TITLE: UTC Reading Local Safeguarding Procedure		VERSION: 1
APPROVAL BODY:	DATE: 01.09.26	REVIEW DATE: 01.09.27
LEAD PERSON: Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead		
VERSION	REVIEWER/APPROVAL	REVIEW NOTES
1.		

UTC Reading Local Safeguarding Procedure

UTC Reading recognises its legal duties and takes seriously its responsibilities to protect and safeguard the interests of all students and staff. Safeguarding incidents can happen anywhere and all staff should be alert to the possible concerns being raised in schools.

For guidance please refer to the latest editions of the ALET Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Keeping Children Safe In Education 2026.

This local procedure fits with the ALET Policy and adds additional context specific information for UTC Reading

Key Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Brett Coley
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Charlotte Tennant, Jennie Thomson, Julie Hooper, Catherine Blackmore
Chair of Governors	Anna Holm
Safeguarding Governors	Anna Holm
Designated Teacher for Looked After Children	Brett Coley
MASH/Early Help	Brighter Futures for Children - 0118 937 3641 info@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

LADO – Sue Darby	Lado@brighterfuturesforchildren.org
Domestic Abuse Lead for Schools –	Brighter Futures for Children - 0118 937 3641
Prevent Lead and Stronger Families	Brighter Futures for Children - 0118 937 3641
YOT	Brighter Futures for Children - 0118 937 3641
NSPCC whistleblowing helpline	0800 028 0285 help@nspcc.org.uk
National Domestic Abuse 24 hour Helpline	0808 2000 247

Local Safeguarding Process – usage of CPOMS

Concerns about a child should be reported as soon as possible using the CPOMS system.

All staff have individual log in details for the system to make confidential reports.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing.

If there is any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records of concerns should include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern using factual information and not opinion
- All records must be made as soon as possible after the concern is observed or a disclosure is made. All reports MUST be recorded on the same working day
- If the concern relates to more than one child this is recorded as a “linked” student
- Any hand written notes or supporting evidence should be uploaded as files to the CPOMS record and hard copies destroyed in confidential waste

If you believe a child is in immediate danger it must be raised with the DSL or deputy DSL immediately in a face to face discussion. Records on CPOMS should follow afterwards.

CPOMS is monitored daily and reports are followed up with the safeguarding team.

Individuals who report concerns may be asked for additional detail or clarity if required.

Regular audits of records take place to ensure that appropriate action and follow up is carried out for all reports and concerns.

Safeguarding Guidance for Visitors to the UTC

Adults visiting or working on the school site play an important part in the life of the school. You can play a part in keeping students safe whilst working at, or visiting, the school by observing the following guidelines:

- Always keep verbal contact appropriate and of a business nature. Never discuss personal details with a student. Physical contact of any kind is unacceptable.
- Do not give any personal information to students, such as your mobile number or address. Do not provide students with your personal email address, and only provide your professional work email if it is necessary as part of the reason for your visit.
- Do not give students details of your personal social network accounts or engage in any communication with students using social networking sites.
- If you have any concerns that a student may be at risk of harm, report it immediately to the senior designated person for child protection who can be contacted via Reception. Do not discuss your concerns with the student, and do not carry out an investigation.
- If a student makes a disclosure to you, do not promise confidentiality. Explain that you will need to talk to someone else. Inform the designated senior person for child protection of your concerns immediately.

For further guidance, ALET Safeguarding and Child Protection policy can be found on the ALET website under the 'policies' tab.

Local Police Context

Child Criminal Exploitation

Criminal Exploitation is a key priority for Thames Valley Police. Any child can become a victim of exploitation, it can be difficult to spot.

What is child criminal exploitation?

"Child criminal exploitation is common in county lines and occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology."

Common signs of exploitation include:

- New possessions with an unknown origin (mobile phones, shoes, clothes)
- The use of alcohol
- The use of drugs
- Secrecy around social media
- The possession of two mobile phones
- A change in behaviour or mood
- Physical harm such as bruises, cuts or burns
- Health problems resulting from sexual activity

- Being absent from school
- Being disruptive in school
- Disappearing from the home and their location being unknown
- Not returning to the home at the expected time

If you are observing changes or signs like the above in your child and you are concerned, you should speak to your child regarding your concerns. No one knows your child better than you, follow your instincts. If you identify potential exploitation or have concerns you can seek help from the police, your GP or your child's school. It does not matter if you ask for help and it transpires that your child was not being exploited, you will not have wasted peoples time. If you feel your child is in immediate risk of harm contact the police straight away.

Knife Crime

Knife crime is a real and growing concern to many in our community. Parents and adults may not be aware that young children and teenagers are carrying knives in fear "for their safety". The community knife amnesty bins is a collaborative initiative by Thames Valley Police and the Council and is an excellent way to help get knives off our streets.

Thames Valley Police have shared a link to the Council's knife crime web page:

Reading Borough Council's knife crime web page

The link includes a moving video from a local parent who has been affected by knife crime and shares their poignant views on knives, knife crime and how it has affected their lives forever:

https://youtu.be/jmOjwC2BTMo

Knife crime is clearly a difficult and frightening subject to address but in order to protect our children it is imperative that we spread the word to all in our community that knives ruin lives.

Informing students and parents that any knives and bladed articles can now be disposed of safely, with no questions asked, can only help our local community here in Reading and the wider Reading area, start to heal.

County Lines – Concerns with illegal substances

County Lines is where illegal drugs are transported from one area to another, often across police and local authority boundaries (although not exclusively), usually by children or vulnerable people who are coerced into it by gangs. The 'County Line' is the mobile phone line used to take the orders of drugs. Importing areas (areas where the drugs are taken to) are reporting increased levels of violence and weapons-related crimes as a result of this trend

UTC Reading works closely with Thames Valley Police through our Schools Safety Partnership to conduct regular checks and training on these key areas to keep our community safe and educated about these important risks.