- never investigate concerns themselves
- understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries
- contribute positively to the safeguarding culture of the school
- continue developing their safeguarding knowledge through training and reflection.

We believe that safeguarding is often about noticing the small things. No concern is too small to report. Staff are encouraged to trust their professional judgement and seek advice whenever something does not feel right.

We would always rather discuss a concern that proves unfounded than miss an opportunity to protect a child.

2.6 Volunteers, Visitors and Contractors

Every adult working with or alongside children shares responsibility for safeguarding.

All volunteers, visitors and contractors are expected to:

- understand their safeguarding responsibilities whilst on site
- follow the school's safeguarding procedures
- report concerns immediately to a member of the safeguarding team
- work within appropriate professional boundaries
- wear appropriate identification where required

- comply with safeguarding, site security and visitor procedures.

Appropriate safeguarding information will be shared with visitors as part of the school's induction and sign-in procedures.

2.7 Professional Curiosity

One of the greatest strengths of effective safeguarding is professional curiosity.

Professional curiosity means looking beyond the obvious, asking respectful questions and remaining open to the possibility that there may be more to understand about a child's experiences or circumstances.

At Steeton Primary School, staff are encouraged to:

- notice patterns rather than isolated incidents
- recognise changes in presentation, behaviour or attendance
- avoid making assumptions
- respectfully challenge where necessary
- seek advice whenever they are uncertain
- remain professionally inquisitive whilst maintaining positive relationships with families.

Professional curiosity helps ensure that concerns are recognised early and that children receive support before difficulties escalate.

2.8 Speaking Up

Safeguarding relies upon adults feeling confident to speak up.

Staff are expected to raise concerns immediately if they are worried about:

- a child
- a member of staff
- a volunteer
- a visitor
- safeguarding practice
- unsafe procedures
- the actions or decisions of others.

Steeton Primary School actively promotes a culture where concerns can be raised without fear of criticism or reprisal.

Respectful professional challenge is welcomed and seen as an essential part of maintaining the highest standards of safeguarding.

Where necessary, staff should follow the school's Whistleblowing Policy or escalate concerns in accordance with statutory guidance.

3. Recognising When Something Isn't Right

Safeguarding rarely begins with a disclosure.

More often, it begins with a small change. A child who is quieter than usual. A sudden deterioration in attendance. A friendship group that changes unexpectedly. A behaviour that feels out of character. A conversation that doesn't quite sit right.

Effective safeguarding relies upon adults noticing these small changes, remaining professionally curious and acting before concerns escalate.

At Steeton Primary School, we encourage staff to trust their professional judgement. We believe that safeguarding is often about recognising patterns rather than isolated incidents and understanding that one concern, however small, may become significant when viewed alongside other information.

Staff should never wait until they are certain that a child is at risk before sharing a concern.

If something does not feel right, it should be recorded and discussed with a member of the safeguarding team.

3.1 Recognising Vulnerability

Every child deserves to feel safe.

However, we recognise that some children may be more vulnerable to abuse, neglect or exploitation because of their individual circumstances.

Vulnerability is not always visible and may change over time.

Children may require additional safeguarding consideration because of factors including:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- mental health needs
- communication difficulties
- disability
- being a young carer
- being a Child Looked After or previously looked after
- family breakdown
- domestic abuse
- substance misuse within the family
- parental mental ill health
- poverty or financial hardship

- attendance concerns
- experiences of discrimination
- exploitation
- online activity
- involvement with Children's Social Care
- bereavement or trauma.

Some children experience multiple vulnerabilities simultaneously. Staff should always consider the whole child and the wider context of their lives when assessing concerns.

3.2 What Staff Might Notice

Children communicate in many different ways.

Whilst some children tell us directly that something is wrong, many communicate through changes in their behaviour, presentation or emotional wellbeing.

Staff should remain alert to changes including:

Changes in behaviour

For example:

- becoming withdrawn
- increased anxiety
- aggression
- unusually compliant behaviour
- sudden emotional outbursts
- loss of confidence
- reluctance to go home
- risk-taking behaviours.

Changes in attendance

Including:

- persistent absence
- repeated lateness
- patterns of absence
- reluctance to attend school
- frequent requests to go home.

Changes in presentation

Such as:

- poor hygiene
- inappropriate clothing
- persistent tiredness
- unexplained injuries
- significant weight loss or gain
- deterioration in self-care.

Changes in learning

Including:

- loss of concentration
- sudden drop in attainment
- disengagement
- reluctance to participate
- unexplained changes in motivation.

Changes in friendships

For example:

- isolation
- controlling friendships
- older peers
- secrecy around relationships
- conflict with previously established friendship groups.

No single indicator confirms abuse or neglect.

However, changes should always prompt professional curiosity and, where appropriate, discussion with the safeguarding team.

3.3 Listening to Children

Children tell us about their lives in many different ways.

Sometimes this is through conversation.

Sometimes through behaviour.

Sometimes through drawings, play, writing or relationships.

At Steeton Primary School we are committed to creating an environment where children know they will be listened to without judgement.

When children choose to share worries, adults will:

- remain calm
- listen carefully
- avoid interrupting unnecessarily
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing
- never promise confidentiality
- avoid asking leading questions
- explain honestly what will happen next
- make an accurate record using the child's own words
- report the concern immediately to the safeguarding team.

Children should always feel that their voice matters.

Whenever appropriate, safeguarding decisions should reflect the wishes and feelings of the child alongside professional judgement and statutory responsibilities.

3.4 Understanding Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment.

It may be inflicted by an adult or another child.

Abuse may occur within a family, an institution, a community or online.

The four recognised categories of abuse are:

Physical Abuse

Deliberately causing physical harm to a child or fabricating or inducing illness.

Staff should remain alert to unexplained injuries, inconsistent explanations or patterns which cause concern.

Emotional Abuse

Persistent emotional maltreatment which adversely affects a child's emotional development, self-worth or wellbeing.

Emotional abuse often accompanies other forms of abuse.

Sexual Abuse

Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they understand what is happening.

Sexual abuse includes contact and non-contact abuse, exploitation and abuse committed online.

Children may also be harmed through harmful sexual behaviour displayed by other children.

Neglect (Steeton's greatest need)

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs.

Neglect may include inadequate supervision, food, clothing, shelter, medical care or emotional support.

Staff receive regular safeguarding training to support them in recognising indicators of abuse and should always seek advice whenever they are uncertain.

3.5 Looking Beyond the Behaviour

Behaviour is communication.

Children often communicate unmet need through behaviour long before they are able to explain it through words.

At Steeton Primary School we are committed to understanding the reasons behind behaviour rather than responding only to what we see.

When behaviour changes, staff will consider:

- What might this child be trying to communicate?
- Has something changed?
- Is there a safeguarding concern?
- Does the child need additional support?
- What do we already know about this child and family?

This approach helps us identify concerns early and provide the right support at the right time.

3.6 The Importance of Professional Curiosity

Safeguarding depends upon adults remaining professionally curious.

Professional curiosity means respectfully exploring concerns rather than making assumptions.

It involves noticing patterns, asking appropriate questions, seeking advice and considering the wider context of a child's experiences.

Professional curiosity is particularly important where:

- explanations do not fully account for what has been observed
- concerns are repeated
- attendance deteriorates
- behaviour changes suddenly
- there are multiple low-level concerns
- information from different sources begins to build a wider picture.

Staff should never worry about being wrong.

If something does not feel right, they should record the concern and seek advice from the safeguarding team.

3.7 It Is Always Better to Share

At Steeton Primary School, we would always rather discuss a concern that proves to be unfounded than miss an opportunity to protect a child.

Staff are never expected to investigate concerns or determine whether abuse has occurred.

Their responsibility is to:

- notice
- listen
- record
- report.

The safeguarding team will decide what action needs to be taken next.

No concern is ever too small to share.

Responding to Concerns

Recognising a concern is only the first step.

Children are safest when adults respond promptly, record accurately and share information without delay.

At Steeton Primary School, we do not expect staff to investigate concerns or determine whether abuse has occurred. Our responsibility is to notice when something does not feel right, record what we have seen or heard and ensure the information reaches the safeguarding team as quickly as possible.

Safeguarding relies upon everyone understanding that seemingly small concerns may become significant when considered alongside other information.

When in doubt, record it and speak to the safeguarding team.

4.1 If You Are Worried About a Child

If any member of staff has a concern about the welfare of a child, they must act immediately.

This may be because:

- something has been seen
- something has been heard
- a child has made a disclosure
- behaviour has changed
- attendance has deteriorated
- another adult has shared information
- instinct or professional judgement suggests something is not right.

Staff should never wait for additional evidence before seeking advice.

Every concern should be treated seriously and responded to promptly.

Steeton Practice

You are never expected to decide whether abuse has occurred.

Your job is to notice, record and report.

The safeguarding team's job is to decide what happens next.

4.2 Immediate Danger

If a child is believed to be at immediate risk of significant harm, staff must not wait to complete records before taking action.

Staff must:

- contact a member of the safeguarding team immediately
- if necessary, contact Children's Social Care and/or the Police
- remain with the child if appropriate
- ensure the child is safe until further support arrives
- complete the CPOMS record as soon as possible afterwards.

No member of staff should ever delay action because they are unable to locate the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

4.3 Recording Concerns

All safeguarding concerns must be recorded on CPOMS as soon as possible after the concern arises.

Records should be:

- factual
- objective
- timely
- accurate
- signed electronically
- completed using the child's own words wherever possible.

Staff should clearly distinguish between:

- what they observed
- what was said
- who said it
- any actions already taken.

Personal opinion or speculation should not be included unless clearly identified as professional opinion.

Steeton Practice

Imagine someone reading your CPOMS record two years from now.

Would they understand exactly what happened?

Good safeguarding records tell the story clearly without interpretation or assumption.

4.4 What Makes a Good CPOMS Record?

Effective safeguarding records should include:

- the date and time
- the context
- who was present
- exactly what was seen or heard
- the child's own words where appropriate
- any visible injuries or behaviours observed
- any immediate action taken
- who the concern has been shared with.

Records should be completed before the end of the working day wherever possible.

Where concerns are urgent, verbal communication with the safeguarding team must always take priority over recording.

4.5 Speaking to the Safeguarding Team

Recording a concern on CPOMS does not replace speaking directly with the safeguarding team where the concern is urgent.

Staff must always ensure that a member of the safeguarding team is aware of significant concerns.

The safeguarding team will decide the appropriate next steps.

Steeton Practice

Never assume that someone else has seen your CPOMS entry.

If you are worried, speak to us.

We'd always rather know twice than not at all.

4.6 If a Child Makes a Disclosure

Children rarely choose the perfect time to tell an adult something worrying.

Disclosures may happen unexpectedly, during ordinary conversations or whilst children are engaged in everyday activities.

When a child discloses information, staff should:

- remain calm
- listen carefully
- allow the child to speak freely
- avoid interrupting
- acknowledge how difficult it may have been to tell someone
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing
- never promise to keep secrets
- avoid asking leading questions
- explain honestly what will happen next
- record the conversation as soon as possible using the child's own words
- report the disclosure immediately.

Staff should not investigate, interview or seek further evidence.

Steeton Practice

Children often remember how an adult responded long after they remember what was said.

Calmness, kindness and honesty matter.

4.7 What Happens Next?

Once concerns have been shared, the safeguarding team will consider:

- the information already held
- previous concerns
- attendance
- behaviour
- wider family context
- the child's wishes and feelings
- professional judgement

- statutory guidance.

The safeguarding team may decide to:

- continue monitoring
- speak with parents or carers
- gather additional information
- initiate Early Help
- consult with external agencies
- make a referral to Children's Social Care
- contact the Police where appropriate.

Where appropriate, staff who have raised concerns will receive feedback to enable them to continue supporting the child.

4.8 Early Help

Not every safeguarding concern requires statutory intervention.

Many children and families benefit from support at an earlier stage.

Steeton Primary School is committed to identifying emerging needs and working proactively with families before concerns escalate.

Early Help is based upon:

- listening to children and families
- understanding strengths as well as needs
- collaborative planning
- multi-agency working
- providing the right support at the right time.

The safeguarding team will coordinate Early Help support where appropriate and will review progress regularly.

Steeton Practice

One of the strongest forms of safeguarding is helping families before they reach crisis.

Early conversations can prevent much bigger problems later.

4.9 Information Sharing

Effective safeguarding depends upon professionals sharing information appropriately.

Information will be shared:

- lawfully
- proportionately
- securely
- with those who need to know
- in the best interests of the child.

Where possible, parents will be informed before information is shared.

However, consent will not be sought if doing so would:

- place a child at greater risk
- prejudice a police investigation
- increase the likelihood of harm
- prevent appropriate safeguarding action.

The safety and welfare of the child will always take precedence.

4.10 Escalating Concerns

If any member of staff feels that:

- concerns have not been taken seriously
- appropriate action has not been taken
- children remain at risk

they have a professional responsibility to escalate those concerns.

Staff should:

- speak again with the safeguarding team
- seek advice from the Headteacher where appropriate
- follow the school's Whistleblowing Policy
- contact Children's Social Care directly if necessary.

No member of staff will ever be criticised for escalating concerns raised in good faith.

Professional challenge is an essential part of effective safeguarding.

4.11 Every Concern Matters

Safeguarding is rarely about one significant event.

More often, it is about connecting many small pieces of information over time.

Every concern matters because:

- today's concern may explain tomorrow's disclosure
- small patterns become significant
- different adults see different parts of a child's life
- safeguarding records build the wider picture.

No concern is too small to record.

No concern is too insignificant to discuss.

Steeton Practice

We often say:

"The concern you nearly didn't record is sometimes the one that completes the picture."

If you're wondering whether something is worth recording...

Record it.

Safeguarding in Everyday School Life

At Steeton Primary School, safeguarding is reflected in every aspect of school life. It shapes our relationships, informs our decisions and underpins the experiences we provide for children every day.

We believe children are safest when they feel known, valued and connected. This means safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, every day.

The following sections explain how safeguarding is embedded throughout our school community.

5.1 Knowing Every Child

Children are safest when they are truly known.

At Steeton Primary School we place great importance on building positive, trusting relationships with every child. Staff know children as individuals and recognise that understanding their personalities, strengths, interests and family circumstances enables us to notice when something changes.

No system can replace the value of strong relationships.

We believe that children are more likely to share worries, seek help and engage with support when they feel safe with the adults around them.

Every member of staff contributes to this culture by taking time to know children well and by creating environments where children feel listened to, respected and valued.

Steeton Practice

We don't just know children's names.

We know when they don't seem themselves.

Often, that's where safeguarding begins.

5.2 Children's Voice

Children have the right to be heard.

Their views, wishes and feelings are central to safeguarding practice.

We encourage children to express themselves confidently and provide a range of opportunities for them to share concerns, celebrate successes and contribute to school life.

Children know who they can speak to if they are worried and understand that adults will listen, take them seriously and act appropriately.

Where safeguarding decisions are made, the wishes and feelings of the child will always be considered alongside professional judgement and statutory responsibilities.

5.3 Behaviour - Looking Beyond the Behaviour

Behaviour is communication.

Whilst children are responsible for their behaviour, adults are responsible for understanding it.

At Steeton Primary School we believe behaviour should always be viewed within the wider context of the child's experiences, development and wellbeing.

When behaviour changes unexpectedly, staff consider whether the behaviour may be communicating an unmet need or safeguarding concern.

Questions we ask include:

- Has something changed?
- Is this behaviour unusual for this child?
- Could there be an unmet need?
- Is there a safeguarding concern?
- What support does this child need?

This approach enables us to provide support as well as accountability and helps ensure that safeguarding concerns are not overlooked.

Behaviour and safeguarding are intrinsically linked.

Steeton Practice

We don't excuse poor behaviour.

But neither do we stop at the behaviour.

We always ask:

"What might this child be trying to tell us?"

5.4 Attendance - Every Day Matters

Good attendance is one of the strongest protective factors in a child's life.

Children who attend school regularly benefit not only from education but from consistent routines, trusted relationships, opportunities to disclose concerns and daily contact with adults who know them well.

Attendance is therefore a safeguarding priority.

We monitor attendance closely and respond quickly to emerging concerns.

Patterns of absence, repeated lateness or sudden changes in attendance are considered alongside wider safeguarding information.

Where concerns arise, we work proactively with families and partner agencies to identify barriers and provide appropriate support.

We recognise that every absence tells a story, and understanding that story is essential to effective safeguarding.

Steeton Practice

We don't just ask,

"Why isn't this child in school today?"

We also ask,

"What might this absence be telling us?"

5.5 Inclusion and Belonging

Every child deserves to feel that they belong.

We are committed to creating an inclusive school where children are respected, valued and celebrated for who they are.

Children who experience discrimination, isolation or exclusion may be at greater risk of harm.

Through our inclusive ethos, curriculum and relationships we seek to remove barriers, promote belonging and ensure that every child feels part of our school community.

Safeguarding is strengthened when children know they are accepted exactly as they are.

5.6 The Curriculum as Safeguarding

Safeguarding is taught as well as practised.

Our curriculum equips children with the knowledge, skills and confidence to recognise risks, seek help and make informed decisions.

Through carefully planned learning, children develop understanding of:

- healthy relationships
- consent and personal boundaries
- online safety
- mental wellbeing
- diversity and respect
- managing risk
- seeking support
- recognising trusted adults
- keeping themselves and others safe.

Safeguarding themes are revisited throughout children's time at Steeton Primary School in age-appropriate ways that build understanding progressively.

We recognise that safeguarding education is most effective when it is embedded across the curriculum rather than taught as isolated lessons.

5.7 Working Alongside Families

Parents and carers are children's first educators and most important influence.

Positive relationships between school and home are fundamental to effective safeguarding.

We seek to work openly, honestly and respectfully with families, recognising their strengths whilst providing support where needed.

Where concerns arise, we will usually discuss these with parents at the earliest appropriate opportunity.

However, where doing so would place a child at greater risk of harm, we will act in accordance with statutory safeguarding guidance.

Our shared aim is always to achieve the best possible outcomes for children.

Steeton Practice

Difficult conversations are often the most important conversations.

We approach them with honesty, kindness and the child's best interests at the centre.

5.8 Site Safety

Children learn best when they feel physically safe.

The school is committed to maintaining a secure learning environment through effective site management, visitor procedures and health and safety practices.

Safeguarding considerations inform decisions regarding:

- site security
- visitor management
- educational visits
- arrival and collection arrangements
- emergency procedures
- risk assessments
- premises development.

Safeguarding is considered whenever changes are made to the physical environment.

5.9 Staff Wellbeing

Children are best supported by adults who feel supported themselves.

The school recognises that safeguarding can be emotionally demanding and is committed to promoting staff wellbeing.

Staff are encouraged to seek advice, access supervision where appropriate and speak openly with leaders if they require support.

We believe that a culture of openness, trust and mutual support strengthens safeguarding practice across the school.

5.10 Continuous Reflection

Safeguarding is never static.

Leaders continually review safeguarding practice through:

- monitoring
- audit
- professional discussion
- learning from incidents
- feedback from children
- feedback from families
- staff training

- local and national safeguarding updates.

This enables safeguarding arrangements to evolve continuously in response to emerging risks and the changing needs of our community.

Looking Beyond Today

At Steeton Primary School, our ambition is not simply that children leave school safe today, but that they leave with the knowledge, confidence and judgement to keep themselves safe throughout their lives.

This reflects our vision of Learning for Life. We believe safeguarding and education are inseparable. Through the relationships we build, the curriculum we teach and the culture we create, we prepare children not only for their time at Steeton, but for the opportunities, responsibilities and challenges they will encounter beyond our school.

Safeguarding is not simply about protecting children from harm. It is about equipping them with the understanding, resilience and confidence to recognise risk, seek help, make informed choices and thrive throughout their lives.

Steeton Reflection

Safeguarding is not an isolated system.

It is the way we welcome children each morning.

The conversations we have.

The relationships we build.

The lessons we teach.

The questions we ask.

The decisions we make.

Every day. For every child.

Working Together to Keep Children Safe

Safeguarding is most effective when professionals, families and agencies work together with a shared commitment to achieving the best possible outcomes for children.

No single professional or organisation holds the complete picture of a child's life. Effective safeguarding depends upon sharing information appropriately, valuing the expertise of others and acting collectively when concerns arise.

At Steeton Primary School we recognise that strong partnerships are fundamental to protecting children and promoting their welfare.

6.1 Working with Families

Parents and carers know their children best and are usually the most important source of support in a child's life.

Wherever possible, we seek to work openly, honestly and respectfully with families.

We believe that positive relationships built on trust, empathy and clear communication enable concerns to be addressed earlier and improve outcomes for children.

Where safeguarding concerns arise, we will usually discuss these with parents or carers before making referrals to external agencies.

However, there will be occasions where informing parents may place a child at greater risk of harm or prejudice a criminal investigation. In these circumstances, advice will be sought from Children's Social Care or the Police and information will be shared in accordance with statutory safeguarding guidance.

The welfare of the child will always remain our paramount consideration.

Steeton Practice

We begin with the assumption that families want the very best for their children.

Even when conversations are difficult, we approach them with honesty, compassion and professionalism.

6.2 Early Help

Some children and families benefit from support long before statutory intervention becomes necessary.

Early Help is about recognising emerging needs, identifying strengths as well as challenges and providing support before concerns escalate.

At Steeton Primary School we believe that providing help early is one of the most effective forms of safeguarding.

Early Help may include support relating to:

- attendance
- emotional wellbeing
- family circumstances
- behaviour
- parenting support
- housing
- financial difficulties
- SEND
- health needs
- relationships
- bereavement
- domestic abuse.

Where appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will coordinate Early Help assessments, work collaboratively with families and involve relevant agencies to ensure support is timely and effective.

Support will be reviewed regularly to ensure it continues to meet the child's needs.

6.3 Working with Other Professionals

Safeguarding is strengthened when professionals work collaboratively.

The school works closely with a range of agencies including:

- Children's Social Care
- Early Help Services
- Health professionals
- Educational Psychology

- Police
- Virtual School
- SEND services
- Attendance services
- Mental Health Support Teams
- local authority safeguarding advisers
- voluntary organisations.

We value the expertise each agency brings and contribute fully to multi-agency planning, information sharing and decision making.

6.4 Information Sharing

Information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.

At Steeton Primary School we recognise that timely, accurate and proportionate information sharing enables professionals to make informed decisions that protect children.

Information will only be shared where it is:

- necessary
- proportionate
- relevant
- accurate
- timely
- secure.

We will always comply with data protection legislation while recognising that safeguarding children takes precedence where there is a risk of harm.

Where appropriate, consent will be sought before information is shared.

However, consent is not required where doing so would:

- increase risk to a child
- delay appropriate safeguarding action
- prejudice the prevention or detection of crime
- compromise the safety of another individual.

Steeton Practice

Good safeguarding depends upon good communication.

We never allow uncertainty about information sharing to become a barrier to protecting a child.

6.5 Child Protection Conferences and Multi-Agency Meetings

Where children are supported through statutory safeguarding processes, the school will participate fully in multi-agency planning.

The school will:

- attend Child Protection Conferences wherever possible
- contribute to Child in Need meetings
- participate in Core Groups
- attend Team Around the Family meetings
- contribute to Early Help reviews
- provide clear, factual and child-centred reports
- implement agreed actions promptly
- monitor progress and review impact.

The views, wishes and experiences of the child will remain central throughout these processes.

6.6 Professional Challenge

Effective safeguarding relies upon professionals being willing to ask questions and respectfully challenge decisions where necessary.

At Steeton Primary School we encourage staff to:

- seek clarification when unsure
- question respectfully
- escalate concerns appropriately
- challenge decisions that do not appear to place the child at the centre.

Professional challenge is not about criticism.

It is about ensuring children receive the support they need.

Steeton Practice

The most effective safeguarding partnerships are built on trust, honesty and respectful challenge.

Asking difficult questions is sometimes one of the most important things we can do for a child.

6.7 When Children Move Schools

Transitions can be periods of increased vulnerability.

The school is committed to ensuring safeguarding information is transferred securely, promptly and in accordance with statutory guidance whenever children join or leave Steeton Primary School.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that:

- safeguarding records are transferred securely
- records are sent separately from the main pupil file
- receipt is confirmed
- safeguarding information is shared directly with the receiving DSL where appropriate
- vulnerable children receive appropriate support during transition.

Effective transition arrangements help ensure continuity of safeguarding support.

6.8 A Shared Responsibility

Safeguarding works best when nobody works in isolation.

Every conversation, every meeting, every shared piece of information contributes to building a clearer understanding of a child's life.

By working together with families, professionals and partner agencies we strengthen our ability to protect children, provide timely support and improve outcomes.

Steeton Reflection

No one professional holds the whole story.

Every observation.

Every conversation.

Every shared piece of information.

Helps us understand the child more fully.

Together, we see the bigger picture.

Chapter 7 Understanding Safeguarding Risks

Safeguarding is continually evolving.

The experiences, opportunities and risks facing children today are different from those of previous generations. As these risks change, so too must our understanding and our response.

At Steeton Primary School, we recognise that safeguarding extends far beyond the traditional categories of abuse. Children may be vulnerable to harm in many different contexts, including within their families, their communities, their peer relationships and the online world.

We are committed to ensuring that staff remain informed about emerging safeguarding issues and understand how these may present within primary-aged children.

Above all, we recognise that every safeguarding concern should be considered within the context of the individual child.

7.1 A Contextual Approach to Safeguarding

Children's experiences do not happen in isolation.

The environments in which children live, learn and socialise all influence their safety and wellbeing.

Safeguarding therefore requires us to consider not only what is happening to a child, but also the wider circumstances that may be affecting them.

These may include:

- family circumstances
- peer relationships
- online activity
- neighbourhood influences
- community experiences
- experiences outside school.

Understanding context enables us to provide more effective support and make better-informed safeguarding decisions.

Steeton Practice

We don't just ask:

"What has happened to this child?"

We also ask:

"What is happening around this child?"

7.2 Child-on-Child Abuse

Children can abuse other children.

This can happen inside or outside school and may occur face to face or online.

At Steeton Primary School we never dismiss abusive behaviour between children as "banter", "falling out", "part of growing up" or "just children being children."

All concerns are taken seriously.

Child-on-child abuse may include:

- bullying, including prejudice-based bullying
- physical abuse
- sexual violence
- sexual harassment
- harmful sexual behaviour
- initiation or hazing behaviours
- sharing nudes and semi-nudes
- online abuse
- coercion or intimidation.

Children who display harmful behaviour may themselves have experienced abuse or trauma.

Both the child experiencing harm and the child displaying harmful behaviour will receive appropriate support.

Each situation will be considered individually, recognising the needs, vulnerabilities and rights of all children involved.

7.3 Online Safety

The online world offers enormous opportunities for learning, creativity and communication.

It also presents safeguarding risks.

Children increasingly experience the online world at younger ages and may not always recognise when they are at risk.

Online safety is therefore embedded throughout school life rather than taught as a standalone topic.

Staff remain alert to risks including:

- inappropriate content
- online grooming
- cyberbullying
- exploitation
- misinformation
- online radicalisation
- gaming-related risks
- harmful online communities
- excessive screen use
- sharing personal information
- sharing images.

The school maintains appropriate filtering and monitoring systems, teaches children how to navigate online spaces safely and works closely with families to promote safe online behaviours both in and beyond school.

Steeton Practice

Online safety isn't about frightening children.

It's about giving them the knowledge and confidence to make safe choices wherever technology is part of their lives.

7.4 Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence is becoming an increasingly common part of children's lives.

The school recognises both the opportunities and safeguarding considerations associated with AI technologies.

Children will be supported to develop an age-appropriate understanding of:

- safe use of AI tools
- the importance of protecting personal information
- recognising inaccurate or misleading content
- understanding that AI-generated responses may not always be correct

- seeking trusted adult guidance when uncertain.

Staff will remain alert to emerging safeguarding risks associated with AI and adapt practice as technologies continue to develop.

7.5 Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

Positive mental health and safeguarding are closely connected.

Whilst experiencing poor mental health does not in itself indicate that abuse has occurred, changes in emotional wellbeing may be an indicator that a child requires additional support.

Staff are encouraged to notice changes including:

- withdrawal
- persistent anxiety
- low mood
- self-harming behaviours
- emotional dysregulation
- significant changes in behaviour
- concerning language or drawings.

Where concerns arise, these will be considered alongside wider safeguarding information to ensure children receive appropriate support.

7.6 Domestic Abuse

Children can be significantly affected by domestic abuse, whether they witness it directly or experience its impact within family life.

Living with domestic abuse can affect children's:

- emotional wellbeing
- relationships
- behaviour
- attendance
- learning
- sense of safety.

The school works closely with families and external agencies to support children affected by domestic abuse and recognises the importance of providing stability, trusted relationships and consistency.

7.7 Exploitation

All children have the right to be protected from exploitation.

Exploitation may take many forms, including:

- criminal exploitation
- sexual exploitation
- county lines
- coercion
- trafficking.

Although these risks are less common within primary-aged children, they are not absent.

Staff receive training to recognise emerging indicators and will always seek advice where concerns arise.

7.8 Honour-Based Abuse, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

The school recognises that honour-based abuse, forced marriage and female genital mutilation are serious safeguarding issues.

Staff receive training to recognise indicators and understand their statutory responsibilities.

Any concerns will be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and managed in accordance with statutory guidance.

Where the mandatory reporting duty relating to FGM applies, teachers will fulfil their legal responsibilities without delay.

7.9 Preventing Radicalisation

Schools have an important role in protecting children from radicalisation and extremist influences.

At Steeton Primary School we promote:

- respect
- inclusion
- critical thinking
- diversity
- democracy

- individual liberty
- the rule of law
- mutual respect.

Children are encouraged to ask questions, think critically and engage respectfully with different viewpoints.

Staff receive Prevent training and understand how to recognise indicators of radicalisation and how to seek advice when concerns arise.

Steeton Practice

The strongest protection against extremism is a school where children feel they belong, learn to think critically and know their voice matters.

7.10 Attendance, Missing Education and Elective Home Education

Children who are persistently absent or missing from education may be at increased risk of harm.

Attendance concerns are always considered from both an educational and safeguarding perspective.

Where children are absent unexpectedly or patterns of attendance change significantly, appropriate enquiries will be made to establish that they are safe.

Where families choose Elective Home Education, the school will fulfil all statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding records and information sharing.

7.11 Children with Additional Vulnerabilities

Some children require additional safeguarding consideration because of their individual circumstances.

These may include children who:

- have SEND
- are young carers
- are looked after or previously looked after
- have social workers
- experience discrimination
- are affected by bereavement

- have complex medical needs
- have experienced trauma.

Safeguarding practice will always be adapted to recognise individual communication needs, developmental stages and barriers to disclosure.

7.12 Emerging Risks

Safeguarding is continually changing.

Leaders remain informed about emerging safeguarding themes through:

- statutory guidance
- local safeguarding partnerships
- professional networks
- research
- training
- safeguarding reviews.

This ensures that safeguarding practice evolves alongside the changing experiences of children and families.

Steeton Reflection

Children's lives change.

Communities change.

Technology changes.

Safeguarding must change too.

Our commitment remains constant.

To understand children.

To recognise risk.

To respond with compassion.

To act without hesitation.

Safe Adults, Safe School

Children should be able to trust the adults who work with them.

At Steeton Primary School, creating a safe environment begins long before an adult first works with a child. It begins with the way we advertise roles, select people, explore their suitability, complete statutory checks and make clear the professional standards we expect.

Safer recruitment is not simply a series of checks completed before somebody starts work.

It is our first opportunity to safeguard children.

We are committed to recruiting adults who share our values, understand the responsibility that comes with working with children and contribute positively to our safeguarding culture.

That responsibility does not end when recruitment checks are complete. Safe organisations remain vigilant throughout a person's employment or involvement with the school.

8.1 Safer Recruitment

The school follows the safer recruitment requirements set out in current statutory guidance.

Safeguarding is considered at every stage of recruitment, including:

- planning the role
- advertising
- application
- shortlisting
- references
- due diligence
- interview and selection
- pre-appointment checks
- induction
- ongoing professional conduct.

The school will ensure that those involved in recruitment have the appropriate knowledge and experience to identify and explore safeguarding concerns.

At least one member of any recruitment panel will have completed appropriate safer recruitment training.

Safeguarding expectations will be made clear from the beginning of the recruitment process. Job descriptions, person specifications and recruitment information will reflect the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

8.2 Applications and Shortlisting

School will use appropriate application processes that enable recruitment panels to consider an applicant's full employment history, experience and suitability to work with children.

Curriculum vitae will not be accepted in place of a completed application form.

Applications will be scrutinised carefully. Recruitment panels will consider:

- gaps in employment
- inconsistencies in information
- unexplained changes in career
- reasons for leaving previous employment
- repeated short periods of employment
- information requiring further clarification.

Applicants will be given the opportunity to explain any gaps, inconsistencies or concerns.

Shortlisted candidates will be informed that online searches may be undertaken as part of the school's due diligence checks. Any such search will focus only on publicly available information that may be relevant to the candidate's suitability to work with children. Relevant matters may be explored appropriately at interview.

The school will ensure that recruitment decisions are fair, proportionate and compliant with equality and data protection legislation.

8.3 References

References are an important part of safer recruitment and will be obtained directly from the referee.

Where possible, references will be sought before interview so that any concerns or inconsistencies can be explored as part of the selection process.

The school will:

- seek appropriate references from current or recent employers
- verify the identity and authority of referees
- compare references with information provided in the application
- explore discrepancies or concerns

- seek clarification where information is vague or insufficient
- not rely upon open references or testimonials provided by the applicant.

Where an applicant has previously worked with children, the school will seek information about their suitability to do so.

Any safeguarding concerns raised through references will be considered carefully and resolved before an appointment is confirmed.

Steeton Practice

A reference is not a formality.

We read it alongside everything else we know about the candidate and ask questions when the pieces do not fit together.

8.4 Interviews and Selection

Interview is an important opportunity to explore not only whether a candidate can do the job, but whether they are suitable to work within our school community.

Recruitment panels will explore:

- motivation for working with children
- understanding of safeguarding responsibilities
- professional boundaries
- values and behaviours
- any concerns or inconsistencies arising from the application, references or due diligence checks.

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate that they understand the responsibility and trust placed in adults who work with children.

No appointment will be made solely because an individual has the right qualifications or experience.

How an adult thinks about children matters too.

8.5 Pre-Appointment Checks

Before an individual begins work, the school will complete all checks required for the role in accordance with current statutory guidance.

These may include, as appropriate:

- verification of identity
- an enhanced DBS check
- a barred list check
- verification of the right to work in the United Kingdom
- prohibition from teaching checks
- verification of professional qualifications
- checks relating to overseas employment
- childcare disqualification requirements
- any additional checks required because of the nature of the role.

The school will not permit an individual to begin regulated activity unless the required safeguarding checks have been completed or, where specifically permitted by statutory guidance, the school has completed the necessary Children's Barred List check and put appropriate safeguards and a documented risk assessment in place.

Any information disclosed through vetting checks will be considered fairly and proportionately, with the safety of children as the central consideration.

8.5a Regulated Activity and Volunteers

From 1 September 2026, the supervision exemption from regulated activity with children no longer applies. This means that an adult may be undertaking regulated activity even where they are supervised by a member of staff.

Where a volunteer teaches, trains, instructs, cares for or supervises children frequently, including on more than three days in a 30-day period, or as part of an overnight activity, the school will ensure that the appropriate Enhanced DBS check with Children's Barred List information is obtained.

The school will consider the nature and frequency of each volunteer role and complete the level of check required by current statutory guidance. Occasional volunteering will be considered according to the activities undertaken and the frequency of involvement.

No person who is barred from working with children will be permitted to undertake regulated activity.

8.6 The Single Central Record

School maintains its Single Central Record using CPOMS Staffsafe.

The Single Central Record provides assurance that all pre-appointment checks required by law and statutory guidance have been completed for relevant adults working within the school.

The record is maintained accurately and kept under regular review. It includes the appropriate checks for:

- employees
- relevant volunteers
- supply staff
- students and trainees
- contractors and other adults where required.

Responsibility for maintaining the Single Central Record is delegated to the Business Manager, with oversight from school leaders.

The Single Central Record is monitored through:

- regular internal checks
- senior leadership oversight
- governor monitoring
- periodic safeguarding audit.

Where an error, omission or inconsistency is identified, it will be addressed promptly.

Using CPOMS StaffSafe enables the school to maintain a secure, clear and auditable record of recruitment and vetting information as part of our wider safeguarding systems.

8.7 Induction - Becoming Part of Steeton

Recruitment brings an adult into the school.

Induction helps them understand the school they have joined.

Every new member of staff will receive safeguarding induction appropriate to their role before, or as soon as possible after, beginning work.

This will include:

- the school's safeguarding and child protection arrangements
- the identity and role of the safeguarding team
- how to recognise and report concerns
- the use of CPOMS, where relevant
- expectations regarding professional conduct

- the staff code of conduct
- low-level concerns
- whistleblowing
- online safety
- filtering and monitoring responsibilities, where relevant
- site security and emergency procedures.

New staff will be given the information, training and support they need to understand not only the school's procedures, but its safeguarding culture.

Steeton Practice

Induction is not complete when someone has signed to say they have read the policies.

It is complete when they understand how we keep children safe here.

8.8 Ongoing Vigilance

Safer recruitment does not end when an appointment is made.

All adults are expected to maintain the highest standards of professional conduct throughout their time at Steeton Primary School.

The school maintains an ongoing culture of vigilance through:

- clear professional expectations
- regular safeguarding training and updates
- supervision and support
- appropriate performance management
- the reporting of concerns
- low-level concerns procedures
- whistleblowing arrangements
- open professional dialogue.

Where concerns arise about an adult's conduct, behaviour or suitability, these will be acted upon promptly and in accordance with the procedures set out in Chapter 9.

Safeguarding children requires us to remain attentive not only when people join the school, but throughout the time they are part of our community.

8.9 Volunteers

Volunteers make a valuable contribution to life at Steeton Primary School and are welcomed as part of our school community.

We also recognise that volunteering places adults in a position of trust. Our arrangements are therefore carefully managed according to the nature of the role, frequency of involvement, level of supervision and degree of contact with children.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead oversees the induction of volunteers. Mrs Kennedy meets with volunteers to ensure that, before beginning their role, they understand:

- the school's safeguarding culture
- how to recognise and report a concern
- who the safeguarding team are
- the standards of conduct expected
- the importance of professional boundaries
- what to do if they are worried about a child or an adult.

Appropriate checks will be completed according to the nature of the volunteer's role and in accordance with statutory guidance.

No volunteer will be left unsupervised or permitted to undertake regulated activity unless the appropriate checks have been completed.

Volunteers will:

- receive safeguarding information appropriate to their role
- know how to report a concern
- understand the standards of conduct expected
- work within agreed boundaries
- be appropriately supervised.

The suitability, induction and supervision arrangements for volunteers will remain under review.

Steeton Practice

Volunteers do not simply sign a form and begin working with children.

We take time to make sure they understand the school they are joining and the responsibility that comes with being a trusted adult at Steeton.

8.10 Visitors

We want Steeton to be a welcoming school.

We also have a responsibility to know who is on our site and why.

Visitors will follow the school's Inventory sign-in and identification procedures and will receive appropriate safeguarding information.

The level of supervision required will depend upon:

- the purpose of the visit
- the visitor's role
- the checks already completed
- the nature and frequency of contact with children.

Visitors must never be given unsupervised access to children unless the school has received appropriate assurance that relevant safeguarding checks have been completed.

All staff share responsibility for maintaining site security and should respectfully challenge any adult whose identity or reason for being on site is unclear.

Steeton Practice

Being welcoming and being vigilant are not opposites.

We can greet people warmly and still ask:

"Can I help you?"

8.11 Contractors and External Providers

School works with contractors, agencies and external providers in a range of contexts.

Before adults are permitted to work on site or with children, the school will obtain appropriate assurance regarding safeguarding checks, suitability and supervision.

The arrangements required will depend upon:

- the nature of the work
- the frequency of attendance
- whether work takes place during the school day
- the likelihood of contact with children
- whether adults will be supervised.

External organisations providing activities or services for children will be expected to have appropriate safeguarding arrangements of their own.

Where school premises are used by external organisations, the school will ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place and will act if concerns arise about the organisation's practice.

The fact that an organisation is separate from Steeton Primary School does not remove our responsibility to respond to safeguarding concerns that come to our attention.

8.12 Supply Staff, Students and Trainees

Supply Staff

Steeton Primary School uses Just Teachers as its established supply agency.

We have a strong and well-established working relationship with the agency and are familiar with its recruitment, vetting and safeguarding arrangements.

Before a supply member of staff works in school, we receive appropriate confirmation that the required checks have been completed. Identity is checked on arrival and supply staff receive safeguarding information appropriate to their role.

We do not assume that familiarity removes the need for vigilance. Every supply member of staff remains subject to the same professional expectations, safeguarding procedures and standards of conduct as other adults working at Steeton.

Any safeguarding or conduct concern relating to a supply member of staff will be acted upon promptly and managed in accordance with statutory guidance.

Students and Trainees

Steeton Primary School is a partner in Unity Teacher Training, in partnership with Leeds Trinity University and takes direct responsibility for the students and trainees placed within our school.

Students are not treated simply as visitors to the school. They become part of our professional community and are expected to understand and contribute to our safeguarding culture.

Jo Elliott is the ITT lead and, alongside school mentors, manages their placement, induction and ongoing support directly, ensuring that they understand:

- the school's safeguarding and child protection arrangements
- how to recognise and report concerns
- who the safeguarding team are
- how CPOMS is used, where access is appropriate to their role
- professional boundaries and expected conduct
- low-level concerns
- whistleblowing

- online safety
- the responsibilities that come with working with children.

Appropriate recruitment and vetting checks are confirmed and recorded in accordance with statutory requirements.

Students and trainees are supervised according to their stage of training, experience and role. As their professional responsibility develops, so too does the expectation that they understand safeguarding not simply as a procedure, but as a fundamental part of being a teacher.

Steeton Practice

Our trainees are learning how to teach.

They are also learning what it means to be a trusted adult in a school.

Safeguarding is part of their professional formation from the very beginning.

When Concerns Are About an Adult

Children are safest in organisations where adults are willing to notice, question and speak up.

At Steeton Primary School, we expect the highest standards of professional conduct from every adult who works with or on behalf of the school. Most adults fulfil this responsibility with great care and integrity.

However, safeguarding also requires us to recognise that concerns can arise about adults.

These concerns must always be taken seriously.

They may relate to:

- a member of staff
- the Headteacher
- a governor
- a volunteer
- a supply teacher
- a student or trainee
- a contractor
- a visitor
- an adult working for an external organisation using the school site.

Concerns may arise from something an adult has done, something another person has observed, information shared by a child or adult, or simply a sense that professional boundaries may have been crossed.

No member of staff is expected to decide how serious a concern is before reporting it.

The responsibility is to speak up.

The responsibility for deciding what happens next sits with those trained to make that decision.

9.1 Two Different Thresholds

Concerns about adults fall broadly into two categories:

1. Concerns or allegations that may meet the harm threshold

These are concerns that an adult may have:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved, or may have behaved, in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

2. Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

These are often referred to as **low-level concerns**.

The word *low-level* does not mean unimportant.

It means that the concern does not appear to meet the threshold for an allegation of harm.

Both types of concern must be reported.

Staff are not expected to decide which threshold applies.

Steeton Practice

You do not need to know whether something is:

an allegation
a low-level concern
a conduct issue
or a misunderstanding.

Tell us what happened. We will decide the correct process.

9.2 If You Have a Concern About an Adult

Any concern about an adult working in or on behalf of the school must be reported immediately.

Concerns about a member of staff, volunteer, supply teacher, student, trainee, contractor or other adult should be reported to the **Headteacher**.

Concerns about the **Headteacher** should be reported to the **Chair of Governors**.

Where there is a conflict of interest, or where the person to whom the concern would normally be reported is unavailable or implicated, the concern must be escalated to an appropriate senior person or directly to the relevant local authority safeguarding service.

Staff must not:

- investigate the concern themselves
- question children or witnesses
- discuss the matter widely
- confront the adult concerned
- delay reporting while trying to gather further information.

The concern should be shared promptly, factually and confidentially.

9.3 Concerns That May Meet the Harm Threshold

Where a concern or allegation may meet the harm threshold, the Headteacher will act without delay.

The first priority will always be to ensure that any child involved is safe.

The Headteacher will consider the available information and seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures.

The school will not undertake an investigation before seeking appropriate advice where this could compromise a statutory or criminal investigation.

Depending upon the circumstances, the process may involve:

- the LADO
- Children's Social Care
- the Police
- the local authority
- the school's HR adviser
- the Disclosure and Barring Service
- the Teaching Regulation Agency.

The school will follow statutory and local procedures throughout.

All decisions and actions will be recorded carefully.

9.4 Suspension Is Not an Automatic Response

An allegation does not automatically mean that an adult will be suspended.

The school will consider each situation carefully, fairly and proportionately, taking appropriate advice.

Where possible, alternatives to suspension will be considered.

Any decision will take account of:

- the safety and welfare of children
- the nature and seriousness of the concern
- the risk of further harm

- the integrity of any investigation
- the rights and wellbeing of the adult concerned.

The school will not reach conclusions before the relevant information has been considered.

Safeguarding children and treating adults fairly are not competing responsibilities.

Both matter.

9.5 Supporting Everyone Involved

Concerns or allegations involving adults can be distressing for everyone involved.

The school will ensure appropriate support for:

- the child or children concerned
- parents and carers, where appropriate
- the adult who is the subject of the concern
- staff affected by the situation.

Information will only be shared with those who need to know.

The school will maintain confidentiality and follow statutory requirements regarding communication, record keeping and the sharing of information.

Children's welfare will remain the paramount consideration throughout.

9.6 Low-Level Concerns

A low-level concern is any concern about an adult's behaviour that is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside work, but which does not meet the harm threshold.

A low-level concern may be no more than:

- a sense of unease
- a nagging doubt
- something that appears out of character
- a concern that professional boundaries may have been crossed.

Examples might include an adult:

- being over-friendly with a child
- showing favouritism
- using inappropriate or humiliating language

- communicating with children outside agreed professional channels
- taking photographs on a personal device
- spending time alone with a child in circumstances that cause concern
- behaving in a way that is inconsistent with expected professional boundaries.

The examples above are not exhaustive.

Context matters.

A concern does not have to be serious enough to meet the harm threshold before it is worth sharing.

9.7 Reporting Low-Level Concerns

All low-level concerns should be reported to the Headteacher as soon as possible.

Staff are encouraged to report concerns even where:

- they are uncertain whether the behaviour was inappropriate
- no child appears to have been harmed
- the incident seems minor
- they are worried about getting someone into trouble.

Reporting a concern is not an accusation.

It is the sharing of information so that the concern can be considered properly.

The Headteacher will review the information and determine the appropriate response.

This may include:

- establishing further facts
- reviewing the staff code of conduct
- providing advice or guidance
- addressing a training need
- strengthening supervision
- taking management action
- following disciplinary procedures
- seeking advice from the LADO if further information suggests the harm threshold may be met.

9.8 Self-Reporting

We encourage adults to speak openly when something has happened that:

- may have been misinterpreted
- did not go as planned
- may appear concerning without context
- fell below the professional standard they expect of themselves.

Self-reporting is part of a healthy safeguarding culture.

It enables concerns to be considered openly, protects children and can protect adults from misunderstandings becoming more serious.

We would always rather an adult say:

"I need to tell you what happened."

than hope that nobody noticed.

Steeton Practice

Safe professionals reflect on their own practice.

Speaking up about a mistake or an interaction that could be misunderstood is a sign of professional responsibility, not weakness.

9.9 Recording and Reviewing Low-Level Concerns

Low-level concerns will be recorded securely and confidentially using CPOMS StaffSafe.

The record will include:

- the details of the concern
- the context in which it arose
- the action taken
- the rationale for decisions made.

Records will be reviewed so that any patterns of concerning, inappropriate or problematic behaviour can be identified.

The school will also consider whether patterns reveal wider issues relating to:

- school culture
- staff training
- supervision

- induction
- policy
- professional expectations.

Where a pattern of behaviour emerges, the school will consider whether the harm threshold has been met and whether advice should be sought from the LADO.

Low-level concerns are not simply filed away.

They are considered, reviewed and learned from.

9.10 Concerns About Supply Staff

Where a concern relates to a member of supply staff, the school will not simply end the booking and consider the matter closed.

The school will follow its safeguarding procedures, liaise with Just Teachers and involve the LADO where the harm threshold may be met.

We value our strong working relationship with Just Teachers and will work collaboratively to ensure concerns are managed properly, information is shared appropriately and children remain protected.

The fact that an adult is employed by an agency does not reduce the school's responsibility to act.

9.11 Concerns About Students and Trainees

Students and trainees are expected to meet the same safeguarding and professional standards as other adults working within the school.

Where a concern arises about a trainee placed through Unity Teacher Training, the school will act promptly and manage the concern through the appropriate safeguarding process.

As we manage our trainees directly through Unity Teacher Training, school leaders will ensure that safeguarding decisions, placement arrangements and any necessary professional action are coordinated appropriately.

A concern will never be treated only as a training or competency issue where there may be a safeguarding dimension.

9.12 Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is different from reporting an individual low-level concern.

It is the process through which an adult raises concerns about:

- unsafe practice
- failures in safeguarding arrangements
- wrongdoing
- serious misconduct
- a culture where concerns are ignored or concealed.

Every member of staff has a responsibility to speak up if they believe children may be placed at risk by the actions, decisions or failures of the organisation or those within it.

Concerns should be raised through the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

Where staff feel unable to raise concerns internally, or believe concerns have not been addressed, they may use appropriate external whistleblowing routes.

No member of staff will be disadvantaged for raising a genuine concern in good faith.

Steeton Practice

Loyalty to colleagues must never come before responsibility to children.

A strong safeguarding culture is not one where concerns never happen.

It is one where people are confident they will be heard when they speak.

9.13 Learning From Concerns

Every concern about an adult is an opportunity to consider whether our safeguarding arrangements can be strengthened.

Where appropriate, leaders will ask:

- Was the concern recognised quickly?
- Did people know how to report it?
- Were professional boundaries clear?
- Did our procedures work?
- Is further training needed?
- Is there anything we need to change?

Safeguarding organisations do not simply close cases.

They learn from them.

Learning, Training and Staying Curious

Excellent safeguarding depends upon adults who continue to learn.

The risks children face change. Guidance changes. Technology changes. Our understanding of abuse, neglect, vulnerability and exploitation continues to develop.

For this reason, safeguarding training at Steeton Primary School is not treated as an annual event or a compliance exercise.

It is an ongoing professional responsibility.

We are committed to ensuring that every adult has the knowledge, confidence and professional curiosity needed to recognise concerns and act when something does not feel right.

10.1 A Learning Culture

Safeguarding is too important to rely upon what we already know.

At Steeton Primary School, we create opportunities throughout the year for staff to:

- revisit key safeguarding principles
- explore emerging risks
- learn from local and national safeguarding themes
- reflect upon practice
- discuss situations and professional judgement
- ask questions
- learn from experience.

Safeguarding knowledge is strengthened through formal training, but also through everyday professional conversations.

A question asked in the staffroom.

A discussion with the DSL.

A concern reviewed together.

A case reflected upon.

All of these contribute to a stronger safeguarding culture.

10.2 Induction

Every new member of staff receives safeguarding induction.

This begins before, or as soon as possible after, they start work and ensures that they understand:

- our safeguarding culture
- who the safeguarding team are
- how to recognise and report concerns
- how and when to use CPOMS
- what to do if a child makes a disclosure
- how to report concerns about an adult
- low-level concerns
- whistleblowing
- professional boundaries
- the staff code of conduct
- online safety
- filtering and monitoring arrangements
- the safeguarding information relevant to their role.

New staff are provided with the safeguarding policies and statutory information they are required to read.

However, induction is not simply about providing documents.

We take time to ensure that new colleagues understand how safeguarding actually works at Steeton.

10.3 Safeguarding Training for All Staff

All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction and regular updates throughout their employment.

Training is refreshed in accordance with statutory guidance and is supported by safeguarding updates throughout the year.

These may be provided through:

- staff meetings
- briefings
- professional discussion

- email updates
- case reflection
- local safeguarding information
- national guidance and research
- emerging safeguarding themes.

Training is adapted where possible to reflect the children, families and risks relevant to our own school community.

Staff are expected to engage actively with safeguarding training and apply their learning in practice.

10.4 Keeping Children Safe in Education

All staff will read Part One of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and will confirm that they have done so. KCSIE is read and discussed each September as a minimum, with any updates explained.

The school will ensure that staff are supported to understand the guidance rather than simply being expected to read it in isolation.

Key changes and implications for practice will be explained and discussed.

Governors and leaders will ensure that the appropriate parts of the guidance are understood by those with specific safeguarding responsibilities.

10.5 The Safeguarding Team

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads receive training appropriate to their role and in accordance with statutory requirements.

Their professional development enables them to:

- maintain current knowledge of legislation and guidance
- understand local safeguarding procedures
- lead effective child protection practice
- support and advise colleagues
- contribute effectively to multi-agency working
- understand emerging safeguarding risks
- oversee high-quality record keeping
- evaluate and strengthen safeguarding practice.

The safeguarding team also learns through professional networks, local authority updates, multi-agency work and reflection upon practice.

Safeguarding expertise is never considered complete.

10.6 The DSL as a Source of Expertise

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is a visible and accessible source of safeguarding expertise within the school.

Staff are encouraged to seek advice whenever they are uncertain.

This may be about:

- a child's behaviour
- something a child has said
- a change in attendance
- a family circumstance
- an online concern
- professional boundaries
- a concern about another adult
- whether something should be recorded.

The DSL supports staff to think carefully and act appropriately, while ensuring that safeguarding responsibility remains shared across the school.

The strength of the safeguarding team does not remove the responsibility of others to notice and report.

It gives them the confidence and support to do so well.

Steeton Practice

Mrs Kennedy would always rather have a conversation that turns out not to be a safeguarding concern than miss the conversation that mattered.

Ask.

10.7 Learning Through Discussion

Some of the most valuable safeguarding learning happens through professional discussion.

Where confidentiality allows, staff may be supported to reflect upon:

- how concerns presented
- what was noticed
- what helped
- what could have been recognised earlier
- how different pieces of information connected
- what can be learned for the future.

Children and families will never be discussed inappropriately or used as training examples without careful consideration of confidentiality.

The purpose of reflection is always to improve practice.

We do not seek to blame people for what was not known at the time.

We seek to become better at noticing next time.

10.8 Role-Specific Training

Different roles create different safeguarding responsibilities.

Additional training will therefore be provided where appropriate for:

- the safeguarding team
- governors
- leaders
- staff involved in recruitment
- staff supporting children with intimate care or medical needs
- staff working in particular areas of identified risk.

Volunteers, students, trainees, supply staff and external adults will receive safeguarding information appropriate to their role and level of contact with children.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, but every responsibility looks different.

10.9 Governors

Governors receive safeguarding and child protection training appropriate to their strategic responsibilities.

This enables them to:

- understand their statutory duties
- provide effective challenge

- evaluate the school's safeguarding culture
- understand safer recruitment responsibilities
- assure themselves that policies and procedures are effective
- recognise the importance of online safety and filtering and monitoring
- maintain appropriate strategic oversight.

The safeguarding governor works closely with school leaders to understand how safeguarding operates in practice.

Governor monitoring is not designed to re-investigate individual cases.

Its purpose is to ask:

Are our systems effective?

Do people understand them?

Are children safe?

10.10 Staying Curious

Safeguarding training should never make adults feel that they have seen everything.

The strongest safeguarding professionals remain curious.

They recognise that:

- children do not always disclose directly
- circumstances change
- small concerns can become patterns
- new risks emerge
- assumptions can be wrong
- there is always more to learn.

At Steeton Primary School, professional curiosity is not a training topic.

It is a habit.

We notice.

We ask.

We reflect.

We learn.

Recording What Matters

Safeguarding is often about seeing the bigger picture.

One conversation may seem insignificant.

One change in behaviour may appear unremarkable.

One late arrival, one comment, one unusual interaction or one moment of concern may not, on its own, suggest that a child is at risk.

But when information is recorded consistently over time, patterns begin to emerge.

At Steeton Primary School, CPOMS is integral to our safeguarding practice. We encourage staff to record concerns, observations and information even when they appear small.

We do not wait until something becomes a safeguarding concern before recording it.

We record because it may become part of the picture.

11.1 CPOMS at Steeton

CPOMS is our central system for recording, sharing and monitoring information about children.

It is used to record:

- safeguarding concerns
- disclosures
- changes in presentation or wellbeing
- concerning comments or conversations
- information shared by parents or carers
- attendance-related concerns
- significant family information
- contact with external agencies
- actions and decisions
- behaviour incidents.

The inclusion of behaviour information is deliberate.

Behaviour can be communication. A pattern of incidents, a sudden change or behaviour that appears unusual for a particular child may contribute to a wider understanding of their experiences and needs.

By bringing relevant information together, CPOMS helps staff and leaders see the whole child rather than isolated incidents.

11.2 No Concern Is Too Small

Staff are actively encouraged to record information even where they are uncertain whether it is significant.

A single entry may never lead to further action.

That is okay.

Our expectation is not that every CPOMS entry becomes a safeguarding case.

Our expectation is that adults share the information they hold so that those with appropriate oversight can consider it alongside everything else we know.

Staff should not withhold information because:

- they think it may be too small
- they are unsure whether it is safeguarding
- they do not want to overreact
- they think somebody else may already know
- the child appears fine now
- they cannot see a pattern themselves.

The person recording one piece of information may not know about the other pieces.

That is why we record.

Steeton Practice

You may hold one piece of the puzzle.

You are not expected to see the whole picture.

Put your piece in.

11.3 Recording Behaviour

At Steeton Primary School, CPOMS is not used only for safeguarding concerns.

We also record behaviour.

This enables us to:

- identify patterns over time
- recognise changes in behaviour
- understand triggers and context
- consider whether behaviour may indicate unmet need
- connect behaviour with attendance, wellbeing or safeguarding information
- evaluate the effectiveness of support
- ensure that children are understood fairly and accurately.

Recording behaviour does not mean that every behaviour incident is a safeguarding concern.

It means that we recognise the value of seeing information together.

A series of apparently separate incidents may tell us something important when viewed as a whole.

11.4 Language Matters

The words we use create a picture of a child.

That picture must be accurate.

Safeguarding and behaviour records may be read months or years later by colleagues, other schools, social workers, health professionals, the Police or other agencies. The language we use can influence how others understand a child and their experiences.

For this reason, records must be:

- factual
- specific
- objective
- proportionate
- respectful
- free from unnecessary exaggeration
- clear about what was seen, heard or reported.

Staff should record observable behaviour rather than attach labels or make assumptions about intent.

For example, a record should describe what a child did or said rather than simply characterising them as *aggressive*, *attention-seeking*, *manipulative*, *defiant* or *out of control*.

Where interpretation or professional opinion is relevant, it should be clearly identified as such and supported by the information on which it is based.

Our SENDCo has contributed to the development of shared language for recording behaviour. This helps staff describe what they have observed accurately, particularly where a child's behaviour may be connected to SEND, communication, regulation or unmet need.

The purpose is not to minimise behaviour.

It is to describe it truthfully.

Steeton Practice

Compare:

"The child became extremely aggressive and completely lost control."

with:

"The child pushed the chair away, shouted 'leave me alone' and left the classroom."

The second record tells us what happened.

Good records describe before they interpret.

11.5 Writing a Good CPOMS Entry

A good CPOMS entry enables somebody who was not present to understand what happened.

Where relevant, it should include:

- the date and time
- the context
- where the incident or conversation took place
- who was present
- what was seen or heard
- the child's exact words
- the source of information
- any immediate action taken
- who has been informed.

Staff should distinguish clearly between:

- direct observation
- information reported by somebody else

- the child's own words
- professional opinion.

Records should not contain speculation presented as fact.

They should be detailed enough to be useful, but not padded with unnecessary information.

Steeton Practice

Before submitting an entry, ask:

Would somebody who was not there understand exactly what happened?

If not, add what is missing.

11.6 Learning What a Good One Looks Like

High-quality recording is a professional skill.

We do not assume that staff will automatically know how to write an effective safeguarding or behaviour record simply because they know how to use CPOMS.

Mrs Kennedy provides regular CPOMS training for staff.

This includes the use of **WAGOLLS - What A Good One Looks Like** - to explore the features of clear, factual and useful records.

Staff also review fictional examples of entries that are not adequate and discuss:

- what is missing
- what is unclear
- where language is subjective
- where assumptions have been made
- where unnecessary exaggeration changes the picture
- what a better record would look like.

These discussions help create consistency across the school.

We spend time considering language because words matter.

A safeguarding record should help the reader understand the child more accurately.

It should never distort the picture.

Steeton Practice

We do not train staff simply to use CPOMS.

We train them to use it well.

11.7 Using Children's Own Words

Where a child shares something significant, their own words should be recorded wherever possible.

Staff should:

- use quotation marks for the child's exact words
- avoid translating the child's language into adult terminology
- record questions they asked where these are relevant
- make clear where wording is exact and where it is a summary.

Children may use words that appear unusual, unclear or insignificant.

Those words should not be corrected, improved or interpreted within the factual account.

The child's voice matters.

11.8 Recording Promptly

Concerns should be recorded as soon as possible.

Prompt recording helps ensure that:

- important details are not forgotten
- the child's words are captured accurately
- information can be considered quickly
- action is not delayed
- the chronology remains clear.

Where a concern is urgent, speaking directly to the safeguarding team must always come first.

CPOMS should never delay immediate action.

The record should then be completed as soon as possible afterwards.

Steeton Practice

Urgent concern? Speak first. Record second.

CPOMS is a safeguarding tool.

It is not a substitute for a conversation.

11.9 Seeing the Bigger Picture

The value of CPOMS lies not only in individual entries, but in the picture that develops over time.

Information may connect across:

- safeguarding
- behaviour
- attendance
- wellbeing
- family circumstances
- peer relationships
- online activity
- external agency involvement.

A pattern may be visible to the safeguarding team that is not visible to the person making an individual entry.

This is why staff should not decide that information is unimportant simply because they cannot see what it connects to.

Safeguarding is often about joining the dots.

CPOMS helps us keep the dots.

11.10 DSL Oversight

Mrs Kennedy monitors CPOMS regularly.

This active oversight is a central part of how safeguarding works at Steeton.

Entries are not simply stored.

They are read, considered and, where necessary, acted upon.

The DSL may:

- review previous records
- identify patterns or changes
- seek further information
- speak with the child
- speak with staff
- contact parents or carers

- monitor attendance or behaviour
- consult Children's Social Care
- contact other relevant agencies
- make a referral
- initiate or coordinate further support.

The action taken will depend upon the information available, the wider context and the needs of the child.

Not every entry requires intervention.

Every entry contributes to our understanding.

Steeton Practice

CPOMS is not a filing cabinet.

Information goes in so that it can be understood.

Understanding leads to professional judgement.

Professional judgement leads to action when action is needed.

11.11 Actions and Outcomes

Safeguarding records should show not only what the concern was, but what happened next.

Where action is taken, this should be recorded clearly.

This may include:

- discussion with the child
- contact with parents or carers
- consultation with the safeguarding team
- advice from an external agency
- contact with Children's Social Care
- a referral
- monitoring arrangements
- support put in place
- the rationale for a decision.

Good records enable somebody reviewing the chronology to understand both the information received and the school's response.

Where no immediate action is required, the information remains part of the child's wider record and may inform future decision-making.

11.12 Confidentiality and Access

Safeguarding records are confidential.

Access to CPOMS is managed according to role and responsibility.

Staff must:

- access only information appropriate to their role
- never share passwords or login details
- protect information from unauthorised access
- discuss safeguarding information only with those who need to know
- follow school procedures for secure information handling.

Confidentiality does not mean secrecy.

Information will be shared where necessary to protect a child and promote their welfare.

11.13 When Children Move Schools

Safeguarding information must follow the child.

When a child leaves Steeton Primary School, relevant safeguarding records will be transferred securely to the receiving school in accordance with statutory guidance.

Where there are significant concerns, the DSL will make direct contact with the DSL at the receiving school to ensure that important information is understood and support can continue without interruption.

Receipt of records will be confirmed.

Safeguarding records will be transferred separately from the main pupil file.

When a child joins Steeton, the safeguarding team will ensure that records received are reviewed and that relevant information informs the support provided.

A child's story should not have to begin again because they change schools.

11.14 StaffSafe

The same principles of accurate, secure and purposeful recording apply to information about adults.

Steeton Primary School uses CPOMS StaffSafe to support the secure management of relevant staff information and the Single Central Record.

Where concerns about adults are recorded, records must be:

- factual
- accurate
- proportionate
- confidential
- securely maintained
- accessible only to those with appropriate responsibility.

As with pupil records, language matters.

StaffSafe is not simply a place to store information. Records must support appropriate oversight, enable patterns to be recognised and provide a clear account of concerns, decisions and actions.

The distinction between safeguarding concerns, low-level concerns, allegations, conduct matters and other staff information will be maintained in accordance with statutory guidance and school procedures.

11.15 Records That Tell the Story

The purpose of safeguarding records is not to create more paperwork.

It is to ensure that important information is not lost.

Over time, a good safeguarding chronology should allow an authorised professional to understand:

- what was happening for the child
- what adults noticed
- what the child said
- how concerns developed
- what action was taken
- why decisions were made
- what support was provided.

Every entry contributes to that story.

We owe it to children to record it well.

Steeton Reflection

One entry may seem small.

One observation may appear unimportant.

One moment may not make sense yet.

Record it.

Because safeguarding is often found not in one dramatic event, but in the picture that appears when the pieces are brought together.

Notice.

Record.

Connect.

Understand.

Act.

Online Safety, Filtering and Monitoring

The online world is part of children's lives.

At Steeton Primary School, we recognise the opportunities technology provides for learning, creativity and communication. We also recognise that online safety is an essential part of safeguarding.

Our approach is not based on fear or avoidance. We aim to give children the knowledge, confidence and judgement to navigate the online world safely - at school, at home and throughout their lives.

12.1 Online Safety at Steeton

Online safety is considered across four broad areas of risk:

- **content** - what children may see
- **contact** - who they may interact with
- **conduct** - how they and others may behave online
- **commerce** - risks including advertising, scams and gambling.

Children are taught about online safety through the curriculum and through age-appropriate responses to emerging issues.

We work alongside families, recognising that children's online lives extend far beyond the school day.

Steeton Practice

Online safety is not about teaching children to fear technology.

It is about helping them develop the knowledge and judgement to use it well.

12.2 Filtering and Monitoring

The school maintains appropriate filtering and monitoring systems to protect children and adults using school networks and devices.

Our IT support is provided by LA COMMS, who work with the school to monitor systems and provide regular information about online activity, including attempts to bypass filtering arrangements.

Leaders ensure that:

- filtering and monitoring systems are appropriate to the school's needs and risks
- information and alerts are reviewed and acted upon
- attempted breaches can be investigated
- arrangements are reviewed regularly
- governors maintain appropriate strategic oversight.

Filtering and monitoring support professional vigilance.

They do not replace it.

12.3 Knowing Who Is Using Our Devices

School devices are managed so that online activity can be traced appropriately.

The school maintains clear records of which iPad is allocated to each pupil. This means that, where a concern or attempted breach is identified, leaders can establish which child was using the device and respond promptly.

This allows us to:

- investigate concerns quickly
- understand what the child was trying to access and why
- speak directly with the child
- identify whether further safeguarding concerns exist
- provide timely education and support
- take further action where necessary.

Children understand that activity on school devices is filtered and monitored.

Our response is not simply about sanction. Where a child attempts to access inappropriate content or bypass school systems, we use this as an opportunity to understand, educate and safeguard.

Steeton Practice

Monitoring tells us what happened.

The conversation with the child helps us understand why.

We need both.

12.4 Every Adult's Responsibility

All staff have a responsibility for online safety.

Staff must:

- use school technology in accordance with agreed policies
- remain alert to inappropriate or concerning online activity
- report concerns promptly
- never deliberately bypass filtering or monitoring systems
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries online
- understand their responsibilities within the school's filtering and monitoring arrangements.

Any online safety concern about a child must be recorded on CPOMS and shared with the safeguarding team where appropriate.

12.5 Working Alongside Families

Children's online lives extend far beyond the school day.

We work alongside parents and carers to help families understand emerging risks and support children to use technology safely.

Relevant and current online safety information is regularly shared through the school's weekly newsletter. This may include new apps, online trends, emerging risks or practical advice for families.

This enables parents and carers to have timely conversations with their children and helps create a shared approach to online safety between school and home.

12.6 Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technology

Technology changes quickly.

The school remains alert to emerging risks, including those associated with artificial intelligence, manipulated images, misinformation and increasingly realistic generated content.

Children are supported to understand that:

- not everything online is true
- personal information should be protected
- images and content can be created or manipulated
- technology should never be used to harm, humiliate or exploit others
- trusted adults can help when something online feels wrong.

Our approach will continue to evolve as technology changes.

Steeton Reflection

Technology changes. The tools children use will change. The risks will change.

Our responsibility remains the same: To help children recognise risk. Make informed choices.

Ask for help. And learn to navigate the world safely.

Learning for Life.

Safeguarding Children with Additional Vulnerabilities

Every child can experience harm.

Some children, however, may face additional barriers to being safe, being heard or receiving the help they need.

At Steeton Primary School, we do not assume that vulnerability sits neatly within a label or category. A child's circumstances may change, vulnerabilities may overlap and needs may not always be immediately visible.

Our responsibility is to know children well enough to notice.

13.1 Seeing the Whole Child

Children may require additional safeguarding consideration because of:

- special educational needs or disabilities
- communication needs
- involvement with Children's Social Care
- being looked after or previously looked after
- caring responsibilities
- poor attendance
- mental health or emotional needs
- medical needs
- bereavement or trauma
- family circumstances
- poverty or financial hardship
- experiences of discrimination
- any other barrier to their safety, wellbeing or ability to flourish.

We recognise that one child may experience several of these circumstances at the same time.

Safeguarding decisions will therefore always consider the whole child rather than a single label, incident or area of need.

Steeton Practice

We do not ask:

"Which category does this child fit into?"

We ask:

"What is happening for this child, and what might they need from us?"

13.2 Children with SEND

Children with SEND may face additional safeguarding vulnerabilities.

They may:

- experience barriers to communication
- find it harder to recognise or report abuse
- be more dependent upon adults
- experience isolation or bullying
- display changes through behaviour rather than words
- have signs of harm mistakenly attributed to their additional needs.

Staff must never assume that a change in behaviour, presentation or emotional wellbeing is simply part of a child's SEND.

The safeguarding team and SENDCo work closely together so that information is shared, patterns are recognised and children are understood accurately.

The language used to record concerns and behaviour is carefully considered so that it reflects what has actually been observed and does not create an exaggerated, misleading or unfair picture of the child.

Steeton Practice

A diagnosis should help us understand a child.

It should never stop us asking what else might be happening.

13.3 Children Known to Children's Social Care

Children who have, or have previously had, a social worker may have experienced adversity, abuse, neglect or complex family circumstances.

The school will ensure that relevant information is understood by those who need to know and that children receive appropriate educational and pastoral support.

The DSL will work closely with social workers and other professionals, contribute to planning and ensure that agreed actions are followed through.

We recognise that a child's involvement with Children's Social Care may end while the impact of their experiences continues.

Support will be based upon the child's needs, not simply their current status.

13.4 Children Looked After and Previously Looked After

Mrs Kennedy is both the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After and Previously Looked After.

This enables safeguarding, education, wellbeing and care to be considered together, with one leader maintaining a clear overview of the whole child.

The school will:

- maintain appropriate information about care arrangements
- understand who holds parental responsibility
- work closely with carers, social workers and the Virtual School
- support stability and belonging
- ensure that children's voices are heard.

Information will be shared carefully and only with those who need to know.

A child's care status does not define them.

13.5 Young Carers

Some children have significant caring responsibilities at home.

These responsibilities may not always be known to school and children may not describe themselves as young carers.

Staff remain alert to signs that a child may be:

- providing practical or emotional care
- taking on responsibilities beyond their age
- worried about a family member
- tired or distracted
- experiencing difficulties with attendance or punctuality.

Where caring responsibilities affect a child's wellbeing, education or safety, the school will work with the child, family and relevant services to provide support.

13.6 Understanding Our Community - Neglect

Effective safeguarding begins with understanding the children and families we serve.

At Steeton Primary School, we know that neglect is our most significant area of safeguarding need.

Neglect is not always dramatic or immediately visible. It may develop slowly and present through a combination of small concerns over time, including:

- poor or deteriorating attendance
- persistent lateness
- hunger
- poor hygiene
- unsuitable clothing
- unmet health or dental needs
- tiredness
- limited supervision
- changes in behaviour or emotional wellbeing
- a child's needs repeatedly not being met.

No single indicator necessarily means that a child is experiencing neglect.

This is why our culture of recording everything, however small, is so important.

Individual concerns that appear insignificant may, when viewed together on CPOMS, reveal a pattern of cumulative harm.

We also recognise that neglect can be complex.

Poverty is not neglect.

A parent or carer having additional needs is not neglect.

A family struggling to navigate services is not neglect.

Our responsibility is to understand what is happening for the child.

Sometimes a parent needs practical help to meet their child's needs. Sometimes a family needs early support. Sometimes concerns require formal intervention.

We remain professionally curious enough to understand the difference - and to act when a child's needs are not being met.

Steeton Practice

Neglect is often found in the accumulation of small things.

One late arrival.

One missed appointment.

One day without the right clothing.

One tired child.

None may tell the whole story.

Together, they might.

13.7 Children and Families Below Formal Thresholds

Because neglect is our greatest area of safeguarding need, we know that effective prevention often happens long before a family reaches a formal threshold.

At Steeton Primary School, we know that around 50 families may, at any one time, need additional support without meeting the criteria for statutory services or formal intervention.

These families matter enormously.

Because we know our community well, we are often able to recognise difficulties early and provide support quietly, sensitively and without unnecessary formality.

This may include:

- practical help
- regular conversations and check-ins
- support to access services
- help to understand letters or professional advice
- completing forms and applications
- signposting to appropriate organisations
- helping families navigate systems that may otherwise feel inaccessible.

Much of this work is deliberately unobtrusive.

Families do not always need a referral, a meeting or a plan.

Sometimes they need a trusted person who knows them, notices when things are difficult and helps.

Steeton Practice

Not meeting a threshold does not mean not needing help.

We do not wait for families to reach crisis before we care.

13.8 Supporting the Adults Around the Child

Sometimes the most effective way to support a child is to support the adult caring for them.

Some parents and carers have additional needs of their own. They may find it difficult to:

- understand complex information
- complete forms
- navigate health, education or other services
- attend appointments alone
- communicate their child's needs
- advocate effectively for support.

Where this creates a barrier to a child receiving the help they need, Steeton will often go well beyond what might traditionally be expected of a school.

This may include helping parents and carers complete paperwork, making contact with services or, where appropriate, accompanying them to important medical or professional appointments.

We do this because systems can be difficult to navigate, and some adults need support to access them.

If a parent or carer cannot access the right help, understand what is being asked of them or communicate effectively with professionals, the child may not receive the support they need.

Supporting the adult can therefore be an essential part of safeguarding the child.

This work is undertaken carefully, professionally and with appropriate boundaries.

But our responsibility to children does not end at the classroom door.

Steeton Practice

Sometimes helping a child means helping the adult who is trying to help them.

We ask:

"What is getting in the way of this child receiving what they need - and can we help remove that barrier?"

13.9 Poverty and Family Hardship

Financial hardship can affect children's lives in many ways.

It may influence:

- attendance
- access to food or clothing

- housing stability
- emotional wellbeing
- opportunities and experiences
- family stress.

Poverty is not neglect.

We will never confuse financial difficulty with a lack of love or care.

Where families need help, we will seek to respond with dignity, practical support and appropriate partnership working.

Where concerns about a child's safety or basic needs arise, these will always be considered and acted upon appropriately.

13.10 Children Facing Multiple Barriers

Vulnerability is rarely simple.

A child may have SEND and poor attendance.

They may be a young carer and experiencing financial hardship.

They may have a social worker and be struggling with friendships or emotional wellbeing.

The more complex a child's circumstances, the more important it is that professionals share information and avoid viewing individual concerns in isolation.

At Steeton, we bring information together.

We look for patterns.

We consider the whole child.

And we remain curious.

13.11 Our Responsibility Does Not Stop at 3:10

Children do not stop being part of our community when the school day ends.

Neither do families stop needing support.

At Steeton Primary School, safeguarding is built upon relationships that extend beyond lessons, timetables and formal meetings.

We know our families.

We take time.

We make phone calls.

We help people navigate difficult systems.

We notice when things change.

We stay alongside families when life is complicated.

This does not mean that school can, or should, solve every problem.

It means that we do not walk away simply because a difficulty falls outside a traditional definition of the school's role.

We work with other professionals.

We help families access the right support.

And where there is something reasonable that we can do to remove a barrier for a child, we will try to do it.

Because safeguarding does not stop at 3:10.

And neither does caring.

13.12 High Expectations and the Right Support

Recognising vulnerability does not mean lowering our expectations for children.

We believe every child should experience:

- safety
- belonging
- ambition
- opportunity
- high-quality education
- adults who believe in them.

Our role is to understand and reduce the barriers that may prevent children from thriving.

This is not separate from safeguarding.

It is part of it.

Steeton Reflection

Some children need protection.

Some need intervention.

Some need a plan.

And some need a school that quietly notices when life is difficult and stays alongside their family.

Our responsibility does not begin at 8:30.

It does not end at 3:10.

We know our children.

We know our families.

And when they need us, we do what we can to help.

Attendance - Every Day Matters

Being in school is one of the strongest protective factors in a child's life.

Children who attend regularly are seen.

They are known.

They have daily contact with trusted adults.

They have opportunities to talk, to be noticed and to receive help.

At Steeton Primary School, attendance is therefore not simply an educational matter.

It is a safeguarding matter.

14.1 Attendance as Safeguarding

We monitor attendance carefully because absence may sometimes be an indicator that something is wrong.

We remain alert to:

- unexplained absence
- persistent or severe absence
- repeated lateness
- sudden changes in attendance
- patterns of absence
- absence linked to particular days or circumstances
- children who are reluctant to attend or leave home
- families who are difficult to contact.

Attendance information is considered alongside what else we know about the child.

One absence may mean very little.

A pattern may tell us much more.

14.2 First-Day Response

Parents and carers are expected to inform the school when a child is absent and provide the reason.

Where a child is absent without explanation, the school will make contact with the family.

If contact cannot be established, staff will consider:

- the child's age and vulnerability
- previous attendance
- known safeguarding concerns
- family circumstances
- information already held on CPOMS.

Where there are concerns about a child's safety, action will be taken promptly. This may include further contact attempts, a home visit, contact with other professionals or referral to the appropriate agency.

We do not assume that no news means a child is safe.

14.3 Patterns Matter

Attendance is not considered in isolation.

Patterns of absence or lateness may connect with:

- neglect
- family difficulties
- emotional wellbeing
- SEND
- bullying
- anxiety
- caring responsibilities
- domestic abuse
- exploitation
- unmet health needs.

Relevant concerns will be recorded on CPOMS so that attendance information can contribute to the wider picture of the child.

14.4 Working with Families

Our first response to attendance difficulties is to understand.

We work with children and families to identify barriers and provide support wherever possible.

This may involve:

- conversations with the child
- meetings with parents or carers
- practical support
- support with routines
- involvement of the SENDCo or safeguarding team
- work with external agencies.

Support does not mean accepting that poor attendance does not matter.

We maintain high expectations because every day in school matters.

We combine those expectations with curiosity about what may be getting in the way.

14.5 Children Missing Education

A child missing education may be at significant risk.

The school will act promptly where a child's whereabouts are unknown, where a child leaves without a known destination or where there are concerns that a child is not receiving suitable education.

We will follow statutory and local procedures, share relevant safeguarding information and work with the appropriate agencies to establish that the child is safe.

No child should simply disappear from our view.

14.6 Elective Home Education

Parents have a legal right to educate their child at home.

Where a parent expresses an intention to remove a child from school for Elective Home Education, the school will follow statutory and local procedures.

The school will consider the child's circumstances carefully and share relevant information where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where appropriate, the DSL will liaise with the local authority and other professionals.

A decision to home educate does not remove the responsibility of professionals to act upon safeguarding concerns.

14.7 When Absence Becomes a Safeguarding Concern

Where absence, lateness or loss of contact raises concern about a child's safety, the safeguarding team will act.

This may include:

- reviewing CPOMS
- speaking with the child
- contacting parents or carers
- making a home visit
- contacting other professionals
- seeking advice
- making a referral to Children's Social Care or the Police where necessary.

The response will always reflect the individual child and the level of concern.

Steeton Reflection

Every day in school is a day when a child can be seen.

Known.

Listened to.

Supported.

Absence matters because children matter.

Every child. Every day.

Physical Safety, Care and the School Environment

A safe environment does not happen by chance.

It is created through careful planning, thoughtful routines and a culture where every adult understands their role in keeping children safe.

At Steeton Primary School, safeguarding is designed into the way our site operates. From the moment children arrive until the last child leaves each day, systems, communication and professional vigilance work together to create a safe environment in which children can learn and thrive.

15.1 Understanding Our Site

Our school site has a number of unique features, including separate buildings, extensive outdoor provision and a public right of way running through part of the site.

These features require us to think carefully about how children move around the site and how adults supervise, communicate and respond.

Safeguarding considerations are embedded into the design and day-to-day operation of the school.

Risk assessments are reviewed regularly and whenever circumstances change.

We recognise that effective safeguarding requires continual reflection rather than relying upon routines becoming familiar.

Steeton Practice

We never assume that because something has always worked, it will always remain the safest way of working.

15.2 Communication Keeps Children Safe

Clear communication is an essential part of safeguarding.

All key members of staff carry walkie-talkie radios throughout the school day. These provide immediate communication between staff across the site, enabling concerns, requests for support and safeguarding matters to be shared quickly and efficiently.

The radios are particularly important during:

- arrival and departure times
- movement between buildings
- outdoor learning
- emergency situations
- responding to safeguarding concerns
- medical incidents.

Effective communication enables staff to respond quickly, coordinate support and ensure children remain safe throughout the school day.

15.3 Site Security

The physical security of the school is reviewed regularly and forms an important part of our safeguarding arrangements.

This includes:

- secure entrances and exits
- visitor management procedures
- extensive CCTV coverage across the school site
- clear supervision arrangements
- ongoing review of site security
- prompt reporting of defects or concerns.

CCTV supports safeguarding by helping leaders review incidents, monitor site security and investigate concerns where appropriate.

It complements, but never replaces, professional supervision.

Staff remain responsible for maintaining vigilance and challenging unknown adults appropriately.

15.4 Arrival and Collection

The beginning and end of the school day are significant safeguarding moments.

Clear systems are in place to ensure children leave school safely.

At the end of each day, members of staff are positioned at every exit gate to supervise collection, support families and ensure that children leave with the appropriate adult.

These arrangements allow staff to:

- maintain visibility across the site
- identify unexpected collection arrangements
- respond quickly to concerns
- communicate immediately using school radios where required
- ensure children leave safely.

Where collection arrangements change unexpectedly or concerns arise about a child's safety, staff will follow school procedures and seek support from the safeguarding team where appropriate.

The child's welfare will always be our first consideration.

15.5 Medical Needs, Intimate Care and Manual Handling

Some children require additional support to ensure their health, dignity and safety.

Support is provided respectfully, maintaining children's privacy while ensuring that appropriate care is delivered.

Where required:

- individual healthcare or intimate care plans are in place
- risk assessments are completed
- staff receive appropriate training
- parents and relevant professionals are involved in planning.

The school also maintains trained staff in manual handling to ensure that children who require physical support are assisted safely and appropriately.

15.6 Physical Intervention

There may be rare occasions when physical intervention is necessary to prevent a child from harming themselves or others.

Any intervention will always be:

- reasonable
- proportionate
- necessary
- for the shortest time required.

Physical intervention is never used as punishment.

Incidents are recorded, reviewed and used to inform future planning, risk assessment and support for the child. Key staff are trained.

Our focus is always on understanding what happened and how future risk can be reduced.

15.7 Educational Visits and Learning Beyond the Classroom

Learning beyond the classroom is an important part of the Steeton curriculum.

Educational visits and off-site activities are carefully planned to ensure children can benefit from rich experiences while remaining safe.

The school uses Evolve to plan, manage and approve educational visits.

Where required, risk assessments are submitted to the Local Authority through the Evolve system in accordance with local procedures.

Planning considers:

- safeguarding
- supervision
- individual needs
- medical needs
- accessibility
- transport
- emergency arrangements
- communication.

Risk management should enable children to access opportunities safely rather than unnecessarily limiting experiences.

15.8 Health and Safety Supports Safeguarding

Health and safety and safeguarding are inseparable.

Whenever leaders make decisions about the school environment, safeguarding is considered alongside operational and educational needs.

This includes decisions relating to:

- premises
- room use
- security

- external providers
- educational visits
- supervision
- movement around the site
- changes to routines.

Where concerns arise, arrangements are reviewed.

Children's safety will always take precedence.

Steeton Reflection

Safe schools are built through hundreds of thoughtful decisions.

The gate that is supervised.

The message sent over a radio.

The risk assessment completed before a visit.

The conversation after an incident.

Safeguarding is found not only in the big decisions.

It is built into the small things we do well, every single day.

Knowing Our Safeguarding Is Effective

Safeguarding is never finished.

Strong safeguarding is not demonstrated by having the right policies or completing an annual audit.

It is demonstrated by what happens every day.

At Steeton Primary School, we continually ask whether our safeguarding arrangements are understood, effective and making a difference to children.

We look.

We listen.

We check.

We challenge.

And when something could be better, we change it.

16.1 Leadership Oversight

The Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead work closely together to maintain oversight of safeguarding across the school.

This includes:

- reviewing safeguarding concerns and emerging themes
- monitoring CPOMS
- considering attendance and behaviour patterns
- reviewing vulnerable children
- evaluating training needs
- responding to local and national safeguarding developments
- reviewing site and online safety
- ensuring actions are followed through.

Safeguarding is considered as part of wider school improvement and strategic decision-making.

It does not sit separately from the rest of school life.

16.2 The Role of the DSL

The DSL maintains day-to-day oversight of safeguarding practice.

Mrs Kennedy regularly reviews CPOMS, follows up concerns and ensures that information leads to action where action is needed.

She also considers the wider picture:

- Are patterns emerging?
- Are particular children or families becoming more vulnerable?
- Are staff recording effectively?
- Are there gaps in our knowledge?
- Do staff need further training?
- Is support making a difference?

The effectiveness of safeguarding depends not simply upon concerns being reported, but upon what happens next.

16.3 Listening to Children

Children's experiences help us understand whether safeguarding is working.

We listen through:

- everyday relationships and conversations
- pupil voice
- the Steeton Voice Panel
- curriculum discussion
- feedback following support
- the concerns children choose to share.

We consider whether children:

- feel safe
- know who they can talk to
- believe adults will listen
- understand how to seek help
- feel that they belong.

Children may not use the language of safeguarding.

We listen to what they tell us - and what they show us.

16.4 Staff Confidence

Effective safeguarding depends upon adults knowing what to do.

Leaders consider whether staff:

- recognise concerns
- record clearly
- report promptly
- understand professional boundaries
- feel confident to ask for advice
- know how to raise concerns about adults
- understand the risks relevant to our children and community.

Training, CPOMS monitoring, WAGOLs, professional discussion and everyday conversations all help us understand where practice is strong and where further support is needed.

16.5 Governor Oversight and Challenge

The Governing Body maintains strategic oversight of safeguarding.

Governors assure themselves that:

- statutory duties are fulfilled
- safeguarding arrangements are effective
- leaders understand the needs and risks within the school community
- appropriate training is in place
- safer recruitment requirements are met
- filtering and monitoring arrangements are effective
- concerns are acted upon
- safeguarding is appropriately resourced.

The safeguarding governor works with school leaders to understand how safeguarding operates in practice.

Governors do not investigate individual cases.

Their role is to ask the questions that provide assurance:

Do our systems work?

Do people understand them?

Do leaders know what the greatest risks are?

Are children safer because of what we do?

16.6 Learning and Improving

We learn from:

- safeguarding concerns
- incidents
- complaints
- low-level concerns
- local and national safeguarding reviews
- feedback from children and families
- professional challenge
- audits
- training
- things that did not work as well as we hoped.

Where learning identifies a need for change, we act.

This may mean changing:

- a procedure
- a physical arrangement
- training
- supervision
- communication
- a policy
- the support provided to a child or family.

A strong safeguarding culture is not one that claims to get everything right.

It is one that keeps looking for ways to be better.

16.7 Reviewing This Handbook

This handbook will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where:

- statutory guidance changes
- local procedures change
- new risks emerge

- an incident identifies learning
- school practice changes.

The Governing Body will approve the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in accordance with statutory requirements.

However, the handbook is not intended to sit untouched until its next review date.

Safeguarding practice evolves throughout the year.

Where something changes, we change with it.

Our Final Commitment

This handbook describes our systems.

Our procedures.

Our expectations.

But safeguarding is not ultimately found in a document.

It is found in people.

In the adult who notices that a child is quieter than usual.

The teacher who records the small concern.

The colleague who asks a difficult question.

The member of staff who stays a little longer to help a family.

The DSL who joins the pieces together.

The governor who challenges.

The child who finally feels safe enough to speak.

At Steeton Primary School, we understand the responsibility placed upon us.

Children trust us.

Families trust us.

Our community trusts us.

We will never take that trust for granted.

Steeton Reflection

Learning for Life begins with feeling safe.

Every child deserves adults who notice.

Adults who listen.

Adults who act.

Adults who care.

That is the responsibility we all share at Steeton Primary School.

Every child. Every day.

The Steeton Safeguarding Expectations

What we expect from every adult

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, but every responsibility looks different.

Whatever your role at Steeton Primary School, we expect you to:

Know children well

Build positive professional relationships. Notice when a child is not themselves.

Notice the small things

A change in behaviour. A comment. A pattern. A feeling that something is not quite right.

Small things can matter.

Be professionally curious

Do not make assumptions. Ask questions. Look beyond the obvious. Consider what else might be happening.

Listen

Give children time. Take them seriously. Make sure they know their voice matters.

Record everything that matters

No concern is too small.

You may hold only one piece of the picture. Put your piece in.

Use careful language

Record what you saw and heard.

Be factual. Be accurate. Describe before you interpret.

Speak up

If you are worried about a child, tell the safeguarding team.

If you are worried about an adult, tell the Headteacher.

If you are worried about the Headteacher, tell the Chair of Governors.

Never investigate

Your responsibility is to:

Notice. Listen. Record. Report.

The safeguarding team's responsibility is to decide what happens next.

Ask for help

You are not expected to know every answer.

You are expected to ask when you are unsure.

Challenge respectfully

If something does not feel right, say so.

If you remain concerned, say so again.

Keep learning

Children's lives change.

Risks change.

Technology changes.

Safeguarding must change too.

Put children first

In every decision, ask:

"What is in the best interests of this child?"

Remember

The concern you nearly did not record may be the one that completes the picture.

The conversation you nearly did not have may be the one that matters.

The question you nearly did not ask may be the one that keeps a child safe.

At Steeton, we:

Notice.

Listen.

Record.

Report.

Act.

Learning for Life begins with feeling safe.

Every child. Every day.

Next is the one staff need when something actually happens. I would keep it very simple and practical.

What to Do If You Are Worried About a Child

Something does not feel right

You may have:

- seen something
- heard something
- noticed a change
- received information from someone else
- had a child tell you something
- simply felt that something is not right.

You do not need to decide whether it is safeguarding.

Is the child in immediate danger?

YES

Act immediately.

1. Stay with the child where appropriate.
2. Contact Mrs Kennedy or another member of the safeguarding team immediately.
3. If a member of the safeguarding team cannot be found, do not wait.
4. Contact emergency or safeguarding services where necessary.
5. Record what happened on CPOMS as soon as possible afterwards.

Urgent concern? Speak first. Record second.

NO

1. Notice:

Pay attention to what you have seen, heard or felt.

Do not dismiss a concern because it seems small.

2. Listen:

If a child speaks to you:

- stay calm
- listen carefully
- take them seriously
- do not interrupt unnecessarily
- do not ask leading questions
- never promise confidentiality
- explain that you may need to tell someone who can help.

3. Record:

Record the concern on CPOMS as soon as possible.

Include:

- what happened
- when and where it happened
- who was present
- exactly what you saw or heard
- the child's own words
- any immediate action taken.

Describe before you interpret.

4. Report:

Make sure the safeguarding team knows.

Do not assume that submitting a CPOMS entry is enough if you are worried.

If it feels urgent or significant, speak to us.

5. Continue to notice

Your responsibility does not end when you press submit.

Continue to:

- notice the child
- listen
- record further concerns
- follow any advice given.

Never

- investigate
- confront an alleged abuser
- ask a child to repeat their account unnecessarily
- promise to keep a secret
- wait for proof
- assume somebody else will report it
- discuss the concern with people who do not need to know.

Remember

You are not expected to see the whole picture.

You may hold one piece.

Put your piece in.

NOTICE → LISTEN → RECORD → REPORT

The safeguarding team will decide what happens next.

Responding When a Child Tells You Something

A child may choose an unexpected moment to tell you something important.
Your response matters.

DO:

Stay calm

Even if what you hear is upsetting or shocking.

Listen

Give the child time.

Allow them to use their own words.

Take them seriously

Do not dismiss, minimise or show disbelief.

Reassure them

Say things such as:

"You have done the right thing by telling me."

"I am listening."

"I will need to tell someone who can help."

Ask only what you need to understand

Use open prompts only where necessary, such as:

"Tell me what happened."

"Explain what you mean."

"Is there anything else you want to tell me?"

Be honest

Never promise to keep a secret.

Explain simply what will happen next.

Report immediately

Speak directly to the safeguarding team.

Record carefully

Use the child's exact words wherever possible.

Record:

- what the child said
- what you said
- any questions you asked
- the context of the conversation
- who was present.

DO NOT:

- investigate
- ask leading questions
- suggest answers
- repeatedly question the child
- ask the child to prove what they have said
- promise confidentiality
- confront anyone involved
- discuss the disclosure with colleagues who do not need to know
- delay reporting while you complete CPOMS.

The order matters

Listen

Speak to the safeguarding team

Record

If the concern is urgent, **the conversation comes before CPOMS.**

Remember

You do not need to find out what happened.

You do not need to decide whether the child is telling the truth.

You do not need to know what should happen next.

Your job is to:

Listen.

Take them seriously.

Tell the right person.

Record what was said.

When the Concern Is About an Adult

A concern may relate to:

- a member of staff
- the Headteacher
- a governor
- a volunteer
- a supply teacher
- a student or trainee
- a contractor
- a visitor
- any other adult working with or around children.

The concern may come from:

- something you saw
- something you heard
- something a child told you
- something another adult told you
- an interaction that did not feel right
- a concern about professional boundaries
- a pattern of behaviour.

You do not need to decide what kind of concern it is.

It may be:

an allegation

a low-level concern

a conduct issue

a misunderstanding

something that may indicate wider unsafe practice

That decision is not yours to make.

Your responsibility is to speak up.

Who do I tell?

Concern about any adult working in or on behalf of the school

Tell the Headteacher immediately.

Concern about the Headteacher

Tell the Chair of Governors immediately.

Unable to report internally, or worried that concerns are not being acted upon?

Follow the Whistleblowing Policy and use the appropriate external reporting route.

What should I do?

1. Report

Tell the right person as soon as possible.

Do not wait until you have more information.

2. Record

Give a clear, factual account of:

- what happened
- when and where it happened
- who was present
- exactly what you saw or heard
- any action already taken

3. Maintain confidentiality

Share the concern only with those who need to know.

4. Continue to speak up

If you remain concerned, raise the concern again or escalate it.

Do not

- investigate
- question children or witnesses
- confront the adult concerned
- discuss the concern with colleagues
- try to decide whether the harm threshold has been met
- wait to see whether it happens again
- assume somebody else will report it.

Low-level does not mean unimportant

A low-level concern may be:

- a sense of unease
- a nagging doubt
- behaviour that seems out of character
- a possible crossing of professional boundaries
- something that could be innocent but does not feel quite right.

One concern may be a misunderstanding.

Several concerns may reveal a pattern.

We can only see the pattern if people speak up.

What about self-reporting?

If something has happened that:

- could be misinterpreted
- did not go as planned
- may look concerning without context
- fell below the professional standard you expect of yourself

tell the Headteacher.

We would always rather an adult say:

"I need to tell you what happened."

than hope that nobody noticed.

Remember

Reporting a concern is not making an accusation.

It is sharing information so that the right person can decide what happens next.

SEE IT → HEAR IT → FEEL IT → REPORT IT

Do not investigate.

Do not categorise.

Do not wait.

Speak up.

Steeton Practice

Loyalty to colleagues must never come before responsibility to children.

A safe school is one where people know they will be heard when they speak.

Recognising Abuse, Neglect and Safeguarding Risks

Safeguarding concerns do not always present clearly.

Children may tell us directly.

They may show us through behaviour.

We may notice a change.

We may see a pattern developing over time.

Staff are not expected to diagnose abuse or prove that harm has occurred.

Our responsibility is to:

Notice.

Be curious.

Record.

Report.

The Four Categories of Abuse

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is deliberately causing physical harm to a child.

Possible indicators may include:

- unexplained injuries
- injuries with inconsistent explanations
- repeated injuries
- fear of particular adults
- flinching or unusual fear of physical contact
- changes in behaviour.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child.

It may include:

- making a child feel worthless or unloved
- humiliation
- intimidation
- silencing
- rejection
- inappropriate expectations
- exposure to frightening or harmful experiences.

Possible indicators may include:

- low self-worth
- anxiety
- withdrawal
- extreme behaviour
- developmental delay
- difficulty forming relationships
- changes in emotional wellbeing.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities.

It can happen:

- face to face
- online
- with or without physical contact.

Possible indicators may include:

- sexualised behaviour or language that is not developmentally expected
- fear of a particular person
- unexplained physical symptoms
- sudden changes in behaviour
- secrecy
- concerning online activity.

Children may not understand that what has happened to them is abuse.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or emotional needs.

At Steeton, we know that neglect is our most significant area of safeguarding need.

Possible indicators may include:

- hunger
- poor or deteriorating hygiene
- unsuitable clothing
- persistent tiredness
- poor or deteriorating attendance
- repeated lateness
- unmet medical or dental needs
- inadequate supervision
- a child's emotional needs repeatedly not being met.

Neglect is often cumulative.

One concern may appear small.

A pattern may tell us much more.

Steeton Practice

Poverty is not neglect.

A family needing help is not neglect.

We remain curious about whether a child's needs are being met - and what may be getting in the way.

Important Safeguarding Risks

The following list is not exhaustive.

Staff do not need detailed expertise in every safeguarding risk.

They do need to recognise that something may be wrong and report it.

Child-on-Child Abuse

Children can harm other children.

This may include:

- bullying
- prejudice-based abuse
- physical abuse
- sexual harassment
- sexual violence
- harmful sexual behaviour
- coercion
- online abuse
- sharing nudes or semi-nudes.

Never dismiss harmful behaviour as:

"banter"

"just children falling out"

or

"part of growing up".

Domestic Abuse

Children can be victims of domestic abuse in their own right.

They may see it.

Hear it.

Experience its effects.

Or live with the fear and instability it creates.

Domestic abuse may affect a child's:

- behaviour
- emotional wellbeing
- attendance
- relationships
- learning
- sense of safety.

Exploitation

Children may be exploited by individuals or groups.

This can include:

- criminal exploitation
- sexual exploitation
- county lines
- trafficking
- coercion into harmful or criminal activity.

Possible indicators may include:

- unexplained money or possessions
- changes in friendships
- secrecy
- unexplained absence
- concerning online contact
- fear or intimidation
- changes in behaviour.

Primary-aged children are not too young to be vulnerable to exploitation.

Online Harm

Online harm may include:

- grooming
- cyberbullying
- harmful content
- exploitation
- coercion
- harmful communities
- sharing images
- manipulated or AI-generated content
- pressure to keep online activity secret.

Online and offline safeguarding are not separate worlds.

What happens online can have very real consequences for children.

Radicalisation

Children may be vulnerable to extremist influences or radicalisation.

Possible indicators may include significant changes in:

- language
- attitudes
- relationships
- online activity
- tolerance of others.

One indicator alone does not mean a child is being radicalised.

Context matters.

Report concerns.

Honour-Based Abuse

Honour-based abuse may include:

- forced marriage
- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- abuse linked to perceived family or community honour.

These are serious safeguarding concerns.

Any concern must be reported immediately.

Teachers also have a specific legal duty relating to known cases of FGM in girls under 18.

Mental Health and Self-Harm

Mental health difficulties do not automatically mean that a child is being abused.

However, changes in mental health or emotional wellbeing may indicate that a child needs help or may have experienced harm.

Staff should be alert to:

- significant changes in mood
- withdrawal
- anxiety
- concerning language or drawings
- self-harm
- changes in behaviour or presentation.

Report concerns.

Children Who Are Absent or Missing

Repeated or unexplained absence can be a warning sign.

It may be linked to:

- neglect
- abuse
- exploitation
- emotional wellbeing
- family difficulties
- other safeguarding risks.

Attendance information must always be considered alongside what else we know about the child.

What Might You Notice?

You may notice:

- a change in behaviour
- a change in appearance
- a child becoming unusually quiet or withdrawn
- a child becoming more distressed or dysregulated
- unexplained injuries
- hunger or tiredness
- a change in attendance
- unusual language
- concerning play, drawings or online activity
- a change in relationships
- a child seeming frightened
- a parent or carer behaving differently
- simply a feeling that something is not right.

None of these automatically means that abuse has occurred.

All may be worth noticing.

Remember

Children do not always disclose.

They may:

- not understand what is happening
- be frightened
- feel ashamed
- worry they will not be believed
- have been told to keep a secret
- communicate through behaviour rather than words.

Do not wait for a child to say:

"I am being harmed."

You do not need to identify the risk.

You do not need to prove anything.

You do not need to see the whole picture.

If something concerns you:

NOTICE → RECORD → REPORT

Let the safeguarding team decide what happens next.

Key Safeguarding Contacts

Steeton Primary School Safeguarding Team:

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mrs Kennedy

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

Claire Redman

Elinor Birtwistle

Jade Wilson

Headteacher

Claire Redman

Concerns about any adult working in or on behalf of the school should be reported to the Headteacher.

Chair of Governors

Stephen Hammond. Stephen.hammond@steeton.bradford.sch.uk

Concerns about the Headteacher should be reported directly to the Chair of Governors.

Designated Teacher for Children Looked After and Previously Looked After

Mrs Kennedy

Safeguarding Governor

Stephen Hammond

Bradford Safeguarding Contacts:

Children's Social Care - Integrated Front Door - 01274 433999

Emergency Duty Team: 01274 431010

Use for concerns about a child who may need support or protection.

Local Authority Designated Officer - LADO

Telephone: **01274 435600**

Email / referral route: LADO@bradford.gov.uk

Use for concerns or allegations about an adult who works with children and may have:

- harmed a child or possibly harmed a child
- committed an offence against or related to a child

- behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm
- behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Police - 999

Non-emergency - 101

Other Important Safeguarding Routes:

NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line - 0800 028 0285

For staff who have concerns about how child protection issues are being handled within the organisation.

Prevent - 0800 011 3764

For concerns that a child may be vulnerable to radicalisation.

Female Genital Mutilation - Mandatory Reporting

Where a teacher discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18, the teacher must follow the statutory mandatory reporting duty.

Police: 101

If You Are Unsure

Concern about a child?

Speak to Mrs Kennedy or another member of the safeguarding team.

Concern about an adult? Tell the Headteacher.

Concern about the Headteacher? Tell the Chair of Governors.

Still concerned? Say so again. Escalate.

Remember

You do not need to know which service is needed.

You do not need to know which threshold has been met.

You do not need to decide what happens next.

You need to share the concern with the right person.

In an emergency, always act to protect the child.

Safeguarding Team → Headteacher → Chair of Governors → External Agency

Do not wait because you are unsure.