

Section 3 – Safeguarding

Safeguarding at Cleaswell Hill is transformational as it enables pupils with the greatest vulnerability to be understood, heard and protected in ways that would not otherwise be possible. For pupils whose complex SEND, communication differences, dependency or regulation needs mean that distress or harm may not be verbally disclosed, staff recognise changes in behaviour, communication and presentation, use trusted relationships and personalised AAC to create accessible routes for help, and act swiftly through a well-established safeguarding team and multi-agency system. This means that safeguarding does more than respond to incidents: it reduces risk, secures timely support and enables pupils to remain safe, included and able to access education. Leaders know this through CPOMS case sampling, pupil and family voice, staff knowledge checks, multi-agency review, governor scrutiny and sustained independent safeguarding assurance.

What is going well: Evidence to support this judgement

Leadership of Safeguarding, including establishing an open and positive safeguarding culture

Leaders sustain an open and positive safeguarding culture in which pupils' interests come first and staff understand the heightened vulnerability created by complex SEND, communication differences, dependency, medical needs and online risk. Staff recognise that concern or distress may be communicated through changes in behaviour, regulation or presentation and act promptly rather than attributing these changes solely to SEND. Pupils are explicitly taught, through developmentally appropriate and accessible approaches, how and where to seek help; personalised augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems, observation, trusted relationships and pupil voice enable leaders to test whether pupils can identify a trusted adult or another effective route for support. This includes pupils who are absent from school, on part-time timetables or accessing alternative or off-site provision, whose safety, welfare and voice remain subject to direct school oversight. CPOMS case sampling, staff knowledge checks, annual audits, external quality assurance and governor monitoring confirm that concerns are recognised, recorded, acted on and followed through consistently over time.

Leaders rigorously evaluate safeguarding through annual review, staff discussions and independent scrutiny from Clennell Education Solutions and the SIP. This identifies gaps, tests leaders' judgements and ensures improvement actions are evaluated and followed through.

Governors provide sustained oversight and challenge through termly safeguarding reports, an annual summative evaluation and scrutiny of trends, decisions and completed actions.

Leaders anticipate changes in statutory guidance and emerging risks, including gender-questioning guidance, VAWG, sextortion, spiked vapes, AI and deepfakes, translating these into timely policy review, training, curriculum adaptation and family guidance. Leaders know the school remains responsive through contextual safeguarding reviews, online-safety audit, pupil voice and governor scrutiny over time. A deputy headteacher is CEOP-trained, strengthening the school's expertise in online-safety education and response.

Strong pastoral and family-partnership systems ensure pupils and families know who they can approach and feel confident raising concerns. Leaders seek and act on views through developmentally appropriate language and communication supports / AAC, observation, trusted relationships and parent feedback; the developing Family Partnership Lead role will be evaluated through its impact on engagement, early help and pupil safety.

Safeguarding Information for All Staff to Know and Act On

Leaders ensure staff and governors understand and uphold their safeguarding responsibilities through induction, annual refresher training and contextual updates, enabling concerns to be recognised, reported and acted on promptly. From September 2026, all staff, including those who do not work directly with children, read Part One of KCSIE 2026 and are supported to understand the revised expectations. Training and contextual updates reflect changes including the revised Family Help framework and updated safeguarding information relating to mental health, exploitation, online harms and other vulnerabilities relevant to Cleaswell Hill's complex SEND cohort. Leaders know this is embedded through signed policy assurance, knowledge checks, staff discussions, safeguarding scenarios and CPOMS scrutiny.

Leaders treat persistent or severe absence, children missing education and time spent away from the school site as potential safeguarding concerns. Pupils' whereabouts, attendance and welfare are monitored closely, with concerns escalated through the EWO, local authority and safeguarding partners and actions recorded and reviewed.

Sustained trauma-informed and neuroinclusive professional development enables staff to recognise when changes in communication, regulation or behaviour may indicate distress or harm rather than attributing them solely to SEND. Leaders evaluate impact through training feedback, therapy input, learning walks and case sampling, with the Lead SaLT's external training and advisory roles providing additional validation.

Staff understand and confidently use procedures for reporting concerns about adults, low-level concerns, poor safeguarding practice and whistleblowing. Leaders test this through staff scenarios and scrutiny of how concerns are recorded, escalated and resolved.

Management of Safeguarding

Leaders work openly and tenaciously with Early Help, social care, health, education welfare and other safeguarding partners, seeking expert advice and challenging thresholds where concerns remain. Half-termly virtual Early Help clinics strengthen access to timely, coordinated support, with impact evaluated through referral outcomes and multi-agency case review. External quality assurance is provided through Clennell Education Solutions and the school SIP, alongside external safeguarding supervision and wider independent scrutiny.

An appropriately trained senior leader fulfils the Lead DSL role, supported by an established deputy DSL team and a CEOP-trained deputy headteacher, providing sufficient capacity to identify, help and protect pupils, including through the Prevent duty. The 2026 transition of Lead DSL responsibility has been managed through protected weekly handover, relevant training, participation by the incoming DSL in external quality assurance and SCR scrutiny, and clearly defined responsibilities across the wider safeguarding team. Weekly Headteacher safeguarding briefings, internal DSL supervision, continued external supervision and safeguarding scrutiny through SIP visits provide additional assurance. Robust cover arrangements ensure that safeguarding concerns continue to be received, monitored and acted upon whenever the Lead DSL is unavailable. Effectiveness is assured through supervision, case review, CPOMS scrutiny and training oversight.

Annual safeguarding and Prevent audits identify emerging risks, test statutory practice and drive precise improvement for pupils with complex SEND. Actions are evaluated through the school's safeguarding improvement plan and subsequent audit findings.

Leaders scrutinise CPOMS to evaluate the quality, timeliness and follow-through of safeguarding records and identify cumulative patterns of concern. Detailed, factual records ensure decisions, rationale, actions and outcomes are available for scrutiny and challenge.

Safeguarding information is transferred, received and acted upon promptly when pupils move between settings or providers. Child-protection files are transferred securely and separately from the main pupil file as soon as possible and within the required timescale of five days for an in-year transfer or within the first five days of a new term. Receipt is confirmed, and the DSL considers what additional information about current risk, safeguarding history, vulnerabilities or support should be shared so that the receiving setting can make appropriate arrangements without delay. Leaders maintain evidence of transfer and scrutinise transition arrangements particularly carefully for pupils with complex SEND or significant additional vulnerabilities.

The safeguarding and child protection policy and related procedures remain current, accessible, understood and consistently applied, including for pupils at greater risk of harm and those attending alternative provision. This enables concerns to be identified, escalated and acted on promptly, with assurance secured through staff knowledge checks and scrutiny of provider arrangements.

Where alternative provision is used, leaders assure themselves of the suitability of the placement and maintain oversight of each pupil's attendance, welfare, safeguarding and educational experience.

Safeguarding education is securely embedded across PSHE, RSHE, computing and Preparation for Adulthood and adapted to pupils' pathways, communication and developmental needs. This enables pupils to recognise risks, understand boundaries and seek help as independently as possible, with impact evaluated through curriculum scrutiny, learning walks and pupil voice.

Filtering and monitoring systems are appropriately configured, regularly tested and responsive to pupils' heightened online vulnerabilities. Leaders formally review filtering and monitoring provision at least once each academic year, with safeguarding and technical expertise working together to test whether systems remain appropriate to the school's pupil risk profile and use of technology. Checks include school-managed internet-connected devices and relevant locations across the school's provision, and records identify when checks took place, who completed them, what was tested and any resulting actions. Leaders also evaluate effectiveness through review of alerts, incidents and online-safety audit findings.

Staff understand how to recognise a potential private fostering arrangement and notify the local authority promptly so its suitability and safety can be assessed. Leaders test this understanding through training, safeguarding scenarios and review of any relevant referrals.

Leaders maintain robust arrangements for pupils with medical conditions through current individual healthcare plans, trained staff, safe medication procedures and clear emergency responses. A dedicated allergy safety policy strengthens protection, with effectiveness evaluated through plan reviews, incident analysis and staff competency checks.

Leaders are highly effective in ensuring safeguarding policies and procedures are consistently understood and applied, enabling concerns to be identified, escalated and acted on promptly to protect pupils from harm. Leaders know this practice is securely embedded through staff knowledge checks, CPOMS case sampling, annual audits and sustained external and governor scrutiny over time.

Leaders use annual safeguarding, online-safety and Prevent audits highly effectively to identify emerging risks, test practice and drive precise improvement, strengthening protection for pupils with complex SEND and communication or online vulnerabilities. Leaders know this is sustained through evaluated action plans, termly DSL and governor monitoring, and repeat audit findings over time.

Safer Recruitment

Leaders ensure all staff and governors involved in recruitment receive accredited safer-recruitment training and apply it consistently from shortlisting to appointment. Recruitment-file scrutiny confirms that employment gaps are explored, references obtained and required checks completed before adults begin working with pupils.

Leaders understand and verify the checks required for staff and other adults, including governors, volunteers, trainee teachers, visitors and contractors, according to their role and level of regulated activity. Safer-recruitment and volunteering procedures have been reviewed for the change to the definition of regulated activity from 1 September 2026, including removal of the previous supervision exemption for individuals undertaking relevant activity frequently or overnight. The electronic SCR and associated recruitment records are routinely sampled, with any discrepancies addressed promptly.

Where checks, access arrangements or deployment create a potential safeguarding risk, leaders use written, time-limited risk assessments that specify supervision, controls and review arrangements. Where alternative provision is used, leaders obtain written confirmation of the provider's safeguarding and vetting checks before placement and review these arrangements regularly.

Leaders maintain accurate and current records of any declarations or checks required under the Childcare Act 2006 and review these when roles or circumstances change.

Leaders manage allegations, low-level concerns and concerns about adults in line with local authority procedures, consulting or referring to the LADO and other relevant authorities promptly where required. Decisions, rationale, actions and outcomes are recorded clearly and subject to appropriate oversight.

Child on Child Violence

Leaders fulfil their responsibilities for child-on-child violence through a whole-school approach that recognises bullying, physical assault or threats of harm, including with a weapon, sexual violence and harassment, harmful sexual behaviour and abuse within pupils' intimate relationships. Staff understand the scale and contexts in which these may occur, including beyond school and online, and recognise changes in pupils' communication, regulation, behaviour or relationships so that early, evidence-informed intervention is secured.

When concerns arise, leaders act promptly to protect and support the pupil who may have experienced harm, the pupil alleged to have caused it and any others affected. Individual risk assessments, Consistent Approach Plans, supervision arrangements and targeted teaching are reviewed to ensure responses are proportionate, protective and responsive to changing risk.

Clear reporting and escalation systems ensure that child-on-child concerns are shared verbally with a DSL and recorded promptly on CPOMS, with alternative reporting arrangements available to adults without system access. DSLs scrutinise records for patterns, consult families and work with

MASH, Early Help, CYPS, police and other safeguarding partners where required, ensuring decisions and follow-up actions are clearly recorded and reviewed.	
Supporting Documentation	Quality Assurance Activities
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, updated for KCSIE 2026 - Safeguarding, Online Safety and Prevent audits with evaluated action plans - DSL structure, role descriptions, training records, supervision records and succession plan - Termly safeguarding reports and annual summative report to governors - Safeguarding link governor monitoring records and governing body minutes - Clennell Education Solutions and SIP safeguarding review reports - CPOMS audit, termly trend analysis and anonymised case-sampling records - Staff induction, safeguarding training matrix and knowledge-check outcomes - Child-on-child abuse and harmful sexual behaviour procedures, incident analysis and reviewed risk assessments - Early Help clinic records and anonymised multi-agency case evidence - Safer recruitment policy, training records, electronic SCR and SCR audit findings - Filtering and monitoring checks, online-safety incident analysis and SENSO reports - Safeguarding curriculum map, learning-walk findings and adapted pupil voice - Allegations, low-level concerns and whistleblowing procedures and records - Alternative provision safeguarding checks and written assurances, where applicable - Designated teacher records and PEPs for looked-after and previously looked-after pupils - Medical needs, allergy safety, medication and staff competency records - Parent and pupil safeguarding feedback, including evidence of actions taken in response - DfE consultation response and completed SWOT analysis	Clennell Education Solutions – Safeguarding Quality Assurance - Safeguarding quality assurance across 2025/26, including policy compliance, CPOMS and case sampling, DSL practice and supervision, safer recruitment, online safety and Prevent. School Improvement Partner Safeguarding Review - SIP safeguarding review across 2025/26, including safeguarding culture, staff vigilance, curriculum safeguarding, case tracking, multi-agency working and CPOMS analysis. June 2026 external scrutiny included data analysis, learning walks and staff discussion and involved an experienced education professional with wide-ranging cross-school quality-assurance experience. Local Authority / Multi-Agency Safeguarding Engagement - Early Help Team collaboration through half-termly virtual clinics. - NCC Equality Lead collaboration relating to VAWG and social-transition statutory guidance. Governor Monitoring and Assurance - Governor safeguarding monitoring across 2025/26, including SCR and training scrutiny, CPOMS and case chronology, Prevent, online safety and curriculum safeguarding. Termly Governor Reports - Autumn Term Safeguarding Report. - Spring Term Safeguarding Report. - Summer Term Summative Safeguarding Report.
Next Steps (Including targets taken from 5-year plan)	
Complete and evaluate the 2025–26 safeguarding, online-safety and Prevent action plans, carrying forward any unresolved priorities into the 2026–27 safeguarding plan with clear timescales and measures of impact.	

Update safeguarding policies, procedures and training in response to KCSIE 2026 and ensure all staff and governors receive the revised guidance. Test understanding through knowledge checks, staff discussion and case-based scenarios.

Secure a smooth transition to the new Lead DSL through protected handover time, mentoring, further training and clearly defined responsibilities across the wider DSL team. Evaluate the effectiveness and capacity of the new arrangements during the autumn term.

Strengthen safeguarding assurance through weekly leadership debriefs, internal and external DSL supervision, and planned monitoring with the SIP, governors and Clennell Education Solutions. Use case sampling, CPOMS scrutiny and completed-action checks to evaluate consistency and impact.