



Mill Water School

Preparation for *their* best future

Mill Water School Safeguarding Process

Reviewed: September 2025

Next review date: September 2026

Key contacts for Mill Water School Academic year 2025 / 2026	
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Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Sarah Pickering head@millwater.devon.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Grace Norman earlyyears@millwater.devon.sch.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead for SPT	Guy Chappell gchappell@specialpartnership.org
Designated Whistleblowing and Safeguarding Governor	Julie Cornwell safeguardingGB@millwater.devon.sch.uk

Key contacts outside of the school Academic year 2025 / 2026	
The Devon Front Door (Formerly Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub)	0345 155 1071 https://devoncountycouncil.outsystemsenterprise.com/MASH/homepage
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	https://devoncountycouncil.outsystemsenterprise.com/devonassist/LADO or ladosecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk
NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline	0800 028 0285

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1. Process Aims

- 1.1 To work within the Special Partnership Trust (SPT) Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, SPT Health and Safety Policies, and SPT Safeguarding Adults Policy.
- 1.2 To embed a safeguarding culture and whole school approach to safeguarding which is enshrined in the Trust ethos, and which is at the forefront of and underpins all relevant aspects of process and policy development, ensuring that all systems, policies and processes operate with the best interests of children at heart.
- 1.3 To inform all adults working or volunteering in Mill Water School of the regulations and processes that must be followed in line with the SPT policies.
- 1.4 To clarify how we put the SPT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy into practice at Mill Water School.

2. Introduction

Mill Water School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people within our areas of responsibility and recognises the importance of ensuring that all adults working or volunteering in our school clearly understand their legal responsibilities, specific roles, and the procedures to follow in order for this to happen.

3. School Process

- 3.1 All appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the school who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult, including governors and volunteers. All members of staff therefore, whether paid or voluntary, are required to have an enhanced DBS check.
- 3.2 The school shares a purpose with parents to educate, keep children safe from harm, and have their welfare promoted. We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We always encourage parents to discuss any concerns they may have with the school as soon as possible.
- 3.3 All staff and volunteers are required to understand their role in Keeping Children Safe In Education, including always reporting any concerns to the DSL/DDSL. We ensure this through the following:
 - i. A thorough induction process.
 - ii. Complete safeguarding awareness training as a part of staff/volunteer induction to the school.
 - iii. Safeguarding refresher training on an annual basis.
 - iv. Weekly teacher and support staff CPD.
 - v. Staff bulletins with a safeguarding focus.
 - vi. Quizzes to check policy understanding.

- vii. Bespoke training according to role.
- viii. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item for all meetings.

3.4 The school employs several strategies to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet (e-safety). These include:

- i. Internet safety days.
- ii. Regular training for staff.
- iii. Internet and e-safety sessions embedded in the curriculum.
- iv. Internet safety group (including school staff, IT manager and governors).

The Trust has developed an Acceptable Use Policy (AUP); the aim of this policy is to ensure that pupils benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's Internet and computing resources in a safe and effective manner. We ask parents/carers of the school to sign this policy which outlines ways they can encourage their child to use the Internet in a safe way when they are at home.

- 3.5 The School has identified a specific role for the Designated Safeguarding Lead with responsibility for child protection. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The school has additionally identified other members of the Senior Leadership Team as Deputy Safeguarding Leads. The school has identified a need for a Safeguarding Admin Assistant with family support responsibility; additional safeguarding training is required for this role. Refresher and multi-agency training is undertaken at bi-annual intervals.
- 3.6 All other school staff, including non-teaching staff, volunteers and governors undertake appropriate in-house and online training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection effectively. This is kept up to date by annual refresher training, staff bulletins and induction processes. There are robust arrangements which ensure all staff know how to raise any concern in relation to the welfare of our pupils.
- 3.7 Mill Water School has a Designated Safeguarding and Whistleblowing governor. One of the governors has undertaken 'safer recruitment training' alongside six members of the Senior Leadership Team. This training is updated every two years.
- 3.8 The school has established a health, safety and premises team who meet regularly and report termly to governors. The school also has a well-being working party who meet on a termly basis. Sally Cregan (Deputy Head) is responsible for wellbeing and reports back to the Local Governing Body and Trustees termly.
- 3.9 The school is part of the Trust-wide Safeguarding Learning Community where all aspects of child protection and safeguarding are developed – including Behaviour, Attendance, Health and Safety and Moving and Handling.

- 3.10 Mill Water School gives equal priority to keeping all children and young people safe regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.
- 3.11 All staff and volunteers in our school need to recognise that many of our pupils may be especially vulnerable to abuse because of their special educational needs, and some may be living in adverse circumstances, and to be mindful of this as part of their working practice. All staff need to be aware that our pupils are less able to speak out if something isn't right.
- Some children may be vulnerable because they:
- have additional communication needs
 - do not understand that what is happening to them is abuse
 - need intimate care or are isolated from others
 - are dependent on adults for care
- 3.12 Our school ensures all staff access CPD to support their understanding and knowledge to meet pupil need, including the importance of communication and AAC, pupil centred behaviour support, and medical and intimate care procedures.
- 3.13 We recognise the importance of listening to the thoughts and feelings of deaf and pre-verbal children and children who have disabilities. We recognise that taking time to understand their unique lived experience is an important part of promoting their welfare.
- 3.14 We make sure the child's voice is heard through a range of different approaches. Where there are safeguarding concerns, we speak to children alone and do not use parents or carers as sign-language interpreters or spoken language translators. If a child's disability means talking about their abuse is difficult or impossible, we make every attempt to communicate by other means.
- 3.15 We consider how a child may communicate through their actions and whether distressed or disruptive behaviour is due to the child's disability or if the child is upset for another reason.
- 3.16 We tailor tools and resources to the child's needs and check that the child has understood what we've told them and is able to apply it – we don't make assumptions about what they have understood.
- 3.17 We work with children to empower them and help them feel able to speak out if they have any worries.
- 3.18 Every pupil has access to a class talker (AAC device) that includes key safeguarding words and phrases to give children every opportunity to make a disclosure. The same words and phrases are linked to the NSPCC Speak Out Stay Safe programme and this is explicitly taught to children during PSHE sessions.

4. Actions to follow when there is a concern

If at any point, there are concerns about or there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child or young person, the DSL must be informed. Staff and volunteers will immediately report on CPOMS. If you are not aware of how to record on CPOMS please ask to see a DSL or DDSL who will support you to do this. This must be done without delay. Staff must report:

- 4.1 Any suspicion that a child/young person is injured, marked or bruised in a way which is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play.
- 4.2 Any explanation given which appears inconsistent or suspicious.
- 4.3 Any behaviours which give rise to suspicions that a child / young person may have suffered harm (e.g. worrying drawings or play).
- 4.4 Any concerns that a child / young person may be suffering from inadequate care, ill treatment, or emotional maltreatment.
- 4.5 Any concerns that a child may be suffering from mental health problems (which could be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation).
- 4.6 Any concerns that a child / young person is presenting signs or symptoms known to be indicators of abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- 4.7 Any significant changes in a child's / young person's presentation, including non-attendance.
- 4.8 Any hint or disclosure of abuse from any person.
- 4.9 Any concerns regarding person(s) who may pose risk to children / young people (e.g. living in a household with children / young people present).

Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse, neglect and / or exploitation. If staff members are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL.

- 4.10 If the DSL is not available, the Deputy DSL must be informed of any concerns. If the concern is about the Headteacher, concern should be raised with the Chair of Governors and / or the Director of the SPT.
- 4.11 If neither the DSL or Deputy DSLs are available, and there is a risk of immediate harm to a child or young person, a referral should be made via Devon Front Door on 0345 1551071. For immediate concerns during evenings and weekends, the out of hours social work service can be contacted on 0345 6000 388. The out of hours service does not deal with routine requests. The contact for the Local Authority Designated Officer

(LADO) is ladosecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk. Alternatively a contact form can be found at <https://devoncountycouncil.outsystemsenterprise.com/devonassist/LADO>. Anyone can make a referral. The DSL must be informed as soon as possible afterwards.

- 4.12 Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a safe time from the team for a call can be booked.

5. Operation Encompass

We are a trained Operation Encompass school.

Operation Encompass ensures there is a simple phone call or notification, to a trained member of school staff, before a child arrives in school. The call or notification is triggered by police recently attending the child's home or being involved in a domestic abuse incident, that the child has experienced.

Operation Encompass is a police and education early information sharing partnership enabling schools to offer immediate support for children and young people experiencing domestic abuse. Information is shared by the police with a school's trained Key Adult (DSL) prior to the start of the next school day after officers have attended a domestic abuse incident thus enabling appropriate support to be given, dependent upon the needs and wishes of the child.

6. Useful Links

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/safeguarding/schools-protecting-children-abuse-neglect/>

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/>

<https://www.tes.com/en-gb/advice-hub/safeguarding>

<https://childline.org.uk/>