

Reading Early Years Schools Federation



REYS

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance

Approved by FGB: September 2026

Chair of Governors: Julia Cottee

Executive Headteacher: Benedict O'Shea

Date: September 2026

Next Review: September 2027

Immediate safeguarding contacts

If a child is in immediate danger, call 999. Safeguarding concerns must be reported to a DSL or DDSL without delay. The absence of a DSL or DDSL must never delay action.

Reading Children's Single Point of Access (CSPoA): 0118 937 3641, option 1, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Out-of-hours Emergency Duty Team: 01344 351 999.

Professionals must use the secure multi-agency notification form. If there is immediate danger, call 999 first, then CSPoA, and complete the form within 24 hours.

Reading Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 0118 937 2684 | LADO@reading.gov.uk. Concerns or allegations about an adult working with children should be referred without delay.

Role	Blagdon Nursery School	Caversham Nursery School	New Bridge Nursery School
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Charlotte Jennings	Jean Read	Jean Read
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs)	Sam Clifford Kate Wiggins Hayley Freeman Claire Bambrick	Claire Taylor Shauni Clifford	Saliha Akram Stacia Beeney
Governor with responsibility for safeguarding	Kerri Hepworth		

This policy is reviewed annually in September and sooner where legislation, statutory guidance, local procedures or safeguarding learning require it.

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1. Principles and statutory framework

Reading Early Years Schools Federation fully recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of every child. Safeguarding and promoting welfare is everyone's responsibility. The child's best interests are central to every decision.

This policy has regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE), Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework for group and school-based providers effective from 1 September 2026, the Prevent duty, the statutory guidance Information sharing to safeguard children and young people, and Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership (BWSCP) procedures and Reading Threshold Guidance.

As maintained nursery schools, the Federation and its governing body exercise their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in accordance with section 175 of the Education Act 2002. Safeguarding decisions will also have due regard to relevant duties under the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998.

This policy applies across Blagdon Nursery School, Caversham Nursery School and New Bridge Nursery School to staff, governors, volunteers, students, trainee teachers, agency and supply workers, contractors and other adults working in or on behalf of the Federation. It should be read alongside the Staff Code of Conduct, Behaviour and Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy, Attendance Policy, Online Safety arrangements, Whistleblowing Policy, Safer Recruitment procedures, Data Protection Policy and relevant SEND and medical-needs procedures.

The Federation will also meet the wider EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirements through its operational policies and procedures, including requirements relating to safer sleep, health and medicines, food and drink, premises, attendance, use of screens and other welfare matters. These operational requirements are not duplicated in full in this child-protection policy.

Safeguarding means:

- providing help and support to meet children's needs as soon as problems emerge;
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether within or outside the home, including online;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is one part of safeguarding. All staff will maintain an attitude of "it could happen here", remain professionally curious and take prompt action.

2. REYS aims and ethos

- Provide a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment in which children can communicate, are listened to and are taken seriously.
- Meet the needs of all children, including children with medical needs, SEND or communication differences.
- Recruit safely and monitor the continuing suitability of adults.
- Ensure all staff understand how to recognise, record, report and escalate concerns.
- Work effectively with parents, carers and safeguarding partners while keeping the child's welfare paramount.
- Teach age-appropriate safety, respectful relationships and fundamental British values through the EYFS curriculum.
- Respond promptly to abuse, neglect, exploitation, domestic abuse, radicalisation and online harm.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The governing body will ensure that this policy and associated procedures are effective, reviewed at least annually, available publicly, and supported by sufficient resources, time, training and authority for safeguarding leads. It will assure itself that safer recruitment, filtering and monitoring, staff conduct, allegations management, information sharing, attendance safeguarding and EYFS welfare requirements are met.

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for implementing this policy, ensuring suitable DSL and DDSL cover, liaising with the LADO when required, supporting an open safeguarding culture, and ensuring concerns about

adults are managed appropriately. Benedict O'Shea is the operational lead for filtering and monitoring but is not a DSL or DDSL.

The DSL and DDSLs will carry out the responsibilities set out in KCSIE 2026, including managing referrals, working with safeguarding partners, supporting staff, maintaining secure records, contributing to assessments and plans, promoting children's views, supporting Family Help and ensuring this policy is known and understood. A DDSL may undertake delegated activities, but ultimate lead responsibility remains with the DSL. During Nursery operating hours, a DSL or DDSL will be available for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns; any exceptional arrangements will be clear to staff and must never delay action.

All staff must:

- read Part One of KCSIE 2026 in full and understand this policy;
- understand Reading thresholds, Family Help and local referral routes, and be alert to children who may need additional support;
- recognise possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation, including online harm;
- report concerns without delay and record them accurately on CPOMS;
- never promise confidentiality to a child;
- take action themselves if a DSL or DDSL is unavailable; and
- avoid investigating, leading questions or confronting an alleged perpetrator.

4. Responding to concerns about a child

Any concern must be passed to the DSL or a DDSL without delay and recorded on CPOMS. If neither is available, staff must speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or contact Children's Social Care directly. The absence of a DSL or DDSL must never delay appropriate action.

Where there is immediate danger or a crime may be in progress, call 999. Professionals referring concerns in Reading must use the current CSPoA secure notification form. Email referrals are not accepted. Where immediate danger has required a 999 call, CSPoA must also be contacted and the form completed within 24 hours.

Staff must record facts, observations, dates, times, the child's own words and actions taken. Staff must not ask leading questions, investigate or discuss the concern more widely than necessary.

Parents and carers will normally be informed when a referral or safeguarding action is being taken, unless doing so could increase risk to the child or another person, prejudice a police or social-care enquiry, lead to evidence being lost, or cause unjustified delay. Consent is not required to share information where there is a lawful safeguarding basis to do so.

If a member of staff believes that a referral has not been dealt with appropriately, the concern must be followed up and escalated through BWSCP procedures. Any member of staff may make a direct referral to Children's Social Care.

4.1 Family Help and early support

Children and families should receive the right help as soon as problems emerge. All staff must be able to identify children who may benefit from universal services, community-based early help or the targeted Family Help level of support, and understand the local assessment processes and thresholds. Family Help does not replace child-protection action and must never delay an urgent safeguarding referral.

For children who live in Reading, staff will use the current Reading Threshold Guidance. At Threshold 2A (additional needs), advice, support and a lead professional can be accessed through the One Reading Partnership Hub at onereading@reading.gov.uk. Where a child or family has multiple needs at Threshold 2B, professionals should use the CSPoA secure multi-agency notification form for targeted support. Where the level of risk is uncertain, staff should seek advice from the DSL/DDSL or CSPoA without delaying action.

The DSL or a DDSL will support staff to contribute to Family Help assessments, plans and reviews, share information lawfully, and escalate where needs are not being met or risk increases. Staff may be asked to contribute as a lead professional or trusted practitioner where this is appropriate to the child and family.

5. Conduct of staff and whistleblowing

All adults must act within the Staff Code of Conduct and maintain professional boundaries. Particular care is required in one-to-one working, physical contact and intervention, communication with families, gifts, transport, social media, personal information and relationships outside the Nursery.

Staff must report unsafe practice or concerns about adults. Concerns about the Executive Headteacher must be reported to the Chair of Governors. Where staff feel unable to raise a concern internally, or believe it is not being addressed, they may contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line on 0800 028 0285 or help@nspcc.org.uk.

6. Concerns and allegations about adults

The harm threshold may be met where a member of staff, supply worker, trainee teacher, volunteer, contractor, governor or other adult working in or on behalf of the Federation has:

- 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; or
- behaved, or may have behaved, in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children, including conduct outside work that may present a transferable risk.

The Executive Headteacher will manage allegations unless the allegation concerns the Executive Headteacher, in which case the Chair of Governors will manage the response. Concerns about the Chair of Governors should be raised with the LADO and the Vice-Chair or other appropriate governance lead. The LADO will be contacted without delay. Where the allegation may involve a crime or a child is at immediate risk, the police and/or Children's Social Care will also be contacted as appropriate. The Federation will not investigate before taking LADO advice where doing so could compromise another process.

Low-level concerns are concerns, however small, that an adult may have acted inconsistently with the Staff Code of Conduct but that do not meet the harm threshold. Staff must report low-level concerns to the Executive Headteacher; concerns about the Executive Headteacher go to the Chair. Concerns will be recorded confidentially, reviewed for patterns and referred to the LADO if the threshold may be met. Appropriate self-referral is encouraged. Where a low-level concern relates to supply staff, a contractor, trainee teacher or another person employed by a third party, the Federation will also notify the person's employer or training provider so that any wider pattern can be identified and managed. Low-level concern records will be kept securely and confidentially and retained in accordance with KCSIE and the Federation's records-retention arrangements, at least until the individual leaves the Federation's employment or engagement.

The Federation will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where the legal referral criteria are met, including where a person is removed from regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left, because the relevant conditions are satisfied. Where applicable, the Federation will also make or consider referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency or another professional regulator in accordance with statutory guidance. A settlement or resignation will not be used to avoid a safeguarding referral duty.

7. Induction and training

All staff, students and volunteers will receive safeguarding induction appropriate to their role before or at the start of their duties. This will include this policy, the Staff Code of Conduct, the identity of the DSL and DDSs, reporting and escalation routes, Family Help and local thresholds, whistleblowing, behaviour expectations, online safety, filtering and monitoring, and mobile-device requirements. Supply and temporary staff, trainee teachers and contractors will receive safeguarding information proportionate to their role before they begin work.

All staff must read Part One of KCSIE 2026 in full. The overview is a complementary quick reference and does not replace Part One. The Federation will maintain evidence that staff have read and understood the required guidance.

All EYFS practitioners will receive safeguarding training that meets the minimum criteria in Annex C of the EYFS statutory framework and this training will be renewed at least every two years. Safeguarding and child-protection updates will also be provided at least annually and whenever required by changes in guidance, local procedures or identified need. DSL and DDS role-specific training will be updated at least every two years, with their knowledge

and skills refreshed at least annually. Prevent awareness, online safety, information sharing, data protection and other role-specific training will be provided as required.

Governors will receive appropriate safeguarding and child-protection training at induction and it will be regularly updated. The safeguarding governor and those who manage allegations will receive role-specific development so that they can provide effective strategic challenge and oversight.

8. Safer recruitment and ongoing suitability

The Federation will follow KCSIE 2026, the EYFS statutory framework and current DfE guidance on regulated activity. At least one person involved in each recruitment process will have completed appropriate safer recruitment training. Recruitment will use a structured application form rather than accepting a curriculum vitae on its own, and selection processes will explore suitability to work with children, employment history and any gaps, qualifications and experience, and safeguarding concerns.

Shortlisted candidates will be informed that the Federation may carry out an online search as part of due diligence. Any search will be proportionate and used only to identify information that may need to be explored with the candidate at interview.

At least one written reference will be obtained for every member of staff, including students and volunteers, before they are recruited. For employees, references should be obtained before interview where possible so that concerns can be explored. Open references, testimonials or references supplied by the applicant will not be accepted. References will be sought directly from the referee, verified, compared with the application and followed up where information is vague, inconsistent or raises a safeguarding concern. The Federation will seek the current or most recent employer and, where relevant, the employer where the applicant last worked with children, and will clarify the reason for leaving.

Pre-appointment checks will include identity, right to work in the UK, qualifications and professional status where required, employment history, an enhanced DBS check, children's barred-list information where the role is regulated activity, teacher prohibition checks for teaching roles, childcare disqualification checks where applicable, and any other check required for the role. Where a person has lived or worked outside the UK, the Federation will make any additional checks it considers appropriate so that relevant overseas events can be considered. Required checks will be recorded on the Single Central Record. Any health or fitness enquiries will be made only at the lawful stage of recruitment and will focus on capability to carry out the role and any reasonable adjustments required.

For every new employee working in EYFS provision, the Federation must receive the appropriate enhanced DBS certificate before the person begins work. Where the role is regulated activity, children's barred-list information must also be obtained. A risk assessment, supervision arrangement or "pending" entry must never be used to allow a new employee to begin work before the required check has been received.

Volunteers undertaking regulated activity must have an enhanced DBS check with children's barred-list information before carrying out that role. From 1 September 2026, supervision no longer removes an otherwise qualifying teaching, training, instructing, caring-for or supervising activity from regulated activity. The Federation will assess the nature and frequency of each volunteer role against current DfE guidance; relevant activity carried out on more than 3 days in any 30-day period, or overnight between 2am and 6am, may be regulated activity. Occasional volunteers who are not undertaking regulated activity will receive appropriate checks and direct supervision through the Federation's visitor and volunteering procedures.

Agency, supply, contractor and third-party staff must not be deployed until the Federation has obtained written confirmation from the employer that all checks required for the role have been completed. The Federation will verify identity on arrival and record the required information on the Single Central Record. Casual workers directly engaged by the Federation are subject to the same pre-employment checks as other employees. For trainee teachers, the Federation will obtain the required written assurance from the training provider and will complete any checks for which the Federation is responsible.

Suitability is ongoing. Staff and volunteers must disclose matters that may affect their suitability to work with children, including matters relevant to childcare disqualification where applicable. The Federation will respond in

line with the EYFS, KCSIE, employment law and local procedures, and will review DBS eligibility if a person's role or activity changes.

Students and work experience placements

The Federation will apply proportionate safeguarding and suitability checks to all student and work experience placements, whether arranged directly, through a school or college, or through an external placement provider.

For college, T Level and other student placements aged 16 or over, the Federation will obtain at least one written reference or suitability confirmation from the student's current education or training provider before the placement begins. References will be obtained and verified in accordance with the Federation's safer recruitment procedures.

For school-age work experience pupils, including Year 10 pupils, the Federation will obtain written placement and suitability confirmation from the pupil's school or placement organiser and appropriate parent/carers agreement before the placement begins.

DBS checks cannot be requested for anyone aged under 16. For students aged 16 or over, the Federation will consider the nature, frequency and duties of the placement and will obtain the appropriate DBS and barred-list information only where the individual is eligible for, or required to have, that level of check.

Anyone aged under 17 must be supervised at all times, must not be left to care for children unsupervised and must not be included in staffing ratios. Students aged 17 or over on long-term placements may only be included in ratios where all EYFS requirements are met, including suitability, competence, responsibility and a valid paediatric first-aid qualification.

All students and work experience pupils will receive an appropriate safeguarding induction, be given clear expectations regarding professional conduct, confidentiality, mobile phones and smart devices, and have a named member of staff responsible for their supervision.

9. Records, information sharing and transfer

Safeguarding records will be accurate, contemporaneous, confidential, securely stored on CPOMS and separate from the main child record. Records will show the concern, discussion, decision, rationale and outcome. Access is restricted to those who need it to safeguard the child.

The Federation will comply with the UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018, Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 and the statutory guidance Information sharing to safeguard children and young people. From 30 September 2026, the Federation will comply with the information-sharing duty under section 16LA of the Children Act 2004.

Data protection law does not prevent relevant and proportionate information sharing for safeguarding. Staff must share information promptly where it may help another safeguarding body carry out its functions, unless sharing would be more detrimental to the child than not sharing. Decisions to share or not share will be recorded, including what was shared, with whom and why. Advice may be sought from the DSL or Data Protection Officer, but urgent action must not be delayed.

When a child leaves, the DSL will transfer the child protection file securely as soon as possible: within five days for an in-year transfer or within the first five days of a new term where the transfer occurs at a normal transition point. The transfer will include a clear, structured summary of current concerns, relevant context and ongoing support needs, and will distinguish current safeguarding information from historic material. Confirmation of receipt will be obtained and retained. The receiving setting should ensure that an appropriately trained person reviews the information promptly and seeks clarification from the Federation where required.

10. Abuse, neglect and exploitation

Abuse may be physical, emotional or sexual. Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs. Exploitation may be sexual, criminal, financial or online and may involve coercion, control, deception or an imbalance of power. Harm can include the impact of seeing, hearing or experiencing domestic abuse; children who experience the effects of domestic abuse are victims in their own right.

Staff must consider the possibility of multiple and overlapping harms, including abuse outside the home, fabricated or induced illness, honour- or faith-based abuse, trafficking, modern slavery, county lines, financial exploitation, serious youth violence, stalking, abusive behaviour in intimate relationships, child-to-parent or caregiver abuse,

online abuse and abuse linked to family, peer, group or community contexts. Staff must also consider prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-based prejudice, misogyny and other discriminatory abuse. Indicators are not proof and absence of indicators does not mean absence of harm.

11. Female genital mutilation

FGM is illegal and is child abuse. Concerns that a child may be at risk of FGM must be reported through normal safeguarding procedures without delay.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, places a personal duty on teachers to report to the police a known case of FGM involving a girl under 18 that they discover in the course of professional work. A known case is where the child discloses that FGM has been carried out or the teacher observes physical signs. The teacher must make the report personally, normally through the police non-emergency route unless there is immediate danger, and must also inform the DSL. Staff must never examine a child.

12. Honour-based abuse

Honour-based abuse may include FGM, forced marriage and practices intended to protect or restore perceived family or community honour. It can involve multiple perpetrators and wider family or community pressure. Concerns must be reported to the DSL or a DDSL and referred to statutory agencies as appropriate. Staff must not approach family or community members where doing so could increase risk.

13. Preventing radicalisation

The Prevent duty is part of the Federation's wider safeguarding responsibilities. There is no single profile of a person susceptible to radicalisation, and staff must avoid stereotyping. Concerns must be considered in context and alongside other safeguarding needs.

Staff must report concerns to the DSL without delay. The DSL will use the current Reading Prevent pathway and, where appropriate, the national Prevent referral form. In an emergency call 999; non-urgent police concerns may be reported through 101. Support may be offered through Channel and Prevent multi-agency arrangements.

The Federation will maintain and review a proportionate Prevent risk assessment, provide staff training and support age-appropriate learning that builds resilience, critical thinking, respect and fundamental British values. The DSL will ensure the current Reading Prevent pathway is used and local/national referral information is kept up to date.

14. Child criminal and sexual exploitation

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is where an individual, group, organised network or gang uses an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity. It may involve violence or threats, movement for exploitation, debt bondage, county lines or online activity, and can amount to modern slavery. A child may be exploited even where the activity appears consensual and may themselves be criminalised for actions carried out under coercion or exploitation.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse where an individual, group or organised network uses an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity. It may involve an exchange for something the child needs or wants, or provide a financial or status advantage to the perpetrator. It may occur without physical contact, including online, and may appear consensual.

Any concern must be treated as safeguarding, recorded and reported without delay.

15. Child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence)

Children can abuse other children inside or outside the Nursery and online. Harmful behaviour will never be dismissed as banter, part of growing up or experimentation.

Child-on-child safeguarding concerns may include bullying and discriminatory behaviour, physical abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence or harassment, coercion, upskirting, initiation or hazing, and the making or sharing of self-generated intimate, nude or semi-nude images or videos. This includes digitally altered or AI-generated imagery and deepfakes. Any incident involving intimate, nude or semi-nude imagery requires an

appropriate safeguarding response whether the creation or sharing appears consensual or is non-consensual; the response will reflect the children's ages and developmental understanding and the nature of any coercion, harm or illegality.

The DSL will lead a child-centred, developmentally appropriate and proportionate safeguarding response. This will consider the child who may have been harmed, the child alleged to have caused harm, other affected children, immediate safety, parental involvement where appropriate, referrals, wider patterns and environmental factors. Behaviour support may form part of the response but will never replace safeguarding action.

16. Mental health and wellbeing

Mental health difficulties can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff should observe changes, listen to the child and report safeguarding concerns to the DSL or a DDSL. Staff must not attempt to diagnose mental-health conditions; diagnosis should be undertaken only by appropriately trained professionals. Where a mental-health concern is also a safeguarding concern, safeguarding action must be taken without delay. The Federation will work with parents, carers and appropriate services unless doing so would increase risk.

Children who may need additional support

All staff should be particularly alert to children whose circumstances may increase vulnerability or the need for Family Help. This includes young carers, children with a social worker, looked-after and previously looked-after children, children affected by parental offending or a parent/carer in custody, children experiencing homelessness or housing instability, children affected by domestic abuse, and children with SEND, health or communication needs. This list is not exhaustive. Concerns will be considered in the context of the individual child and family, without stereotyping, and support or referral will be arranged through the appropriate Reading pathway.

17. Children absent from education

Although nursery attendance is non-statutory, the Federation monitors and follows up absence because unexplainable and/or persistent absence can be a safeguarding warning sign. Each Nursery will maintain an Attendance Policy and share it with parents and carers. The policy will set out expectations for reporting absence and the actions the Nursery will take where a child is absent without notification or for a prolonged period. If a child is absent without explanation, staff will check for messages and contact the main carers within the first two hours of the session.

Where the child or family is vulnerable, the DSL or DDSL must be told as soon as possible. If contact is not made, staff will use emergency contacts and other agreed methods. The DSL or DDSL will consider patterns and trends, the child's and carers' vulnerabilities and home circumstances, assess risk and liaise with relevant agencies. Any safeguarding concern arising from absence will be referred to Children's Social Care and/or a police welfare check requested where appropriate. Their absence must not delay action. The Federation will seek at least two emergency contacts and, where reasonably possible, more than two.

18. Private fostering

A private fostering arrangement occurs when a child under 16, or under 18 if disabled, is cared for by someone who is not a parent or close relative for 28 days or more by private arrangement. Staff who become aware of a possible private fostering arrangement must report it to the DSL, who will notify the local authority.

19. Alternative provision

The Federation does not currently commission alternative provision. If this changes, the Federation will remain responsible for safeguarding the child, complete appropriate due diligence, obtain written confirmation of required checks, maintain oversight of attendance and welfare, and review the placement regularly.

20. Children with SEND or health needs

Children with SEND, communication differences or certain medical or physical health conditions may be more vulnerable to abuse and may face additional barriers to recognition and disclosure. Staff must not assume that

injuries, behaviour, communication differences, distress or changes in presentation arise from disability or medical need without considering safeguarding. An incident involving the management of a medical condition may also require safeguarding consideration where there are wider concerns.

- The DSL and Inclusion Manager will work together where appropriate.
- Communication will be adapted so each child can express views and be heard.
- Risk assessments and support plans will be proportionate and reviewed.
- Staff will receive training relevant to children's needs and possible safeguarding barriers.
- Parents, carers and professionals will be involved unless this could increase risk or conflict with safeguarding advice.

21. Restrictive physical intervention

The Federation will seek to prevent and reduce the need for restrictive intervention through positive relationships, co-regulation, reasonable adjustments, de-escalation and individual planning. Where reasonable force or another restrictive intervention is necessary, staff must use no more force than is necessary, for the least amount of time, and act in accordance with the Federation's Behaviour and Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy and the DfE guidance Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools (effective from 1 April 2026).

Every significant incident involving the use of force, and every incident of seclusion or restraint that must be recorded under current law and guidance, will be recorded in writing as soon as practicable, normally on the same day, and reviewed. Parents or carers will be informed as soon as practicable, normally on the same day, unless a statutory exception applies because doing so would be likely to result in serious harm. Where an exception applies, the Federation will follow the alternative reporting route required by law. The DSL and SEND/Inclusion lead will be involved where safeguarding, disability, health or repeated-use concerns arise.

22. Photography and images

Images of children may be taken or used only for an authorised purpose, on a Federation-authorised device, and in accordance with consent, privacy, safeguarding and data-protection requirements. Staff members' personal devices must never be used to photograph, record or store images, video or audio of children. There are no special-event exceptions for staff members' personal devices.

Images will be transferred, stored, retained and deleted securely. Children will not be named in public images unless there is a clear authorised reason and appropriate consent. At events, families will be reminded that images containing other children must not be published or shared electronically without permission.

23. Online safety, filtering and monitoring

Online safety is part of the whole-setting safeguarding approach and covers content, contact, conduct and commerce risks. Children will access the internet only with appropriate supervision. The Federation will teach age-appropriate online safety and respond through safeguarding procedures to concerns arising inside or outside the Nursery. In line with the EYFS, screen use will be purposeful, age-appropriate and considered in relation to children's safeguarding, health, wellbeing and development.

SoftEgg provides the Federation's filtering and monitoring service. Benedict O'Shea, Executive Headteacher, is the operational lead; the governing body retains strategic oversight. Roles, alerts, checks, reviews and actions will be recorded. At least once each academic year, the operational lead will review the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring with the DSL and appropriate IT support. The review will include checks that filtering and monitoring operate as intended on all internet-connected devices and in all relevant locations used by the Federation. Provision will also be reviewed after a significant incident or system change. Filtering and monitoring do not replace supervision, education or professional curiosity.

Risk assessment and staff awareness will include generative AI, deepfakes, image manipulation and AI-generated nude or semi-nude imagery. Concerns must be reported to the DSL without delay and evidence preserved appropriately.

24. Mobile phones and smart devices

Personal mobile phones must not be taken into nursery rooms or other areas used by children. They must be stored securely in lockers or designated offices and may be accessed only during authorised breaks in designated staff areas. Where an urgent personal call is expected, the phone must be left with the office, which will contact the member of staff through normal arrangements.

Personal devices must never be used to photograph, record or store images, video or audio of children. Only Federation-authorised devices may be used.

Smart watches or wearable devices with their own SIM or independent mobile-data capability may be worn but must remain in flight mode in nursery rooms or other areas used by children. Any wearable device with camera, audio-recording or video-recording capability must have those functions disabled in areas used by children, whether or not it has its own SIM or data capability. Other devices may be worn provided they are not used for communication while working with children. If recording functions cannot be reliably disabled, the device must not be worn in nursery rooms or other areas used by children.

Breaches must be reported and may be managed under the Staff Code of Conduct, low-level concerns or disciplinary procedures, according to the circumstances.

25. Confidentiality

No member of staff may promise confidentiality to a child. Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis for safeguarding, but the need to safeguard a child takes priority over maintaining confidentiality. Staff will explain, in an age-appropriate way, that information may need to be shared with people who can help. Records and discussions will be kept secure.

26. Monitoring, evaluation and governance reporting

The Executive Headteacher, DSLs and safeguarding governor will monitor implementation. The governing body will receive appropriate, anonymised information about safeguarding activity, Family Help and referrals, training, allegations and low-level concerns, safer recruitment, filtering and monitoring, attendance concerns, restrictive interventions, audit findings and completion of actions. Information will not identify individual children or families unless there is a lawful, necessary reason. Safeguarding assurance will include checking that local Reading referral routes and contact details remain current.

The policy will be reviewed in September each year and sooner following statutory change, updated Reading/BWSGP procedures, a serious incident, identified weakness or safeguarding learning. Local contact details and referral routes will be checked as part of each review and whenever the Federation is notified of a change.

27. Dissemination

The policy will be published on the Federation's websites and made readily available to staff, volunteers, students and families. New staff and volunteers will receive it during induction. Material changes will be communicated promptly and understanding checked.

28. Success criteria

- Staff understand their responsibilities and know how to report and escalate concerns.
- Children are listened to and safeguarding responses are child-centred and timely.
- Records are accurate, secure and evidence decisions and outcomes.
- Safer recruitment and continued suitability requirements are met.
- Filtering and monitoring arrangements are effective and reviewed.
- Governors receive sufficient assurance and agreed actions are completed.

29. Useful links and contacts

Resource	Link
Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026	Open resource
Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026	Open resource
EYFS statutory framework	Open resource
Information sharing to safeguard children and young people	Open resource
What to do if you're worried a child is being abused	Open resource
Prevent duty guidance	Open resource
Making a referral to Prevent	Open resource
Berkshire West safeguarding procedures	Open resource
Reading Threshold Guidance	Open resource
BFfC - report or refer concerns about a child	Open resource
BFfC - early help and prevention / One Reading	Open resource
BFfC - Reading Prevent guidance	Open resource
BFfC - Reading LADO	Open resource
Working or volunteering in regulated activity with children	Open resource
Restrictive interventions, including reasonable force, in schools	Open resource
Filtering and monitoring standards	Open resource

Key telephone and email contacts

- CSPoA: 0118 937 3641, option 1
- One Reading Partnership Hub: onereading@reading.gov.uk
- Out-of-hours Emergency Duty Team: 01344 351 999
- Reading LADO: 0118 937 2684 | LADO@reading.gov.uk
- Police emergency: 999 | non-emergency: 101
- NSPCC: 0808 800 5000
- NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line: 0800 028 0285 | help@nspcc.org.uk
- Childline: 0800 1111
- Ofsted: 0300 123 1231

Appendix 1: Child protection reporting procedure

- Make the child safe. Call 999 if there is immediate danger.
- Listen, remain calm and take the child seriously. Do not promise confidentiality, ask leading questions or investigate.
- Report the concern to the DSL or a DDSL without delay and record it accurately on CPOMS, including the child's own words, date, time, context, observations and actions.
- If no DSL or DDSL is available, speak to senior leadership and/or contact Children's Social Care directly. Do not delay action.
- Complete a body map for injuries observed during the normal course of work. Never examine a child.
- The DSL will decide next steps, including referral, consultation, Family Help, parental involvement, immediate safety planning and liaison with agencies. Seeking Family Help must never delay child-protection action where risk requires a referral.
- If dissatisfied with the response, follow up and escalate. Any member of staff may make a direct referral.

Appendix 2: Recognising possible abuse, neglect and exploitation

Children may communicate concerns through words, behaviour, play, appearance, attendance, relationships or changes from their usual presentation. No single indicator proves abuse, and some children show no outward signs.

- unexplained, inconsistent or repeated injuries;
- fear of a person or place;
- marked changes in behaviour, development, sleep, eating, toileting or play;
- sexualised behaviour or language that is not developmentally expected;
- persistent hunger, poor hygiene, unsuitable clothing, untreated needs or inadequate supervision;
- unexplainable and/or persistent absence;
- withdrawal, distress, aggression or loss of acquired skills;
- concerning online activity or imagery;
- signs of coercion, exploitation, controlling relationships or domestic abuse;
- a disclosure by the child or another person.

Staff must consider safeguarding without stereotyping or making assumptions. Children with SEND or communication differences may require adapted approaches and may face additional barriers to disclosure.

Appendix 3: FGM indicators

Possible indicators of risk may include a family history of FGM, a planned extended visit to a country or community where FGM is practised, talk of a special procedure or ceremony, or a child seeking help. Possible indicators that FGM may have occurred include difficulty walking, sitting or standing, prolonged toilet use, recurrent urinary difficulties, absence followed by changed behaviour, or reluctance to undergo medical examination. Indicators are not proof. Report concerns immediately and do not examine the child.

Appendix 4: Prevent concerns and referral

There is no single profile of susceptibility to radicalisation. Possible concerning changes could include withdrawal from usual activities, extremist "us and them" language, support for terrorist violence, possession or searching for extremist material, or association with people promoting extremist ideology. These signs may have other explanations and must be considered in context.

- Make the person safe; call 999 in an emergency.
- Report the concern to the DSL without delay.
- Record the concern and action on CPOMS.
- The DSL will consider wider safeguarding needs, use the Reading Prevent pathway and submit the national Prevent referral form where appropriate.
- Use 101 for non-urgent police concerns.

- Do not delay if the DSL or DDSL is unavailable: speak to senior leadership, use the current Reading Prevent route and/or contact the police as appropriate to the level of risk.

Glossary

Term	Meaning
BWSCP	Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership
CCE	Child Criminal Exploitation
CPOMS	Safeguarding recording and case-management system
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
CSPoA	Children's Single Point of Access
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
DDSL	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
KCSIE	Keeping Children Safe in Education
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
Prevent	The duty to have due regard to preventing people from being drawn into terrorism
REYS	Reading Early Years Schools Federation
SEND	Special educational needs and disabilities
UK GDPR	United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulation
Family Help	Targeted help and support for children and families under Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and local arrangements
SCR	Single Central Record
SLT	Senior Leadership Team