

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2024-2025

Document provenance

This policy was approved by:

Approver: Board of Directors:

- **Toni Matthews.**
- **Iain Woodbridge.**
- **James Matthews Woodbridge.**
- **Diana Glencross.**

Safeguarding **Date of Review: March 2025**

Unless there are legislative or regulatory changes in the interim, this policy will be reviewed annually. Should no substantive changes be required at that point, the policy will move to the next review cycle.

Useful contacts

The Ranch Weymouth Contacts

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Ann-Marie Carter (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Level 3) office@theranchweymouth.com

Dorset Contacts:

Children's Advice and Duty service (ChAD) 01305 228866

Safeguarding and Standards Advisor for Schools

Safeguarding and Standards Advisor for Schools; Laura Tulk and Jack Corrigan,
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Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO); Martha Sharp, Lynne Bowman and Laura Tulk,
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West Locality; 01308 425241, westlocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership; www.pdscp.co.uk

The DSL will work with Children Services in Dorset. The Children's Advice and Duty Service (ChAD) provides a single point of contact for families, members of the public and professionals who are seeking to raise a concern in respect of a child or young person they have concerns about or believe to be at risk of harm.

The ChAD team works alongside MASH Multi-agency Safeguarding colleagues, the Dorset Police Safeguarding Referral Unit and Safeguarding Health professionals. The ChAD team progress all new referrals and make the decisions in respect of whether a Referral is allocated to the one of the other Care and Protection Teams by determining if there is a need for any further social care or early help support and intervention.

Academic Year: 2024-2025

Provision Name:	The Ranch Weymouth
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):	Iain Woodbridge
Deputy Safeguarding Lead/s (DDSL (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads)):	Ann-Marie Carter
Prevent Single Point of Contact:	Iain Woodbridge
Date:	19/03/2024

PROCEDURE MANUAL

The Ranch Weymouth Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedure Manual follows this Policy. This is referred to throughout this document.

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1. Introduction and Purpose

We are committed to safeguarding children and expect all staff and visitors to The Ranch Weymouth to share this commitment. We will always act in the best interest of the child.

The Ranch Weymouth aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- All staff are aware of, and fully understand, their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- Staff are effectively trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues as part of our culture of vigilance
- A whole setting approach to safeguarding (i.e., safeguarding culture) is clear and that safeguarding underpins all relevant systems and processes with a continuing commitment and ongoing vigilance. Within this culture it includes listening to children and taking account of their wishes.
- If a safeguarding issue is raised regarding a pupil on roll at another educational setting the Designated Safeguarding Lead at The Ranch will contact the named Designated Safeguarding Lead at that nominated setting to discuss actions to be taken, including if LADO has been informed. This will be recorded on The Ranch secure Sharepoint 365 Safeguarding log.

2. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Section 1 and 2 of the procedure manual below outlines the categories and *types of abuse*.

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. *Section 1 of the procedure manual below defines neglect in more detail.*

Children includes everyone under the age of 18 in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023/24*.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of The Ranch, full or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Parents refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example stepparents, foster carers, adoptive parents, and LA (Local Authority) corporate parents.

3. Scope

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff (including volunteer staff) guest speakers and visiting education mentors at The Ranch Weymouth and is consistent with the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to off-site activities.

Whilst we fully adhere to this statutory requirement, our duty of care remains in place in full until a child completes their educational provision with us.

This extends from the beginning of the Early Years Foundation Stage to the end of Key Stage 5 and therefore beyond the age of 18. In such cases, our practice does not change in relation to safeguarding all our students. Therefore, where the policy refers to under the age of 18 as set out in legislation, the policy should also be read within this scope to meet in full our duty of care.

4. Legislation and Regulation

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE) statutory guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#). We comply with this guidance and the procedures set out by our local safeguarding partners in line with the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership policies and procedures (PDSCP) manual and follow Working Together to Safeguard Children.

We follow the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 (KCSiE), which is updated each September.

Updates to this can be found

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

This policy is also based on the following legislation:	
Section 175 of the Education Act 2002	Places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009	Sets out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least one person on a school interview/appointment panel to be trained in safer recruitment techniques.
The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment)	Provides a framework for the care and protection of children

Section 5B (11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015	Places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the Police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.
Statutory guidance on FGM	Sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM.
The Rehabilitation of Offenders	Outlines when people with criminal convictions can work

¹<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

²https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/788234/governance_handbook_2019.pdf

Act 1974	with children
Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006	Defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty	Explains schools' duties under the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.

5. Policy Statement

All children should be protected from risk of abuse and harm however, it is important to recognise that potentially, some children have an increased risk. Additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing abuse and harm therefore, we give special consideration to students who:

- Have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- Are in need of a social worker
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, faith and belief or no faith, age, gender identification; sexuality
- Are pregnant or in receipt of paternity/maternity leave
- Are married or in a civil partnership
- Have English as an additional language
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse, domestic abuse, or poor mental health
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual/criminal exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers
- Are looked after or who have been previously looked after
- Are privately fostered
- Are children missing education

- May be due to receive elective home education as formally requested by a parent/carer •
- Are children accessing alternative provision

We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face, and we are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances.

We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection, and justice. We listen to our pupils and take seriously what they tell us, children are aware of the adults they can talk to if they have a concern.

We will ensure concerns are discussed with parents first unless we have reason to believe that by doing so would be contrary to the child's welfare.

6. Recognising and responding to abuse

Staff **must** follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding concern as outlined in section 3 of the procedure manual below.

If a child is in immediate danger or where a child is suffering or is likely to suffer from harm, make a referral to children's social care and/or the Police. Anyone can make a referral. Any child, in any family, in any school setting, could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of **"It could happen here."**

We recognise that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are complex and are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. Staff are aware that in most cases multiple issues will overlap one another.

We are aware that abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in the family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

We are aware that abuse and neglect may also take place outside of the home, known as contextual safeguarding, and this may include (but not limited to), sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, radicalisation.

Staff are aware that behaviours linked to drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger and that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. Further information about the four categories of abuse; physical, emotional, sexual and neglect, (familial and contextual) and indicators that a child may be being abused can be found in section 1 and 2 in the procedure manual below and in *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 Part 1/Annex A/Annex B*.

Types of safeguarding concerns

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child missing from education • child missing from home or care • child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE) • bullying including cyberbullying • domestic abuse • drugs • fabricated or induced illness • faith abuse • female genital mutilation (FGM) • forced marriage • gangs and youth violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG) • mental health difficulties • private fostering • radicalisation • youth produced sexual imagery (sexting) • teenage relationship abuse • trafficking • child on child abuse • upskirting • serious violence • sexual harassment
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There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk but have no 'real' evidence. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, and they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical or inconclusive signs may have been noticed. We recognise that the signs may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill, or an accident has occurred. However, they may also indicate a child is being abused or needs safeguarding.

In these circumstances staff will try to give the child the opportunity to talk. It is fine for staff to ask the pupil if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

7. Safeguarding concerns and allegations of abuse

Allegations and/or low-level concerns against staff

Allegations and/or low-level concerns against staff will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff section 3 of the procedure manual below.

Whistleblowing

The Ranch Weymouth has a separate Whistleblowing policy that covers concerns regarding the way The Ranch Weymouth safeguards pupils including, poor or unsafe practice, or potential failures.

This policy can be found on our public website
<https://www.theranchweymouth.com/general-5-1>

8. Training

All staff will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) both at induction and regularly throughout the year as required. The training will be regularly updated.

All staff will receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, SharePoint training page, and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

All staff are required to undertake formal safeguarding update training every 3 yrs

All staff must hold mandatory PREVENT and level 2 Safeguarding. Certificates of completion are logged in individual training files, securely online on The Ranch 365 Sharepoint. These are available to access at any point.

Staff induction includes access to safeguarding glossary of terms and signs, which can be accessed remotely as required.

Role	Requirements
<p>Staff</p>	<p>Undertake regular safeguarding and child protection training at induction. Read and ensure understanding of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child protection and safeguarding policy • behaviour policy • staff code of conduct • whistleblowing procedures • role of the DSL • attendance policy <p>Staff must understand The Ranch's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities and must be able to identify signs of possible abuse or neglect. Training will be annually updated and will be in line with advice from our Local Safeguarding Partners. Recorded on individual staff training log, held centrally on our secure The Ranch 365 Sharepoint.</p> <p>All staff are responsible for ensuring that their individual understanding of safeguarding is always up to date and must be aware of who they should approach with concerns or questions.</p> <p>Level of knowledge, understanding and any updates on Safeguarding policy and procedures are reviewed in monthly supervisions with the DSL.</p> <p>All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children susceptible to being drawn into terrorism and know how to challenge extremist ideas.</p> <p>All staff training will follow include PREVENT and Safeguarding Level 2 as Mandatory as a minimum expectation. Additional bespoke training will be coordinated by The Ranch Weymouth as required (i.e. in line</p>
	<p>with local circumstances).</p>

<p>DSL and Deputy/Deputies</p>	<p>Ensure staff receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, through emails, e-bulletins, and staff meetings), at least termly.</p> <p>The DSL and Deputy/Deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every two years.</p> <p>Update knowledge (particularly local knowledge of safeguarding risks) and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e bulletins, meeting other DSLs (Designated Safeguarding Lead), or taking time to read and digest safeguarding policy documents and national updates).</p> <p>Undertake Prevent awareness training.</p>
<p>Youth Support Staff</p>	<p>Staff will be made aware of the specific needs of vulnerable children. Notably, social-worker children (SWC), those with SEND, those with relevant health conditions and young carers. This will include the additional safeguarding risks.</p> <p>For SEND that includes assumptions that indicators of possible abuse relate to the child’s condition without further exploration; being more prone to child-on-child abuse; being disproportionately impacted by child-on-child abuse without showing any signs; lacking cognitive understanding (e.g., the difference between fact and fiction for online content) and communication barriers in managing/reporting these challenges.</p>
<p>Pupils</p>	<p>The Ranch Weymouth will ensure all pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of all safeguarding areas in an age-appropriate manner.</p> <p>This will be mapped out by The Ranch Weymouth at the start of each placement and may take the form of ClassDojo lessons, PSHE (Personal Social and Health Education) sessions, off-curriculum days, notice boards, displays, posters or bespoke sessions from external providers.</p> <p>Where necessary, The Ranch Weymouth will be responsive to local context and circumstances. Pupils will learn how to identify and manage risks as well as how to mitigate against those risks and how to raise a concern at any time.</p>

9. Children Missing Education

Any pupil absent will be reported on by The Ranch Weymouth regularly to the referring Lead Professional or School they are on role at and will be reviewed by Directors. Any concerns will be immediately addressed (i.e., asking about the steps being taken to trace and track the movement of

CME pupils and actions being taken to ensure their safety).

The Ranch Weymouth maintains daily attendance registers held on a secure online system monitored by the office administration lead and designated deputy safeguarding lead Ann-Marie Carter.

Process.

To support in ensuring all our pupils are safe, any pre advised absence will be investigated by contacting the School in which the pupil is on role and/or the parent/guardian.

Weekly communication will be completed by The Ranch Weymouth for any pupil who is absent for 5 consecutive days regardless of the reason for absence, to check on the wellbeing of the pupil.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation, or radicalisation. There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system; come from new migrant families

Taking Action	
Staff	<p>Follow The Ranch Weymouth procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future.</p> <p>Understand the signs to look out for, and the individual triggers to be aware of, when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage. Record concerns on the Safeguarding Concerns Report form - on SharePoint 365 and report to the DSL.</p>

DSL	<p>Inform the local authority if a child leaves The Ranch Weymouth without a new school being named and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.</p> <p>Ensure Staff are trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.</p> <p>If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries.</p> <p>Make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the Police if the child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm.</p>
Parents	<p>Provide at least two emergency contacts for their child and ensure The Ranch Weymouth is updated if these numbers change. This is held on a centre secure online system upon registration.</p>

10. Recruitment – interview and appointment panels

Our Safeguarding lead Iain Woodbridge has been trained on Safer Recruitment by the NSPCC. At least one person on any interview/appointment panel for a post at The Ranch Weymouth will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023* and be in line with local safeguarding procedures. Further information relating to safer recruitment can be found in section 4 of the procedure manual below.

11. Supervision

All staff who have contact with children and families have mandatory monthly scheduled supervision and reflective practice. Which will provide them with support, coaching and training, promote the interests of children and allow for confidential discussions of sensitive issues. This is through direct supervision by the DSL Iain Woodbridge and Reflective practice via The Dorset Nurture Hub.

12. Responsibilities

We will follow the statutory guidance as set out in the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 (and associated documents and guidance (outlined in appendices 1 and 2), adhering to the roles, responsibilities and expectations identified for:

- The director/s
- The designated safeguarding lead
- The deputy designated safeguarding lead/s
- Staff

Role	Responsibilities
Staff	<p>Read and sign to confirm their understanding of Part 1 and Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and review this guidance at least annually. Annex A provides a condensed version of Part 1 and will be utilised for staff who do not work directly with children on a regular basis.</p> <p>All staff will understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our systems which support safeguarding, including the staff code of conduct policy, the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), the behaviour policy, and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education • The early help process (sometimes known as the common assessment framework) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment; the process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including statutory duties such as reporting FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals • The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child sexual exploitation (CSE), FGM and radicalisation • How to raise a safeguarding concern or allegation in relation to a member of staff, volunteer, or supply staff • How to implement appropriate pupil release procedures in line with The Ranch's expectations to ensure the duty of care for children is transferred to parents/carers
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<p>DSL</p>	<p>The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding.</p> <p>During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. The contact details of the DSL and Deputy DSL and local authority's referring team can be found at the top of this document.</p> <p>When the DSL is absent, the deputy/deputies will act as cover.</p> <p>This will be Ann-Marie Level 3 Safeguarding.</p> <p>The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources, and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so • Contribute to the assessment of children; refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or Police), and support staff who make such referrals directly • Keep the Directors informed of any issues and liaise with the local authority's referring team; this can be SEN provisional lead/social worker/virtual school lead/ case officer for child protection concerns as appropriate. • Link with the local safeguarding partners and other external agencies as required. In relation to the Police, this will include consideration for '<u>When to call the Police</u>'. This includes involvement in discussions about early help provision. • Take lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes for social-worker children (SWC) by knowing their safeguarding concerns and the impact these might have on attendance, engagement, and achievement – Jointly with the Designated Key Worker on The Ranch Team, the DSL will also ensure that The Ranch adheres to all of the set processes.
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	<p>Understand the views of children – encourage a culture of listening/taking account their wishes and understanding the difficulties they may have in approaching staff about their issues</p> <p>Share a child’s safeguarding information with the new provision within 5 days of them leaving and share in advance any additional information that is required to safeguard a child.</p> <p>Being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult (i.e., for Police investigations and searches). Consideration for PACE (Police and Criminal Evidence) Code C 2019 (Updated 2020).</p> <p>The role of DSL and Deputy DSL is explicit in the role holder’s job description. The full description of their responsibilities is set out in section 5 of the procedure manual below.</p>
<p>Governance</p>	<p>The Board of Directors will approve this policy at each review. implementation.</p> <p>All staff are trained in the procedures to follow if they have a safeguarding concern/allegation.</p>
<p>Lead Facilitator - Director Toni Matthews in combination with the DSL Iain Woodbridge.</p>	<p>The lead facilitator, or where appropriate her/his deputy, is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that staff (including temporary/volunteer staff) are informed of this policy as part of their induction; communicating this policy to parents when their child joins The Ranch Weymouth and via The Ranch website • Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training, and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent • Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and update this regularly

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting as the ‘case manager’ in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff, volunteer, or supply staff, where appropriate (refer to section 3 of the procedure manual below). • Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable • Ensuring that each child in the setting is assigned a key person.
Parents	<p>Have access to Safeguarding statements, policy, and other associated documents.</p> <p>Be made aware of The Ranch Weymouth’s responsibility to safeguard children. Understand how to access appropriate signposting for support e.g., Domestic Abuse</p>

13. Confidentiality

The Ranch Weymouth has a separate policy with respect to confidentiality and data protection. This includes a list of guidelines for staff to follow to avoid breaching confidentiality.

All staff must be aware that:

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding (including withholding personal information for the purposes of keeping a child safe); whether problems are first emerging, or a child is already known to Social Care
- Information must only be shared on a ‘need-to-know’ basis, but you do not need consent to share information if a child is suffering, or at risk of, serious harm
- Information can be shared without consent where it is not possible to gain consent or cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent
- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation, as this may not be in the child’s best interests
- Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to allegations of abuse against staff in section 3 of the procedure manual below.

Record Keeping:

We will hold records in line with data protection legislation.

The Ranch Weymouth uses Microsoft 365 and Sharepoint to securely host all records in a paperless format. This has control access and ongoing firewall and security protection via Microsoft.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded on a central log held securely online, accessible to the DSL. Staff can choose to upload a hand-written record if required. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL. Non-confidential records will be easily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

Any safeguarding logs including child protection are recorded securely on our central paperless online intranet and will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken, and decisions reached (including a rationale/justification for these decisions as appropriate).

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period after they have left their placement at The Ranch Weymouth. All safeguarding records are stored paperless, password protected online within The Ranch intranet. The Ranch Weymouth will share information with other agencies and when this is appropriate, in line with local safeguarding procedures.

14. Mobile phones and cameras

The Ranch staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to The Ranch Weymouth for their own use but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present, unless during work time when they may want a record of a child's learning for assessment purposes.

We will follow the General Data Protection Regulation³ which formed the Data Protection Act 2018 when taking and storing photos

³<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted>

15. Monitoring and compliance

This policy will be monitored by the Board of Directors and the designated Safeguarding Leads and through regular meetings with the lead facilitator Toni Matthews. Compliance will be assured through the above mentioned staff.

Full access is in place for each via The Ranch's Safeguarding SharePoint. This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review, it will be approved by the full board of directors.

The Ranch Escalation Policy

How to Escalate a Concern

The Ranch recognises the decision to report a concern can be difficult, especially where a colleague is implicated.

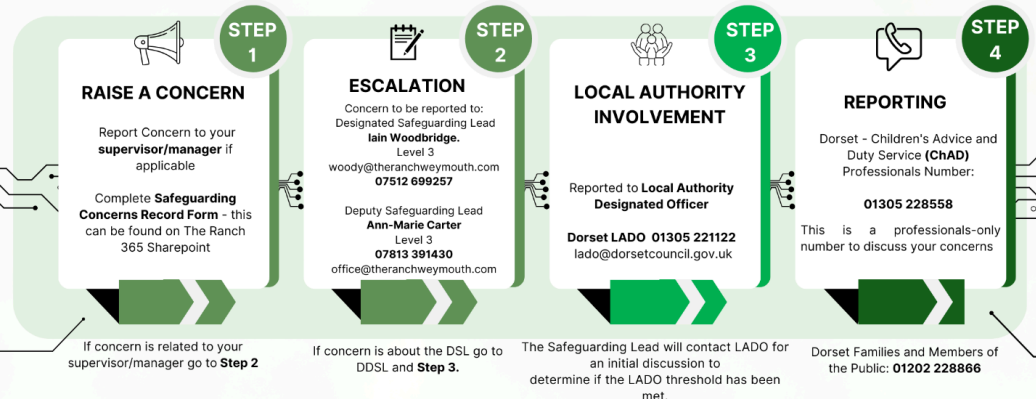
The Ranch is determined that the reporting of concerns will be treated seriously and sensitively.

The Ranch directors will always take appropriate action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith.

All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal your identity unless you wish otherwise.

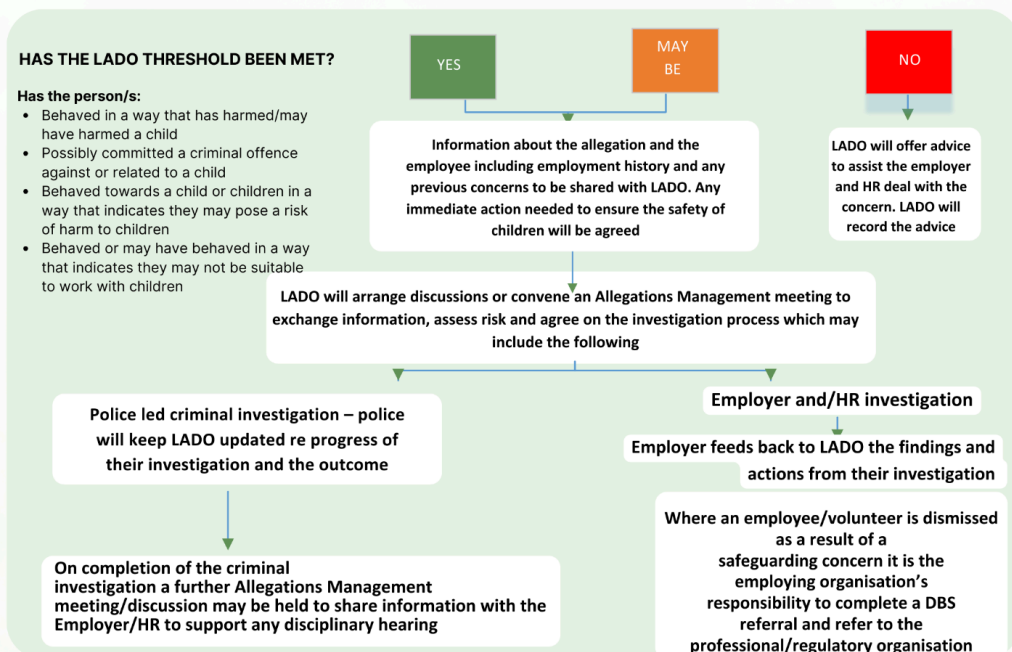
If a situation arises where a concern cannot be resolved without revealing your identity, we will discuss this with you beforehand.

If you are concerned about the immediate safety of a child or if a child has an injury contact the Police on 101 or 999 for emergencies



If an allegation is made about an employee or a volunteer working with children/young people you must report to your Safeguarding Lead or Senior Manager. This applies to allegations/concerns raised about people in their personal as well as professional lives.

LADO Process Flowchart - For Allegations against People working with Children



If you make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you. If, however, you make an allegation which the investigation indicates may have been made without substance, maliciously or for your own personal gain, disciplinary action will be taken against you.

WWW.THERANCHWEYMOUTH.COM

Escalation Flow Chart for Staff.

[Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedure Manual](#) follows this page.

PROCEDURE MANUAL

1. Categories of abuse and taking action

Categories of Abuse include:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse (including Domestic Abuse)
- Sexual Abuse (including child sexual exploitation)
- Neglect

Possible non-specific indicators of abuse in children

- Significant change in behaviour
- Extreme anger or sadness
- Aggressive and attention-needing behaviour
- Suspicious bruises with unsatisfactory explanations
- Lack of self-esteem
- Self-injury
- Depression and/or anxiousness
- Age-inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Criminality
- Substance abuse
- Mental health problems
- Poor attendance

Risk Indicators

The factors described in this section are frequently found in cases of child abuse. Their presence is not proof that abuse has occurred, but:

- Must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm
- Justifies the need for careful assessment and discussion with designated / named / lead person, manager, (or in the absence of all those individuals, an experienced colleague)
- May require consultation with and / or referral to Children's Services

The absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not occurred.

In an abusive relationship the child may:

- Appear frightened of the parent/s
 - Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (though full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups)

The parent or carer may:

- Persistently avoid child health promotion services and treatment of the child's episodic illnesses
- Have unrealistic expectations of the child
- Frequently complain about/to the child and may fail to provide attention or praise (high criticism/low warmth environment)
- Be absent or misusing substances
- Persistently refuse to allow access on home visits
- Be involved in domestic abuse

Staff should be aware of the potential risk to children when individuals, previously known or suspected to have abused children, move into the household.

Recognising Physical Abuse

The following are often regarded as indicators of concern:

- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury
- Several different explanations provided for an injury
- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment
- Parents are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury
- Parents are absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment
- Repeated presentation of minor injuries
- Family use of different doctors and A&E departments
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries

Bruising

Children can have accidental bruising however, the following must be considered as non accidental unless there is evidence, or an adequate explanation provided:

- Any bruising to a pre-crawling or pre-walking baby
- Bruising in or around the mouth, particularly in small babies which may indicate force feeding
- Two simultaneous bruised eyes, without bruising to the forehead, (rarely accidental, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive)
- Repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally
- Variation in colour possibly indicating injuries caused at different times
- The outline of an object used e.g., belt marks, handprints, or a hairbrush
- Bruising or tears around, or behind, the earlobe/s indicating injury by pulling or twisting
- Bruising around the face
- Grasp marks on small children
- Bruising on the arms, buttocks and thighs may be an indicator of sexual abuse

Mongolian Blue Spot:

Bruising in non-mobile children is rare and may indicate abuse or neglect. Birth marks, especially Mongolian Blue Spots, can mimic bruising. Mongolian Blue Spot can be identified (see below), however if in any doubt as to the cause of the bruise refer to local authority guidance and consultation.

- Areas of skin hyperpigmentation – flat, not raised, swollen, or inflamed

- Not painful to touch
- Usually present at birth/ develop soon afterwards
- Will not change in shape or colour within a few days
- Normally uniform blue/ grey in colour across the mark
- Common in African, Middle Eastern, Mediterranean, and Asian children
- While most occur at the lower back and buttocks, they can appear anywhere (e.g., back of shoulder or limb). Scalp/ face rarely affected
- Can be single/ multiple, vary in size, but mostly few centimetres diameter

Gradually fade over many years

Bite Marks

Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth. Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped. Those over 3 cm in diameter are more likely to have been caused by an adult or older child. A medical opinion should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite.

Burns and Scalds

It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns and scalds and will always require experienced medical opinion.

Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious e.g.:

- Circular burns from cigarettes (but may be friction burns if along the bony protuberance of the spine)
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements
- Burns of uniform depth over a large area
- Scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid (a child getting into hot water is his/her own accord will struggle to get out and cause splash marks)
- Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation

Scalds to the buttocks of a small child, particularly in the absence of burns to the feet, are indicative of dipping into a hot liquid or bath.

Fractures

Fractures may cause pain, swelling and discolouration over a bone or joint. Non-mobile children rarely sustain fractures. There are grounds for concern if:

- The history provided is vague, non-existent, or inconsistent with the fracture type
- There are associated old fractures
- Medical attention is sought after a period of delay when the fracture has caused symptoms such as swelling, pain or loss of movement
- There is an unexplained fracture in the first year of life

Scars

Many scars or scars of different sizes or ages, or on different parts of the body, may suggest abuse.

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The manifestations of emotional abuse might also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse. The indicators of emotional abuse are often also associated with other forms of abuse.

Some indicators of emotional abuse:

- Developmental delay
- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent e.g., anxious, indiscriminate, or not attachment
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach
- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Scapegoated within the family
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence

Withdrawn or seen as a “loner” – difficulty relating to others

Recognising Signs of Sexual Abuse

Boys and girls of all ages may be sexually abused and are frequently scared to say anything due to guilt and/or fear.

This is particularly difficult for a child to talk about, and full account should be taken of the cultural sensitivities of any individual child/family.

Recognition can be difficult unless the child discloses and is believed. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional/behavioural.

Behavioural indicators could include:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the child’s age
- Continual and inappropriate or excessive masturbation
- Self-harm (including eating disorder), self-mutilation and suicide attempts
- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners
- An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes e.g., for sports events (but this may be related to cultural norms or physical difficulties)

Physical indicators could include:

- Pain or itching in genital area
- Blood on underclothes
- Pregnancy in a younger girl where the identity of the father is not disclosed
- Physical symptoms such as injuries to the genital or anal area, bruising to buttocks, abdomen and thighs, sexually transmitted disease, presence of semen on vagina, anus, external genitalia, or clothing

Recognising Neglect

Evidence of neglect is built up over time and can cover different aspects of parenting. **Indicators include:**

- Persistent failure by parents or carers to meet the basic essential needs e.g., adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene, and medical care
- Child seen to be listless, apathetic, and irresponsive with no apparent medical cause
- Failure of child to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss
- Child thrives away from home environment
- Child is frequently absent from school
- Child is left with adults who are intoxicated or violent
- Child is abandoned or left alone for excessive periods

If a child is in immediate danger

Taking Action	
Staff	<p>Make a referral to children’s social care and/or the Police immediately. Anyone can make a referral.</p> <p>Tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and log on a safeguarding report form on The Ranch safeguarding Sharepoint 365 as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.</p> <p>Details of how to make a referral is also included below.</p>
DSL	<p>Work in partnership with other agencies in the best interests of the children. Where necessary, liaise with the Police, any relevant external agency including GP (General Practitioner), school on which the pupil is held on role and make a referral to children’s social care.</p> <p>Where the child already has a safeguarding social worker, the request for service should go immediately to the social worker involved, or in their absence to their team manager and log on the safeguarding report form on The Ranch Safeguarding Sharepoint.</p> <p>The following link provides additional guidance for reporting child abuse to your local council: https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council</p>

Managing disclosures

We recognise that children may not feel ready to disclose their abuse, neglect, or exploitation and that they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. This could be because of a range of factors

such as embarrassment, coercion, or vulnerability (such as SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), sexual orientation or language barriers).

All staff will work towards building positive/trusted relationships with children that facilitate communication and show professional curiosity that will provide opportunities for disclosure. Additional pastoral support (and appropriate support for communication in relation to children with SEND) will be considered.

We recognise that it takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, guilty, or scared, their abuser may have threatened that something will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults or believe that what has happened is their fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.

A child who makes a disclosure may have to tell their story on several subsequent occasions to the police and/or social workers. Therefore, it is vital that their first experience of talking to a trusted adult is a positive one.

The tables below outline the steps that must be followed if a child makes a disclosure:

During their conversation with the pupil staff will;

- listen to what the child has to say and allow them to speak freely.
- remain calm and not overreact or act shocked or disgusted – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting the listener.
- reassure the child that it is not their fault and that they have done the right thing in telling someone.
- not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how difficult it is for the pupil and allow them time to talk.
- take what the child is disclosing seriously.
- ask open questions and avoid asking leading questions.
- avoid jumping to conclusions, speculation or making accusations.
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who is being abused.
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing sooner. Saying things such as ‘I do wish you had told me about it when it started’ (this may be the staff member’s way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean they have done something wrong).
- tell the child what will happen next, that they cannot keep secrets and that information will be shared to ensure the right level of support is given.
- Record on the safeguarding report form on Sharepoint 365 the conversation as soon as possible in the child’s own words. Stick to the facts and do not make your own judgment on it. The record must include dates and times to ensure there is an accurate record; alternatively, if appropriate and there is immediate risk of harm, make a referral to children’s social care and/or the Police directly, and tell the DSL as soon as possible.

Notifying Parents

- This must be handled sensitively and normally the DSL/DDSL will contact the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion, or disclosure of abuse that the child has been harmed in some way.
- However, if The Ranch believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from The Children's Advice and Duty Service (ChAD)
- Where there are concerns about forced marriage or so-called honour-based abuse, parents should not be informed a referral is being made as to do so may place the child at a significantly increased risk. In some circumstances it would be appropriate to contact the police.
- Any meetings with parents that relate to safeguarding (including pastoral meetings for attendance/behaviour/wellbeing) will be recorded on The Ranch safeguarding Sharepoint.

Making a referral

- Concerns about a child or a disclosure should be immediately raised with the DSL who will help decide whether a referral to the children's Local Authority Safeguarding Hub or other support is appropriate. This then needs to be logged on a safeguarding report form on The Ranch safeguarding sharepoint asap.
- If The Ranch as a provider are uncertain about whether a concern raised should be referred to the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub, a consultation will be sought with the Local Authority to seek further support and guidance and advice logged on our safeguarding sharepoint central secure log.
- If a referral is needed, the DSL should make this rapidly and have the necessary systems in place to enable this to happen. However, anyone can make a referral and if for any reason a staff member thinks a referral is appropriate and one has not been made, they can, and should, consider making a referral themselves then logged on a safeguarding report form on The Ranch sharepoint 365 asap.
- The child (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child, rationale for both needs to be logged on a safeguarding report form on The Ranch Sharepoint asap.
- If after a referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the designated safeguarding lead should request re-consideration, to ensure their concerns have been addressed, and most importantly the child's situation improves.
- Where a referral has not been made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed, and information logged on a safeguarding report form asap.
- The following link provides additional guidance for reporting child abuse to your local council: <https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

Supporting Staff

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through any concerns with the DSLs and to seek further support as appropriate.

We recognise that staff working in the setting of The Ranch Weymouth who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, may find the situation

stressful and upsetting.

2. Types of abuse and additional vulnerabilities

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

So-called honour-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. These are detailed below.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 explains that FGM comprises “all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs” We recognise that FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as ‘female genital cutting,’ ‘circumcision’ or ‘initiation.’

Section 6(1) of the FGM ACT 2003 states that ‘girl includes woman’. In line with the Scope item 3.2 in this policy, our duty does extend to all girls within our duty of care and reporting must also be in line with local safeguarding arrangements for child protection.

Possible indicators that a pupil may be at risk of FGM

- The girl’s family having a history of practicing FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practiced in the girl’s community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues
- Unexpected holiday abroad and rumours of surgery, rituals, or traditions abroad; having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
- Having limited level of integration within UK society; confiding to a professional that she is to have a “special procedure” or to attend a special occasion to “become a woman”
- Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
- Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
- Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
- Being unexpectedly absent from school or visiting a surgeon from another country who is visiting the UK, having sections missing from her ‘red book’ (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication.

**The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.*

Indicators that FGM has already occurred

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues
- Having unusual difficulty walking, sitting, or standing, or looking uncomfortable
- Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
- Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems; avoiding physical exercise or missing PE
- Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period
- Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour; being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
- Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem; talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

If you discover that FGM has taken place, or a pupil is at risk of FGM, the table below outlines your responsibilities based on your role within The Ranch Weymouth

Taking Action	
Support Staff, key workers	Any staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18, must immediately report this to the

	<p>Police, personally then log on to a safeguarding report form on our Sharepoint and inform DSL asap.</p> <p>This is a statutory duty.</p> <p>This does not apply in cases where a pupil is <i>at risk</i> of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff must inform the DSL if they have any concerns that a pupil may be having FGM surgery in the future in the UK but also abroad. Staff must not examine pupils.</p>
Any other member of staff	Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18 must speak to the DSL and follow The Ranch's safeguarding procedures as outlined in section 6 of the procedure manual below.
DSL	The DSL will make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to be alert to children affected by FGM or at risk of FGM.

Extremism and Radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism.

Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, or ideological cause.'

Pupils may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal, and environmental factors. It is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. **It is vital that school staff can recognise those vulnerabilities.**

The government website Educate Against Hate <https://educateagainsthate.com/> and charity NSPCC says that signs that a pupil is being radicalised can include:

Possible indicators that a child is being radicalised
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, children who are different from themselves • Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution • Changes in friendship groups and appearance • Rejecting activities, they used to enjoy • Converting to a new religion • Isolating themselves from family and friends • Talking as if from a scripted speech • An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views • A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others • Increased levels of anger • Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use • Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessing extremist material online, including via social media platforms • Possessing extremist literature • Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

The Department for Education (DfE) also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, that The Ranch staff can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

We recognise that there is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period. Staff will be alerted to changes in pupils' behaviour.

Taking Action	
Staff	<p>As an educational setting The Ranch Weymouth has a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism.</p> <p>All staff will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that all staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.</p> <p>If a child is not at immediate risk of harm, where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree on a course of action. Alternatively, make a referral to the local authority children's social care directly if appropriate (see 'Referral' above).</p> <p>In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think someone is in immediate danger • Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group • See or hear something that may be terrorist related. <p>Recognise that children who are susceptible to radicalisation may have low self-esteem or be victims of bullying or discrimination. It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour, staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong.</p> <p>Staff must always take action if they are worried and log on the safeguarding report form on the staff Sharepoint 365</p>
DSL	<p>The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that all staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.</p> <p>Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral. This could include Channel, the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.</p> <p>If there are concerns that the child is at risk of harm, then a referral must be made to children's social care regardless of whether a Channel referral is deemed appropriate.</p>
The Ranch Weymouth	<p>The Ranch will ensure that suitable access to the internet is limited and filtering is in place and equip our pupils to stay safe online at the setting and at home.</p>

2.3 Forced Marriage

Forcing a person to purposefully cause a child to marry before the age of 18 is a crime, even without violence or coercion. This applies to both legal and non-binding 'marriages'.

A forced marriage is one entered without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological and can come from parents and other family members or elders in a particular religion.

Taking Action	
Staff	<p>Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms via the online safeguarding terms glossary on The Ranch Staff training Sharepoint.</p> <p>Be aware of the 'one chance' rule, i.e., we may only have one chance to speak to the potential victim and only one chance to save them. If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the pupil about their concerns in a secure and private place.</p> <p>Recognise that if the victim is not offered support following disclosure that the 'One Chance' opportunity may be lost. Therefore, all staff are aware of their responsibilities and obligations when they become aware of potential forced marriage, FGM and HBV cases.</p> <p>Report concerns to the DSL and log on to a safeguarding report form on The Ranch Sharepoint.</p>
DSL	<p>Speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place</p> <p>Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer</p> <p>Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or fmfu@fco.gov.uk. Refer to Government guidance on 'The right to choose'⁴</p>

Breast Ironing

Breast Ironing is practiced in some African countries, notably Cameroon. Girls aged between 9 and 15 have hot pestles, stones or other implements rubbed on their developing breast to stop them growing further. In the vast majority of cases breast ironing is carried out by mothers or grandmothers and the men in the family are unaware. Estimates range between 25% and 50% of girls in Cameroon are affected by breast ironing, affecting up to 3.8 million women across Africa. Further information in relation to breast ironing can be found at www.nationalfgmcentre.org.uk.

The practice of breast ironing is seen as a protection to girls by making them seem 'child-like' for longer and reducing the likelihood of pregnancy. Breast ironing is more prevalent in cities. Cameroon has one of the highest rates of literacy in Africa and ensuring that girls remain in education is seen as an important outcome of breast ironing.

Breast ironing is a form of physical abuse that has been condemned by the United Nations and

⁴<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-right-to-choose-government-guidance-on-forced-marriage>

identified as Gender-based Violence.

Taking Action	
Staff	Staff worried about the risk of breast ironing in their setting should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible and log concerns on the safeguarding report form on the Ranch Sharepoint 365

Serious Youth Violence

As included in *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023*, all staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. Possible indicators are outlined in the table below:

Possible indicators that a child is involved with serious violence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased absence from school • a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups • a significant decline in performance • signs of self-harm or significant change in well-being • signs of assault or unexplained injuries • unexplained gifts or new possessions • exclusions or being permanently excluded • having experienced maltreatment • been involved in offending (i.e., robbery or theft) • Being male <p><i>These could indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.</i></p>

Taking Action	
Staff	<p>All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these.</p> <p>Further advice can be provided in the Home Office's 2018 guidance documents: ⁵<i>Preventing Youth Violence and Gang Involvement</i> and <i>Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines</i> guidance.</p> <p>Report concerns to the DSL and log on a safeguarding report form on The Ranch Sharepoint.</p>

Child Exploitation

Child exploitation is a form of abuse that occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual (CSE) or criminal (CCE) activity.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is where children are sexually exploited for money, power, or status.

⁵https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418131/Preventing_youth_violence_and_gang_involvement_v3_March2015.pdf

This can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults, but does not always involve physical contact and can happen online.

For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam. CSE is a form of child sexual abuse.

Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is where children are used to complete criminal activity (a) in exchange for something they need (i.e., food/money), (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator, or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. This can also occur using technology.

CCE can include county lines (see below), or children being forced to work in cannabis factories, forced to shoplift or pickpocket or to threaten other young people.

County lines is a form of CCE that refers to gangs or organised criminal networks exploiting children to transport illegal drugs/drug money into one or more importing areas (within the UK) using 'deal lines' (dedicated mobile phone lines). Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network. It is acknowledged that experiences of girls and boys in relation to CCE can be different, but both can exist and where this is the case, there is a higher risk of CSE.

Possible indicators that a child is being exploited
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions • Associating with other young people involved in exploitation • Having older boyfriends or girlfriends • Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant • Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour • Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing • Misusing drugs and/or alcohol • Going missing for periods of time, or regularly coming home late • Regularly missing school or education, or not taking part in education

Taking Action	
Staff	If a member of staff suspects CSE or CCE, discuss this with the DSL and record concerns on the safeguarding report form, that can be found on The Ranch SharePoint 365.
DSL	The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the Police, if appropriate.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are personally connected. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional.

Taking Action	
Staff	<p>Be aware that all children can see, hear, or experience domestic abuse in the context of their home life. They are therefore victims in their own right.</p> <p>Be aware that exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children.</p> <p>Be aware that in some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Therefore, abuse can include the impact of witnessing the ill-treatment of others.</p> <p>Be aware of The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 that received royal assent on 29 April 2021.</p> <p>If a member of staff suspects domestic abuse, discuss this with the DSL and record concerns</p>
DSL	The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the Police, if appropriate

Online Safety

Technology is a significant component of safeguarding issues and abuse can take place concurrently online and in daily life. Online safety is an ongoing and interrelated theme that informs other policy and systems/processes.

The prevalence of issues arising through children's access to the online world is significant and all staff should be aware of associated risks and signs/symptoms. These are categorised within Keeping Children Safe in Education as:

- Content
- Contact
- Conduct
- Commerce

Online safety includes non-age-appropriate content, self-harm, and suicide, sharing nudes or semi nudes, cyberbullying, grooming, radicalisation, gaming (now identified by the World Health Organisation as a disorder), online gambling, inappropriate advertising, harmful online challenges/hoaxes⁶ and cybercrime. Our pupils will receive support and internet safety activity booklet to ensure they are aware of the risks associated above and how to report any concerns.

e Safety ⁶<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/harmful-online-challenges-and-online-hoaxes>

Filtering and Monitoring

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 requires schools and colleges in England to ‘ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place.’ There is additional guidance on how to teach pupils to be safe online on the DfE guidance.

Taking Action	
DSL	<p>It is the role of the DSL to lead, and take responsibility, for monitoring the internet usage of any equipment with access provided by The Ranch.</p> <p>Ensure that staff are present at any time where a pupil will use the internet on The Ranch equipment to access education.</p>
Staff	<p>Understand the importance of monitoring and being present when a pupil is using the internet on a laptop/tablet owned by The Ranch Weymouth. Undertake any mandatory training requirements.</p>
The Ranch Weymouth	<p>The Ranch will meet the Cyber security standards as outlined in the Government guidance ‘meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges’.</p> <p>The Ranch makes sure that the content is age appropriate and includes the ability to implement variable monitoring appropriate to age.</p>

Technical requirements to meet the cyber security standards

- Protect every device with a correctly configured boundary, or software firewall, or a device that performs the same function
- Change the default administrator password, or disable remote access on each firewall
- Protect access to the firewall's administrative interface with multi-factor authentication (MFA), or a small, specified IP-allow list combined with a managed password, or prevent access from the internet entirely
- Keep firewall firmware up to date
- Check monitoring logs as they can be useful in detecting suspicious activity
- Block inbound unauthenticated connections by default
- Document reasons why particular inbound traffic has been permitted through the firewall
- Review reasons why particular inbound traffic has been permitted through the firewall often, change the rules when access is no longer needed
- Enable a software firewall for devices used on untrusted networks, like public wi-fi

All connections to the internet wifi within the setting are password protected.

All access to specific information held on the Sharepoint are monitored and password restricted with the ability for the IT and DSL to block at any point.

Mental Health

Supporting all children's mental health is a key priority for The Ranch Weymouth (and is specifically included within the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 definition of 'safeguarding'). This includes preventing/acting on abuse caused by impairment of a child's mental health or development.

Poor mental health is an indicator of potential harm and potential adverse childhood experiences. Training for staff will include being aware of this link.

Taking Action	
DSL	<p>Ensure that all staff are trained in the signs/symptoms of poor mental health and will record their concerns on the safeguarding concerns report form on The Ranch Sharepoint 365, using the mental health category.</p> <p>Ensure staff are aware of their responsibility of informing the DSL immediately if they perceive that the child is at risk of harm (including through self-harm or suicide).</p>
Staff	<p>Where staff have a mental health concern for a child where there are also safeguarding concerns then immediate action will be taken including the DSL liaising with The Dorset Nurture Hub.</p>

Specific reference to safeguarding in relation to mental health can be found in The Ranch Weymouth's Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy - which can be found on the policies tab of The Ranch Weymouth webpage.

Extra-Familial Harms / Contextual Safeguarding

Safeguarding concerns can be associated with factors outside the home environment and all staff (but especially safeguarding teams) should be aware of the context that such concerns can occur. This includes issues that arise in The Ranch setting, between children, within the local community or online.

Children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence. We recognise that children and young people's risk experiencing significant harm in extra-familial contexts, and seek to include these contexts within prevention, identification, assessment, and intervention safeguarding activities.

Taking Action	
DSL	<p>Ensure that all staff are trained in the signs/symptoms of extra-familial Harms and will record their concerns and actions taken on a safeguarding report form on Sharepoint 365.</p> <p>Ensure staff are aware of their responsibility of informing the DSL immediately if they perceive that the child is at risk of harm.</p> <p>DSL along with the directors will continually assess the risks that young people may be exposed to, both inside and outside of The Ranch community.</p> <p>The DSL will consider all potential harms when assessing the risk to a pupil.</p>
Staff	Where staff concerns for a child immediate action will be taken including the DSL and recording concerns on a safeguarding report form on SharePoint 365.

Pupil awareness

Pupils will have the chance to receive an age-appropriate personal outcome plan that ensures they are provided with effective information, support, and signposting for all safeguarding areas. This includes delivery through ASDAN PSHE modules.

Pupils will be taught about relevant risks, appropriate behaviour and how to report concerns. Examples from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 are outlined in the table below:

Pupils should be aware of
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sexism • misogyny/misandry

- homophobia
- biphobia
- sexual violence/harassment
- healthy and respectful relationships
- boundaries and consent
- stereotyping
- prejudice and equality
- body confidence and self-esteem
- how to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour) • the concepts of, and laws relating to sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable together with sensitively reinforcing that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them

Where external visitors are utilised to provide information and advice on site at The Ranch Weymouth, appropriate checks will be completed to ensure that the visitor/organisation: Is who they say they are (i.e. ID checks/website checks/reviews), will be of benefit from an education perspective, is age appropriate, that the content is neutral from political views, that there is no attempt to coerce/manipulate/radicalise and that they are clear on your safeguarding expectations (through sharing The Ranch Weymouth safeguarding information) including confirming they have read and understood Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 Annex A.

A useful guide can also be found from [‘Using external visitors to support online safety education’](#).

Child Abduction/Community Safety/Modern Slavery

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends, and acquaintances); and by strangers.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

Taking Action	
Staff	<p>Work with pupils will be focused, at an age-appropriate level, on practical advice for staying safe together with building confidence and resilience.</p> <p>Be aware of the signs and systems which can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents unable to leave work to attend meetings • subjected to violence or threats • unexplained injuries

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concerns over identity or other relevant documentation • being in a situation of dependence or perception of being bonded
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	<p>by debt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • receiving little or no payment. <p>Staff should record concerns and report any concerns to the DSL.</p>
DSL	<p>Ensure staff receive awareness training about this type of abuse.</p> <p>If deemed appropriate, complete a referral to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) when there are concerns about a child in relation to modern slavery.</p>

3. Safeguarding concerns or allegations of abuse

Concerns about a staff member, volunteer, or supply staff

If there is a safeguarding concern or allegation about a member of staff, this should be addressed in line with Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023. Information in relation to the harm test is provided in Part 4 through a link to '[Making barring referrals to the DBS](#)'.

We will deal with any allegation of abuse against a member of staff, volunteer, or visitor very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and fair judgment.

NOTE: Abuse can be reported no matter how long ago it happened.

This is also covered in our [Making an Allegation Procedure](#) which can be found on our policies page on the main The Ranch Weymouth website.

www.theranchweymouth.com

Taking Action

<p>Staff</p>	<p>Staff must comply with The Ranch Weymouth’s staff Code of Conduct. Members of staff should recognise the ‘Guidance for Safer Working practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education (2019)’.</p> <p>This can be found online on the policies page of The Ranch website, alongside The Whistleblowing Policy.</p> <p>In line with The Ranch’s Whistleblowing Policy, if you have concerns about a member of staff, volunteer, or visitor, speak to the DSL, director. (as outlined above) If you have concerns about the Designated Safeguarding Lead, speak to the deputy designated safeguard lead. As detailed in our escalation guidelines and visible on a poster display at all sites. If your concern is about both safeguarding leads, this can be raised with the board of directors (as detailed above) or directly to LADO (as detailed above)</p> <p>You can also discuss any safeguarding procedural concerns with the DSL.</p>
<p>DSL / Director</p>	<p>Once a concern has been reported, the Directors and DSL will determine if the member of staff has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, or • Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or • Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children. • Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may

	<p>not be suitable to work with children</p> <p>The final bullet point refers to ‘transferable risk’ from a staff member who is involved in an incident outside of The Ranch setting that does not involve children i.e., a member of staff who is involved in perpetrating domestic abuse at home and it is determined that a child could trigger the same reaction and would thus be put at risk.</p> <p>It applies regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place in the setting .</p> <p>Allegations against a staff member who is no longer teaching and historical allegations of abuse will be referred to the Police/LADO and The Ranch Weymouth will support any investigations in full.</p> <p>If the allegation meets this threshold, the procedure for managing this is outlined below.</p>
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Procedure for dealing with allegations that meet the harm threshold

When an allegation is made, a case manager will be allocated. If the allegation relates to a member of staff, the case manager will be the DSL. If the allegation relates to the DSL the Directors will seek advice from LADO.

Role	Responsibility
Case Manager	<p>Immediately ensure any children and staff involved in the allegation are safe and ensure any actions do not jeopardise any potential Police investigation.</p> <p>Immediately discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority.</p> <p>Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated</p>

	<p>officer (and the Police or children’s social care services, where necessary).</p> <p>Where the Police and/or children’s social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies.</p> <p>Where appropriate, carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at The Ranch is justified, or whether alternative arrangements should be agreed. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, Police and/or children’s social care services, as appropriate.</p> <p>If immediate suspension is considered necessary, consult with HR (Human Resource), and agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer.</p> <p>The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at The Ranch and their contact details.</p> <p>Further information about suspension can be found below</p>
Case Manager	<p>If it is decided that no further action is to be taken, record this decision, and the justification for it, and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation. This may sometimes result in further action being taken if there are concerns regarding the conduct of the member of staff.</p> <p>If it is decided that further action is needed, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in The Ranch Weymouth and/or liaise with the Police and/or children’s social care services as appropriate.</p> <p>Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate. The Ranch works alongside The Dorset Nurture Hub.</p>

Case Manager	<p>Inform the parents of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children’s social care services and/or the Police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice.</p> <p>Keep the parents of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case and the outcome, where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process (in confidence).</p> <p>Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely</p>
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	<p>to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child.</p> <p>NOTE: If The Ranch is made aware that the Secretary of State has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Authority (TRA).</p>
Case manager	<p>In The Ranch Weymouth we will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations.</p> <p>This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.</p> <p>Where the Police are involved, wherever possible we will ask the Police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in The Ranch disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.</p>
Case Manager	<p>Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution</p> <p>The case manager will discuss with the local authority’s designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the Police and/or children’s Social Care.</p>

Case Manager	<p>Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated</p> <p>If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the case manager and the school's personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.</p> <p>If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the case manager and personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to refer the matter to the TRA to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.</p>
Case Manager	<p>Individuals returning to work after suspension</p> <p>If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.</p> <p>The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation if they are still attending The Ranch Weymouth.</p>
Case Manager	<p>Unsubstantiated or malicious allegations</p> <p>If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the</p>

	<p>DSL, or other appropriate person in the case of an allegation against the DSL, will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the pupil(s) who made it, or whether the Police should be asked to consider whether action against those who made the allegation might be appropriate, even if they are not a pupil.</p>
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Case Manager	<p>Record Keeping</p> <p>The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or safeguarding concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case.</p> <p>Such records will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation or safeguarding concern • Details of how it was followed up and resolved • Notes of any action taken, and decisions reached (and justification for these, as stated above). <p>If an allegation is not found to have been malicious, the school will retain the records of the case on the individual's confidential personnel file and provide a copy to the individual. We will retain these records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.</p> <p>The records of any allegation that is found to be malicious will be deleted from the individual's personnel file.</p>
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Suspension

Suspension will not be the default position and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- Redeployment within The Ranch Weymouth so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in The Ranch setting so that they do not have unsupervised access to children
- Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)
- **Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

Processing allegations against staff - Case Manager will be the DSL If basic

enquiries determine potential foundation to allegation:

- Inform LADO – Inform Education Director, Regional Safeguarding Lead, HR • Complete LADO referral if requested by LADO – Investigation (either by Police/Social Care/internally through investigating officer (IO))
- Record outcome and shared with above professionals

If basic enquiries determine no potential foundation to allegation:

- Check to ensure the allegation is not malicious and confirm the conclusion to the individual who raised the allegation.

Processing allegations against DSL - Case Manager will be the Director or as advised by LADO.

If basic enquiries determine potential foundation to allegation:

- Inform LADO and complete LADO referral if requested by LADO
- Participate in the investigation (either by Police, Social Care, internally through investigating officer (IO))
- Record and shared with above professionals

If basic enquiries determine no potential foundation to allegation:

- Check to ensure allegation is not malicious
- Confirm conclusion to individual who raised the allegation – Outcome recorded and shared with Directors

Timescales

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious will be resolved within 1 week.
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, we will institute appropriate action within 3 working days.
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, we will hold this within 15 working days.

Confidentiality

The Ranch will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

The case manager will take advice from the local authority's designated officer, Police, and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
- How to manage speculation, leaks, and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises.

References

When providing employer references, we will not refer to any allegation that has been proven to be false, unsubstantiated, or malicious, or any history of allegations where all such allegations have been proven to be false, unsubstantiated, or malicious.

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are substantiated, we will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
- The duration of the suspension
- Whether or not the suspension was justified
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual.

Procedure for dealing with allegations do not meet the harms threshold (Low level concerns)

We have an open and transparent culture where all concerns about adults are dealt with promptly and appropriately, and where all adults feel able to share their concerns. Where the harm threshold is not met, there are still concerns that can exist from: suspicion, patterns in behaviour, a 'nagging doubt' or incidents that are inconsistent with the staff code of conduct.

Examples of this could include:

- Being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- engaging 1:1 with a child in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- using inappropriate sexualised/intimidating/offensive language

Whilst there is a wide spectrum here from inadvertent/thoughtless actions to those actions intended to enable abuse. It is essential that these low-level concerns are fully addressed and appropriately recorded.

Taking Action	
Staff	<p>Inform DSL of any safeguarding procedural concerns so that these can be checked, and appropriate action taken.</p> <p>Inform the directors or DSL of any low-level concerns about staff. Head Facilitator for Inclusion and DSL to complete a joint internal informal investigation of concerns – DSL to determine if management expectation letter is required (in conjunction with HR as required). DSL to record outcome on safeguarding sharepoint.</p>

<p>Directors/ DSL, HR</p>	<p>Analyse trends for low level concerns to identify wider lessons learnt (i.e., such as additional staff training) and to ascertain if an individual member of staff poses a greater risk based on their reported low-level concerns in conjunction with other relevant information (i.e., vetting checks etc).</p> <p>Where this is the case, further formal investigation and consultation with the LADO may be required. Whilst the Headteacher is the ultimate decision maker they may wish to consult with the DSL and take a more collaborative decision-making approach.</p> <p>If in any doubt about whether the information shared as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, then the LADO should be consulted.</p>
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Support

Staff will receive training around the concept of low-level concerns and the process to follow to raise these concerns. Staff will be provided with The Ranch Weymouth's staff code of conduct and also receive specific training around safeguarding procedures, positive handling, managing behaviour and safer working practice.

The Ranch's Whistleblowing Policy is shared with all staff so that they are clear on how to raise a concern. The use of The Ranch Sharepoint and Microsoft 365 enables the confidential, secure, and consistent storing of all low-level concerns/allegations together with enabling analysis of trends by those with appropriate access and knowledge to do so.

NOTE: Low level concerns will not be referred to in a reference unless they relate to issues that would normally be included (i.e., misconduct or poor performance).

Allegations of abuse made against other pupils (child on child abuse) Some

examples of child-on-child abuse are included in the table below:

Examples of child-on-child abuse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying (including cyberbullying) • Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (including teenage relationship abuse) • Physical abuse • Sexual violence • Sexual harassment • Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent (i.e., forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or engage in sexual activity with a third party) • Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes • Upskirting

- Initiation/hazing

We recognise that children can abuse other children and that this can happen inside or outside of school and online. This includes intra-familial harm where it is necessary to ensure appropriate support is provided to siblings. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up.” We have a zero-tolerance approach.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our Ranch Ethos and bullying within the setting policy, but this policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. It can be found on the policy page on The Ranch Website. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offense
- Could put pupils in the school at risk
- Is violent
- Involves pupils being forced/coerced into drugs or alcohol
- Involves criminal exploitation, such as threatening other children into criminal activity • Involves sexual exploitation, abuse, violence, or harassment

Upskirting typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm. This is a criminal offence under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 and victims can be of any gender or identification.

When referring to sexual harassment it means ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline. When sexual harassment is referenced, it is done so in the context of child-on child sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded, or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive, or sexualised environment.

The Ranch monitoring processes ensure that any pupil who carries out child on child abuse online (through laptops and systems used whilst at the setting) can be identified, and action will be taken.

Examples of sexual harassment can include

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, and calling someone sexualised names • Sexual “jokes” or taunting
- Physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes, and displaying pictures, photos, or drawings of a sexual nature • online sexual harassment

- consensual (NOTE: consensual image sharing may not be abusive, but it is illegal) and non consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images – See also UKCIS advice on ‘Sharing nudes and semi-nudes’
- sharing of unwanted explicit content (e.g., pornography)
- Misogynistic messages
- upskirting
- Sexualised online bullying
- Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media
- sexual exploitation; coercion and threat

Taking Action

Staff

Understand the importance that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up; not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and upskirting; dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

All staff will minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour and ensuring we are confident and trained to recognise the signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to report concerns.

All staff need to understand that a pupil harming another child could be a sign that the pupil is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy.

If a child discloses violence or abuse to you, reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and will be supported/kept safe so that they never feel like they are creating a problem or feel ashamed for reporting. The wishes of the victim will be an important consideration.

You must tell the DSL and record the allegation on a safeguarding report form on Sharepoint 365, but do not investigate it.

<p>DSL</p>	<p>Ensure all staff receive training on how to manage a disclosure as the initial response is so important given that children may find it difficult to make a direct report.</p> <p>If an allegation is made, the DSL may contact the local authority children’s social care team and follow their advice, as well as the Police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence.</p> <p>The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including consideration for before/after school activities) – both the victim(s) and the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made – with a named person they can talk to if needed – considering for the time and location of the incident and any action required to make the location safer; the wellbeing of all children</p>
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	<p>involved is essential and the DSL will contact specialist mental health services, if appropriate.</p> <p>Parents/carers will be informed in a timely manner (of both children) and wherever possible, children provided with an outcome for the allegation.</p> <p>The four likely scenarios for managing reports are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • manage internally (i.e., through behaviour policy) • Early Help referral • Social Care referral • Reporting to the Police. <p>Deliberately false/malicious allegations will be considered in line with the behaviour policy.</p>
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Early Help

If early help is appropriate, the DSL will support you in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate.

The DSL will keep the case under constant review and the school will consider a referral to local authority children’s social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.

Referral

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children’s social care or the Police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so.

If you make a referral directly, you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

The local authority will decide within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must contact the local authority and make sure the case is reconsidered to ensure the concerns have been addressed and the child's situation improves.

If at any point The Ranch feels that the rationale/justification for the decisions made by social care do not ensure that the child is prevented from risk of harm, then they will escalate their concerns in line with the social care escalation policy/procedure. This must be recorded on the safeguarding Sharepoint.

4 Safer Recruitment and DBS Checks

We will record all information on the checks carried out in The Ranch Weymouth's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

Appointing new staff

When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity (best practice is checking their birth certificate)
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will not keep a copy of this for longer than 6 months
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available (alongside a risk assessment and only under exceptional circumstances following authorisation) or where previous role was in regulated activity and was less than three months before appointment
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities • Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher • Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. This could include criminal records checks for overseas applicants and a letter from the relevant professional regulating authority (seen as the certificate of professional competence). A risk assessment will be implemented if these checks are not obtainable to demonstrate alternative methods sought and other relevant evidence. • Check that candidates taking up a management position are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the Secretary of State. NOTE: Job title is not the determining factor for a 'management' position
- Ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete.
- Consider other information such as evidence of their online behaviour through social

media. Candidates will be asked to confirm that their social media accounts are set to private.

We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before the interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not.

Existing staff

If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff. We will also do this if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is.

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult:

- Where the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e., that no action or inaction occurred but the present risk that it could was significant)
- Where the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence
- If there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#)
- If the individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform (letter of reassurance and DBS confirmation).

We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at The Ranch Weymouth has had the appropriate level of DBS check. This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors. We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months. Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances. We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at The Ranch. This section applies to our use of alternative provision (AP).

Volunteers

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity.

Trainee/work experience

Work experience is never unsupervised or working directly with pupils. The Ranch only agrees placements for experience with animal and land husbandry.

All individuals must provide full contact details and information to the associated course tutor and setting.

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the work, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

The decision and any risk assessment required will be recorded by the DSL..

If a pupil (over 16) is on work experience that gives the opportunity for contact with children, then consideration should be given on whether an enhanced DBS check is required for the pupil themselves.

If the individual is over 16 then a DBS should be applied for unless the individual is fully supervised in line with the below:

- *There must be supervision by a person who is in regulated activity, the supervision must be regular and day to day; and the supervision must be 'reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children'*

The Safer Recruitment Process must be completed as the risk assessment. This must be shared and understood with relevant stakeholders prior to commencing the role.

If the role is planned for longer than one half-term, then the volunteer process should be completed.

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff before entering the site. If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification.

Visitors are expected to sign in and wear a visitor's badge. The Ranch Weymouth will issue a red lanyard to the visitor.

If a visitor is wearing a red lanyard, they cannot be left unsupervised on The Ranch sites at any point.

Visitors in a professional capacity will have identity checked and we will obtain assurance that an

appropriate DBS check is in place alongside a letter of reassurance.

All visitors to our setting, including external organisations, will be always accompanied by a member of staff in regulated activity. We will carefully consider the suitability of input from external organisations including an assessment of the educational value, age appropriateness and relevant checks.

We will not invite into the settings of The Ranch any individual/organisation who is known to disseminate extremist views and we will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual/organisation using The Ranch Weymouth's facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils, parents, or staff.

5. Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The designated safeguarding lead should take **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and social-worker children). This should be explicit in the role holder's job description.

Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead. This responsibility should not be delegated.

The designated safeguarding lead should liaise with the three safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children.

The DSL should understand when they should consider calling the Police and what to expect when they do.

During term time, the DSL should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

The DSL should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. The training should be updated every two years. In addition to their formal training as set out above, their knowledge and skills should be updated (for example via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments), at regular intervals, and at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads should be trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the role should be explicit in their job description. The deputy (or multiple deputies) must be able to perform the role of the DSL in the absence of the DSL.

Visitors

If you have any concerns about the health and safety of a child or feel that something may be troubling them, you need to share this information with an appropriate member of staff. Issues relating to a child's appearance, hygiene or general behaviour can be shared with any member of staff.

Please do not worry about reporting small matters – we would rather you tell us things which turn out to be minor than miss a worrying or potentially dangerous situation.

If you think the matter is more serious and/or is related to a safeguarding issue e.g. physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect you must talk to the Designated Safeguarding Staff named here immediately.

If you are unable to contact any of the safeguarding team you can ask staff to find them and ask them to speak to you straight away about a confidential and urgent matter.

LADO

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) provides advice, guidance and management where an allegation has been made against a person who works with children or young people under 18 years old.

The LADO works with the police and other agencies to consider whether an allegation is true or not. They ensure that any allegation is dealt with as quickly as possible.

The document, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) says that the LADO should consider an allegation if it might relate to a person who works with children who 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; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

PREVENT

Further support and advice relating to PREVENT concerns can be gained from contacting the LADO and PREVENT Coordinator.

GDPR

The Ranch Weymouth is committed to keeping your personal information secure, in line with GDPR and our own data protection policy. The Ranch Weymouth has a Data Protection that can be found on line under the policies tab on The Ranch Weymouth website.

Child Protection and Safeguarding

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

This policy should be read alongside the following policies and guidance:

Policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camera observation Procedure. • Whistleblowing Policy • Code of Conduct Policy • Complaints Policy • Health and Safety Policy • Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy • Data Protection Policy • Cyber Security Policy • Online Safety Policy Statement • Allegation Procedure • Safer Recruitment • Anti Bullying Policy <p>www.theranchweymouth.com</p>

Appendix 2

This policy should be read alongside the following Government Guidance documents

Government Guidance

- [Alternative provision \(2013; Updated 2016\)](#)
- [Behaviour and discipline in schools \(2016; Updated 2020\)](#)
- [Children Missing Education \(2016\)](#)
- [Data protection: a toolkit for schools \(2018; Updated 2018, updated 2023\)](#) ▪
- [Designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children \(2018\)](#) ▪
- [Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 \(2018\)](#)
- [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school \(2013\)](#) ▪ [Exclusion from maintained schools, academies, and pupil referral units in England \(2017; Updated 2021\)](#)
- [Guidance for Safer Working practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education \(2019\)](#)
- [Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents, and carers \(2018\)](#)
- [Keeping children safe in out of school settings guidance \(2022\)](#)
- [Listening to and involving children and young people \(2014\)](#)

- [Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – procedural information \(2015; Updated 2020\)](#)
- [Modern Slavery: how to identify and support victims \(2020; Updated 2021, updated 2023\)](#)
- [Multi-Agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation \(2016; Updated 2020\)](#) ▪
- [Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales \(2015; Updated 2021\)](#)
- [Preventing and tackling bullying \(2013; Updated 2017\)](#)
- [Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children \(2014; Updated 2018\)](#)
- [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education in England \(2019; Updated 2020, updated 2021\)](#)
- [Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations \(2019\)](#)
- [School Admissions Code \(2021\)](#)
- [School attendance: parental responsibility measures \(2015; Updated 2020\)](#)
- [Teaching online safety in schools \(2019, updated 2023\)](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010: advice for schools \(2014; Updated 2018\)](#)
- [The Teachers’ Standards \(2011; Updated 2021\)](#)
- [UKCIS: Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes \(2020\)](#)
- [UKCIS: Using External Visitors to Support Online Safety Education \(2018, updated 2022\)](#)
- [Use of Reasonable Force in Schools \(2013\)](#)
- [What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners \(2015\)](#) ▪ [Working Together to Improve School Attendance \(2022\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)