

Learning Together for Life

Jesus said, 'Love one another as I have loved you' John 15:12, New Testament ('Injil')

Stepney Greencoat

Church of England

Primary School



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Policy Reviewed/Approved	By Full Governing Board
Policy Renewal Date	AUTUMN 2023

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APPENDIX 1 – Flowchart – Making a Child Protection Decision

APPENDIX 2 – Eight Golden Rules for Information Sharing

This Child Protection and Safeguarding policy is shaped by our vision:

Learning Together for Life, Jesus said 'Love one another as I have loved you'

John 15:12, New Testament ('Injil').

Learning: As a school we have a strong commitment to everyone as a learner and this is particularly the case for staff as learners in relation to the safeguarding of pupils. We provide regular safeguarding training and updates for all of our staff and all of our staff understand the importance of this policy.

Together: As a school we recognise the need to work closely together, both as a school and with outside agencies to ensure that all of our pupils are safe and protected.

Life: Our policy is built upon prevention and early detection and intervention as we understand the serious, significant lifelong impact on children and families who are harmed.

Our practice in relation to child protection and safeguarding is reflective of Jesus' teaching to 'Love one another as I have loved you' John 15:12, New Testament ('Injil').

INTRODUCTION

At Stepney Greencoat, our safeguarding policies include the Child Protection policy, Anti-bullying policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Recruitment policy, Allegations against Staff policy, Complaints policy, Behaviour policy and Online safety policy.

The Child Protection policy is available on the school website, the staff shared drive, in the staff room and the school office. This policy will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident, new legislation or updated guidance calls for the need for a review sooner than this.

At Stepney Greencoat, the health, safety and well-being of every child is our highest priority. We expect all staff, governors and volunteers to share this commitment to safeguarding our pupils.

We listen to our pupils and take seriously what they tell us. All school staff are trained in Child Protection, and children are made aware of the adults they can talk to if they have any concerns. Staff are trained to look out for signs of physical/emotional harm or neglect and are required to report these to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

We follow the procedures set out by the Tower Hamlets Local Authority Safeguarding Team and our school has adopted a Child Protection policy in line with this, for the safety of all.

Procedures within the Child Protection Policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors and they have been written in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 and reflect local safeguarding arrangements including the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership supplementary guidance (THSCP).

1. CORE SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

- The welfare of the child is paramount and underpins all discussions and decision making.
- All concerns shared and reported by children will be taken seriously
- All children have the right to have a life free from harm, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, all have equal rights to protection. This includes children's lives in digital and online environments.
- The child's wishes and feelings will always be taken into account at the school when determining the action to take and what support to provide.

- All staff including supply staff, contractors and volunteers have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm or has been harmed.
- The DSL will ensure that all pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support.

2. PURPOSE OF POLICY

- To provide all staff with key information to enable them to identify safeguarding concerns and know what action to take in response.
- To ensure consistent good practice throughout the school.
- To demonstrate the school's commitment to safeguarding to the whole school community: pupils, parents and other partners.

3. SAFEGUARDING LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

The following safeguarding legislation and government guidance have informed the content of this policy:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (maintained schools only)
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (Updated July 2022)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (1st September 2022)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Department advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities (May 2014)
- The Teacher Standards 2012

4. THSCP SUPPLEMENTARY SAFEGUARDING GUIDANCE

The following THSCP safeguarding guidance has informed the content of this policy:

- London Child Protection Procedures revised 7th Edition (London Safeguarding Children Board, March 2022)
- Tower Hamlets SCP Multi-Agency Safeguarding Thresholds Guidance

- Tower Hamlets SCP Supplementary Guidance for Schools and Education Settings on Child Protection Procedures - September 2022
- Tower Hamlets SCP LADO Procedures and Flowchart re Allegations made against staff working in the children’s workforce - Information about reporting and managing allegations
- Tower Hamlets SCP Supplementary Guidance for Schools and Education Settings on Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff – September 2022

5. TOWER HAMLETS SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP

The Children’s Act 2004 as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017 has brought about the establishment of the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership (THSCP). The Partnership coordinates the work of all agencies and ensures that this work is effective in achieving the best outcomes for Tower Hamlets children. The three key safeguarding partners have published arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs.

As a named ‘relevant agency’, the school is under a statutory duty to cooperate with the THSCP arrangements.

The school will engage with the borough’s Designated Safeguarding Leads forums, co-operate with the Rapid Review process and any Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, participate in the THSCP multi-agency safeguarding training offer, and co-operate with the THSCP’s and borough’s Section 175/157 School Safeguarding Audit cycle.

6. KEY DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing the impairment of a child’s physical and mental 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 refers to the processes followed to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

The term 'child' includes everyone under the age of 18.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, carers, foster carers, and adoptive parents.

Staff refers to all those who work for the school or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body have the strategic leadership responsibility for safeguarding arrangements at the school. As a collective body it must have regard to all relevant statutory guidance issued, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, ensuring that the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, including the current Child Protection Policy, are compliant with legislation and statutory guidance, reflect local safeguarding arrangements and are effective for the education setting.

The Head teacher is responsible for ensuring that the school's Child Protection Policy and other safeguarding policies are communicated to all staff, understood by all members of staff, and followed by all members of staff.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead takes the lead responsibility for safeguarding arrangements within the school on a day to day basis.

Our Designated Safeguarding Team

Strategic Safeguarding Lead: Liz Figueiredo, Interim Head

Designated Safeguarding Leads: Georgina Hazel, Interim Deputy Head / Liz Figueiredo, Interim Head

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads: Lorraine Crowe, Welfare Lead / Mariette Trott, Assistant Head / Thomas Jakobsson, Assistant Head

Designated Safeguarding Governor: Robert Scott

Designated Online Safety Governor: Robert Scott

Designated Teacher for Looked After Children: Georgina Hazel, Interim Deputy Head

If you have a safeguarding concern about a child, you must speak to a Designated Safeguarding lead and follow the expectations and procedures set in this Child Protection Policy.

Out of hours and during holiday periods, any concerns should be directed to the **Child Protection Advice Line: 020 7364 3444**

The role of the DSL includes:

- ensuring all staff read and understand the school's safeguarding policies and that procedures are followed by all staff
- advising and supporting staff as they carry out their safeguarding duty
- encouraging a whole school approach to safeguarding – ensuring that the importance of the welfare of the child underpins all systems, policies, procedures, and decision making
- promoting a culture of listening to the voice of the child and ensuring that there are formal and informal opportunities for that voice to be heard
- ensuring timely and accurate referrals are made to children's social care, the police, or other agencies
- participating in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings
- liaising with the case manager and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where allegations are made against staff
- making staff aware of training courses and the latest local safeguarding arrangements available through the local safeguarding partner arrangements
- transferring the child protection file to a child's new school and proactively contacting the new school in advance to help ensure a successful transition
- undergoing the required 2-day refresher training every 2 years as a minimum and receiving regular updates to maintain the knowledge and skills to carry out the role, including Prevent awareness training.

The Deputy DSLs are trained to the same level as the DSL and support the DSL with safeguarding matters.

All staff are expected to keep safeguarding values at the centre of their conduct. The best interests of the child must be at the centre of all decision making, behaviours and action taken in relation to the child.

All concerns should be logged on CPOMS, regardless of how incidental they may seem. When logging a safeguarding concern, staff should also alert the DSL in person. All staff should effectively listen to the children; promote positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils.

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach. All staff understand the Sexual Offences Act 2003 makes it an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence.

8. RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

The school upholds the human rights of the child in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998. It is unlawful for schools to act in a way that is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. Specifically, the school embeds and upholds the following Convention rights of the child across its safeguarding policies and procedures:

- Article 3: the right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment (an absolute right)
- Article 8: the right to respect for private and family life (a qualified right) includes a duty to protect individuals' physical and psychological integrity
- Article 14: requires that all of the rights and freedoms set out in the Act must be protected and applied without discrimination
- Protocol 1, Article 2: protects the right to education.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the school must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics).

Our school's Single Equality Plan provides further details on our commitment to the Equality Act. The school is committed to supporting and taking positive action towards children with regard to particular protected characteristics - including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race- who may be at a disadvantage and be disproportionately vulnerable.

In fulfilment of the school's Public Sector Equality Duty the school has due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation (and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act), to advance equality of opportunity

and foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

At Stepney Greencoat, we address the issue of Human Rights and Equality through our whole school assembly program, PSHCE curriculum and work regarding our school values.

As evident in the Serious Case Review Child Q, the school is aware that children from ethnically diverse groups are at risk of adultification whereby their vulnerability as a child is reduced or set aside because of racial bias and stereotypes impacting professional judgement. All staff share in the whole school's commitment to ensure equity, diversity and inclusion remain at the centre of the school's safeguarding culture, so that all children receive the care, support, and protection they have the right to receive.

The school shares the London Borough of Tower Hamlet's commitment to being an anti-racist borough and to tackle and eliminate race discrimination. The council's Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Inequalities Commission (2021) concluded that racism still exists within institutions and structures in the borough and has developed an action plan to achieve race equality at pace. The action plan recognises that schools have a powerful and significant role in changing narratives and bringing about social change through education.

9. CHILDREN WHO MAY BE POTENTIALLY MORE AT RISK OF HARM

It is recognised that all children are vulnerable but that some children may be more vulnerable than others to risks of harm. This may include a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is at risk of so-called honour based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care;

- is a privately fostered child
- has health conditions
- has mental health needs
- has a family member in prison or who are affected by parental offending
- is persistently absent from school, including persistent absences for part of the school day

Staff must be more vigilant in their day-to-day work with children when the above vulnerabilities are known and report all concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

10. CHILDREN IN NEED OF A SOCIAL WORKER

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children who have been allocated a social worker may have experienced abuse, neglect and belong to a family that has many complex circumstances. The school recognises that these children will have experienced adversity and trauma that can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

When making decisions about safeguarding, analysing risks and providing pastoral and academic support, the school will take seriously the fact that the child in need of a social worker will require enhanced support alongside that provided by statutory services.

The school will co-operate with the Virtual School, which now has a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of children known to a social worker.

11. CHILDREN REQUIRING MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

The school has an important role in supporting the mental well-being of children and to identify behaviour that may suggest a child is experiencing mental health problems. All staff recognise that mental health may be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff are aware of the trauma and mental health impact on a child who has had adverse childhood experiences including abuse, bereavement and separation of parents. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem.

Where we have concerns about the mental health of pupils in our school we, after speaking with the child and with the parents, either together, separately or both, would make a referral to CAMHS for further advice and support for the child and family. We

would also follow our usual safeguarding procedures in logging concerns and seeking support from Social Care as needed.

12. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS

Our staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to safeguard Looked After Children and Care Leavers. The DSL and Designated Teacher will work with relevant agencies and take immediate action to safeguard and provide support to this vulnerable group of children.

The Head teacher is also the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and Care Leavers. She works closely with the Tower Hamlets Virtual School Head teacher and staff to ensure that pupils are supported emotionally and academically and are effectively safeguarded. This work includes ensuring the child has a Personal Education Plan (PEP) and that a termly PEP meeting is held involving all professionals.

The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead will work with the local authority's Personal Advisor appointed to guide and support Care Leavers, so that any issues or concerns affecting the care leaver can be explored and effective support put in place.

13. SEND CHILDREN

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children, which can include:

- professionals and other adults making assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities or certain medical conditions being vulnerable to experiencing peer exclusion and isolation and being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs;
- children not understanding that what is happening to them is abuse; and
- communication barriers when reporting and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Staff are trained to understand and be aware of these additional barriers to ensure this group of children are appropriately safeguarded.

All staff need to be aware that SEND children may be more vulnerable when online and using digital platforms, and it is important that Online Safety lessons and related advice are tailored to their individual needs.

Further information on safeguarding SEND children is available in the non-statutory guidance [Safeguarding Disabled Children](#) (2009), but staff should speak with the DSL and SENDCO in the first instance.

14. CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION AND CHILDREN MISSING

The school closely monitors attendance, absence and exclusions. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including child sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation or mental health problems. Staff should be alert to children already known to be vulnerable going missing from education especially Children known to a Social Worker and Looked After Children.

The school follows up on absences as part of its safeguarding duty. Staff must be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

The school's Attendance Policy provides further details on the procedures following absence and issues with attendance.

When a pupil does not return to school and the whereabouts of the child and their family are not known after the school has made initial inquiries, the school must refer to the Local Authority using a Missing Children referral form.

Contact: LBTH CME Officer, Tower Hamlets Education Safeguarding Service, Saadia.Anwer@towerhamlets.gov.uk 020 7364 3426 / 07562 431 817

15. ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

The school recognises that parents have a legal right to electively home educate their child at home; however, it is expected that the parents' decision to do this is made with their child's best education and best interests at its heart. Staff should be aware that even though most home educated children have a positive experience, this is not the

case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

When a parent informs the head teacher of their intention to electively home educate their child, the school will convene and coordinate a meeting between the LA, relevant school staff, parents and all key professionals currently working with the child and family. In accordance with LBTH Policy this meeting must occur before any final decision is made by the parents, to ensure that the best interests of the child have been taken fully into account and carefully considered. The occurrence of this meeting is especially important when the children have known vulnerabilities including Children known to a Social Worker and SEND children.

16. WHISTLEBLOWING

All staff members have a responsibility to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in any aspect of the school's safeguarding arrangements and staff should feel confident that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

The type of activity or behaviour which Stepney Greencoat CE Primary School considers should be dealt with under the Whistleblowing policy includes:

- manipulation of accounting records and finances
- inappropriate use of school assets or funds
- decision-making for personal gain
- any criminal activity
- abuse of position
- fraud and deceit
- serious breaches of school procedures which may advantage a particular party (for example tampering with tender documentation, failure to register a personal interest)

For further details of the whistleblowing procedures, please refer to the school Whistleblowing Policy.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they should consider other channels including:

The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line 0800 028 0285 which is free and anonymous. More information can be found at [nspcc.org.uk/whistleblowing](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/whistleblowing).

17. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

When an allegation is made against a member of staff including supply staff and volunteers, the school's Managing Allegations Procedures will be followed. The procedures are compliant with KCSIE 2022 part 4 and THSCP Supplementary Guidance- Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff – September 2022.

An allegation is made against a member of staff including supply staff, volunteers, contractors and governors when an individual has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

All allegations made against staff, including supply staff, volunteers, contractors and governors are taken seriously and the schools procedures are carefully followed.

When an allegation is made against a supply member of staff, the head teacher will be the case manager and take the lead in contacting the LADO.

On receipt of a report of an allegation, the head teacher will make immediate contact with the Local Authority Designated Officer for an initial discussion. If the allegation concerns the head teacher, then the chair of governors shall make contact with the LADO.

Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the school, or historical allegations will be reported to the police.

LBTH Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):

Melanie Benzie

Email:

Melanie.Benzie@towerhamlets.gov.uk or
LADO@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Telephone:

0207364 0677

Concerns about staff that do not meet the harm threshold and the allegation criteria set out above are known as Low-Level Concerns. Staff should report low-level concerns and self-

report low-level concerns about themselves in accordance with the school's procedures on low-level concerns.

18. STAFF TRAINING INCLUDING TRAINING FOR GOVERNORS

Safeguarding training is always part of the INSET day training in September for all staff. At this time all staff receive a copy of both the safeguarding policy and of Keeping Children Safe in Education, whether or not there have been any updates. All staff sign to confirm that they have received and commit to reading and complying with the documentation. Where staff are absent for this training, or join the school at other times in the academic year, they will receive safeguarding training, and the relevant documents on their return or as part of their induction.

Regular safeguarding updates are also given at daily staff briefing meetings.

The safeguarding team monitor the number of concerns logged by individual staff on CPOMS and the quality of these referrals. Where further support is needed for individual staff in relation to safeguarding referrals, this is done by the DSL or the Deputy DSL.

In addition to School Staff, governors are required to have compulsory safeguarding training as part of their induction and to maintain their knowledge through regular safeguarding training and updates. Through regular safeguarding training and updates staff are given the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively and governors will be empowered and equipped to provide strategic challenge and gain assurance that effective safeguarding arrangements in place.

19. SAFER RECRUITMENT

The school's safer recruitment procedures comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 part 3 and the local safeguarding partner arrangements by carrying out the required checks and verifying the applicant's identity, qualifications and work history. At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

In compliance with the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and the statutory guidance, relevant staff involved in early years and/or before or after school care for children under eight) are made aware of the Regulations and their obligations to disclose relevant information to the school.

The school request and ensure receipt of written confirmation from supply agencies or third-party organisations that relevant checks have been carried out and the supply or third-party staff are suitable to work with children.

For all volunteers, including governors, working within the school, a DBS check is completed before they are able to work or interact with children.

Should the school have any trainee teachers then we would ensure that all appropriate checks, including a valid DBS certificate are provided by the training provider.

The school maintains a Single Central Record of recruitment checks undertaken, which is regularly reviewed, at least termly, for compliance by the Senior Admin Officer, the Head teacher and the link Governor for Safeguarding. It is also externally checked by our HR provider at least annually.

20. VISITORS

All visitors to the school must sign the visitor's book. If the visitor will have contact with children, a copy of their ID and DBS is taken, checked and entered on the Single Central Record. Visitors without an up to date DBS will not be allowed onto the premises unaccompanied.

When a Social Worker, Police Officer or another professional visits the school to meet with a child as part of statutory investigations or other work, the ultimate safeguarding responsibility remains with the school. The school is aware of the need for the child to have an appropriate adult when interviewed by the Police in accordance with the PACE Code C statutory guidance.

21. EXTENDED SCHOOL AND OFF-SITE ARRANGEMENTS

All extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment and take into account the school's Child Protection Policy and procedures.

When employing external contractors for activities such as after school clubs, the school ensures that the organisation has their own Safeguarding Policy and Procedures in place. All staff working with children are also obliged to have a valid DBS.

When pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work-related activities, the school ensures that Risk Assessments are completed by the school, in conjunction with information from the venue. School staff will always attend these events with children and will follow the safeguarding policy.

22. STAFF/PUPIL ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS

It is the school policy that staff must not have online relationships with pupils through platforms such as on Facebook, Instagram, Tik Toc etc.

23. MOBILE USE AND CAMERA USE

Mobile phones have a place in settings such as classrooms, and on outings, as they can be the only means of contact available in those situations and can be helpful in ensuring children are kept safe.

To protect children, we will:

- Only use mobile phones appropriately, and ensure staff have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse
- Ensure the use of a mobile phone does not detract from the quality of supervision and care of children.
- Ensure all mobile phone use is open to scrutiny.
- Ensure any staff known or seen to be using a mobile phone, when it has not been agreed to do so, will be disciplined.
- Prohibit staff from using their mobile phones to take pictures of the children.
- Ask visitors either to turn their mobile phones off or to store them in the office before viewing the school.
- Ensure the use of mobile phones on outings is included as part of the risk assessment, for example: how to keep personal numbers, that may be stored on the phone, safe.

24. IDENTIFYING ABUSE

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse may be carried out by adults and other children.

The school is aware that children can be at risk of abuse, harm and exploitation beyond the family home. Extra familial harms include sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, serious youth violence and abuse that occurs on digital and online platforms. All staff especially the DSL and Deputy DSLs will consider whether children are at risk of harms and exploitation in environments outside the family home.

25. INDICATORS OF ABUSE

Physical - may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Sexual - involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Emotional - the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Neglect - 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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate

supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

The DSL is aware of the borough's LBTH Neglect Guidance and all school staff understands its important role in identifying children who may be suffering from Neglect.

26. VOICE OF THE CHILD

All those with a responsibility to safeguard children need to recognise that it takes great courage for a child to share a concern and speak up about any form of abuse especially child sexual abuse.

There are many reasons why children are not able to articulate what they are experiencing. Children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or are currently being threatened by the perpetrator of abuse. Also, children may not feel ready or know how to tell a trusted adult that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected. They may not even realise that their experiences are harmful.

The barriers preventing a child communicating their concerns may be connected to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation, or language. The child's behaviour may be the first sign that a child has experienced harm. Staff will therefore exhibit professional curiosity and understand that a child may be communicating a concern through their actions and behaviours and take a safeguarding approach when responding to behaviours.

Staff need to be aware of and promote the systems in place at the school which enable children to share their concerns and report abuse confidently. Children need to be assured that their concerns will be taken seriously by staff and action will be taken to safeguard and protect them. It is also important that staff determine how best to build safe and trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitates communication and the sharing of concerns.

At Stepney Greencoat, our PSHCE curriculum, school assemblies and pastoral work help children to be aware of their trusted adults and we continue to encourage them to voice any concerns they may have.

SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

27. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something

the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CSE can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. It can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media).

Staff should be vigilant and aware of the following indicators of CSE, and report all concerns immediately to the DSL:

- children who experience sudden changes in behavior e.g. looking agitated
- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.
- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

We follow the Jig-Saw scheme of work for the teaching of PSHE and Relationships and Sex Education.

For further information staff can read the [Home Office Statutory Guidance](#) on Child Sexual Exploitation as well as speaking to the DSL.

28. CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION INCLUDING COUNTY LINES

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Staff need to be aware of some of the indicators of CCE:

- Children who experience sudden changes in behaviour e.g. looking agitated
- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.

It is important that we stay alert to the increased vulnerability of children under 10 years old being exploited because they are under the criminal age of responsibility.

Further information on the signs of a child’s involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office and The Children’s Society [County Lines Toolkit For Professionals](#).

We are aware of the increased vulnerability of children under 10 years old being exploited because they are under the age of criminal responsibility.

29. SERIOUS YOUTH VIOLENCE

All staff are aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school or being frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm, a significant change in wellbeing, signs of assault or unexplained injuries, being male, having experienced child maltreatment or having been involved in offending such as theft or robbery. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

30. ONLINE HARMS

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Abuse can happen online and/or offline. Examples of which include child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation/grooming and forms of child-on-child abuse - technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm.

An effective approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate the whole school community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate.

In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse their peers online, which can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example - pornography, fake news, racism, prejudice-based content, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism;
- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example, peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults with the intention of grooming or exploiting;
- Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.
- Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and financial scams. When pupils are at risk of phishing, school can reports concerns to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

Children can also abuse their peers online. This can include:

- Abusive, harassing or misogynistic message
- Non-consensual sharing of indecent images (particularly in chat groups)
- Sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who don't want to receive such content

The school IT system is filtered using the LGFL firewall to prevent any inappropriate content being available to both staff and pupils.

The school has an Online Safety Policy for all pupils as well as an ICT and Staff Agreement Policy which include the school's Acceptable User Agreement.

As part of a whole school approach the school is committed to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to be empowered and upskilled in keeping children safe online through the sharing of Online Safety information, advice and guidance including the offer of workshops to support parents for example in installing safeguards on to their children's digital devices.

Staff should be aware that children with known vulnerabilities such as SEND, LAC and PLAC children and Children known to a Social Worker, may be more vulnerable to harm and exploitation in the online and digital environments.

31. DOMESTIC ABUSE

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. Domestic abuse can encompass a range of abusive behaviours, which may be a single incident or pattern of abuse, including: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

The school has signed up to the Metropolitan Police's Operation Encompass and on receipt of a notification will provide appropriate support to the child. Operation Encompass ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, and where there are children in the household, the police will notify the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead before the child arrives at school the following day, so that the school can provide 'silent support' to the child.

32. SO-CALLED HONOUR-BASED ABUSE

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 female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast

ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving “honour” often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children’s social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers that requires a different approach.

Female Genital Mutilation

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, FGM is a criminal offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.

Forced Marriage

In England and Wales, the practice of Forced Marriage is a criminal offence under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fm@fcdo.gov.uk.

Virginity Testing and Hymenoplasty

The government has made it illegal to carry out, offer or aid and abet virginity testing or hymenoplasty in any part of the UK, as part of the Health and Care Act 2022.

It is also illegal for UK nationals and residents to do these things outside the UK.

In response to any reports of a child/young person being subject to or at risk of virginity testing or hymenoplasty, the DSL will take action in accordance with the government's non-statutory guidance [Virginity testing and hymenoplasty: multi-agency guidance](#) (July 2022).

33. RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools' or colleges' safeguarding approach.

- Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.
- Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- 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.

As a school we follow the Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.

Prevent training is part of our ongoing cycle of training for staff and is also addressed in briefing meetings as needed.

Our curriculum is designed to meet the needs of our children and reflects the diverse nature of our school community, living in the heart of London, in terms of ethnicity, religion and culture and allows regular opportunities for children to learn from and about the views of others which may be different to their own.

The school promotes fundamental British Values as part of SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education through Collective Worship, PSHCE and the wider curriculum.

In LBTH the Prevent Education Officer is Eleanor Knight
Eleanor.Knight@towerhamlets.gov.uk.

In LBTH all Prevent referrals related to children should be made through the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.

34. CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE

Children may be harmed by other children. All staff recognise that children can abuse their peers and should follow the school's policy and procedures regarding child-on-child abuse. At our school, all incidents of child-on-child abuse are treated very seriously and all forms are unacceptable. As with all forms of abuse, the occurrence of child-on-child abuse is an infringement of a child's human rights. Abuse is abuse and will never be dismissed as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

Child-on-child abuse can take many forms and may be facilitated by technology, including:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- physical abuse such as biting, hitting, kicking or hair pulling
- sexually harmful behaviour and sexual abuse including inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault or rape
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos
- teenage relationship abuse – where there is a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, perpetrated against a current or former partner
- upskirting – taking a picture under a person's clothing without their knowledge, which is a criminal offence
- initiation/hazing - used to introduce newcomers into an organisation or group by subjecting them to a series of trials and challenges, which are potentially humiliating, embarrassing or abusive.
- prejudice and discrimination - behaviours which cause a person to feel powerless, worthless or excluded originating from prejudices around belonging, identity and equality, for example, prejudices linked to disabilities, special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender and sexual identity
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers

- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without their consent (for example, forcing someone to strip, touching themselves sexually or to engage in sexual activity with a third party)

Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with child-on-child abuse, for example girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence.

Although a child identifying as LGBTQ+ is not in itself a safeguarding concern, such children may be more vulnerable to forms of child-on-child abuse. This includes children who are perceived to be LGBTQ+ even though they do not identify as such. The school is committed to providing a safe space for LGBTQ+ children to share any concerns they may have and in ensuring an inclusive culture is maintained.

Child-on-child abuse is taken seriously by the school and a range of actions are taken both to stop this and to support all involved parties in understanding why the actions are wrong and to prevent such incidents happening in the future.

Actions include, observations, individual and joint meetings, meetings with parents, therapeutic activities, agreements put in place, whole staff awareness, referrals to outside agencies, including social care if appropriate

At Stepney Greencoat, we seek to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse through the implementation of our curriculum and associated policies:

- Our Anti-bullying policy acknowledges the process and procedures followed by staff
- Our Relationships and Sex Policy and Jigsaw Scheme prepares the children for age appropriate relationships and physical contact.

Our school values support our work in helping children to be respectful of one another and to be responsible for their 'positive' impact upon one another in a safe way.

We are clear however that abuse is abuse, it could happen here, and if it does, it will not be tolerated. As staff we must remain objective to the facts and we must avoid passing incidences off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. Part of our duty for safeguarding is also teaching the children appropriate behaviours/language to avoid safeguarding matters escalating for them.

If you are concerned about potential child-on-child abuse, you must report it to the Designated Safeguarding leads and record incidents and concerns on CPOMs.

In partnership with the child and their family, the Designated Safeguarding leads will decide what further action to take which may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Discussions with alleged victim and perpetrator to understand the extent of the harm;
- Discussions with the alleged victim and perpetrators parents regarding the extent of the harm and a support plan to respond;
- The use of restorative practices to enable children to fully learn about and understand the extent of the harm that has been committed and to empower them to take responsibility for their actions;
- A support plan may include a referral to the school's pastoral team
- Discussions with the Early Help Hub may be sought to determine what support could be sought by both the alleged victim and perpetrator. This is likely to be appropriate if the abuse may have stemmed from a lack of structured time outside of school.

35. CHILD-ON-CHILD SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

All staff must be aware that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex and it can happen in any environment including schools, the family home as part of intra-familial abuse and via online platforms.

Staff should be aware that some groups of children are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and LGBTQ+ children are at greater risk.

The school complies with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 part 5 when responding to reports of sexual harassment and sexual violence which may include;

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- challenging inappropriate behaviours;
- making clear 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”; and
- challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting upskirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours will help to normalise them.

If you are concerned about potential child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment, you must report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding leads and record on CPOMs.

36. BULLYING (INCLUDING CYBERBULLYING)

Bullying is a very serious issue that can cause anxiety and distress. All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based bullying and discriminatory bullying should be reported and will be managed through the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and procedure.

Please refer to the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and procedures for further details.

37. HOMELESSNESS

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL will raise concerns at the earliest opportunity about a family at risk of homelessness through the [Tower Hamlets Homeless and Housing Options service](#)

Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live.

Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

38. CHILDREN AND THE COURT SYSTEM

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed.

The DSL will ensure that the children concerned are supported and where appropriate make use of the guides provided by the HM Courts & Tribunals Service for [children 5-11-year olds](#). The guide explains each step of the process, support and special

measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. Where appropriate parents can be signposted to the Department of Justice's [information toolkit](#) for families on making child arrangements which sets out each party's responsibility including the importance of putting the needs of the children first in the process.

39. CHILDREN WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN PRISON

An estimated 310,000 children every year have a parent in prison in England and Wales and 10,000 visits are made by children to our public prisons every week. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health.

The DSL will draw upon the resources and guidance offered through [The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders](#) (NICCO) to support the children involved and mitigate negative consequences for those children.

40. PRIVATE FOSTERING

Private fostering occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home. A child is not privately fostered if the person caring for and accommodating them has done so for less than 28 days and does not intend to do so for longer.

Staff should be vigilant about children who are in private fostering arrangements and report concerns to the DSL, who will notify the Local Authority through a MASH referral, as set out in the THSCP Multi-Agency Private Fostering Guidance (January 2022). The Local Authority will check the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child in accordance with the [Private Fostering statutory guidance](#)

41. YOUNG CARERS

A young carer is a person aged 18 or under who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member. This can include, but is not limited to a person with:

- a long-term illness or condition
- a physical or learning disability

- a substance misuse problem
- a mental health problem

The support provided by a child can vary based on the condition of the person they are caring for, but typically young carers provide a combination of personal (such as helping to dress or bath them), practical (such as cooking, cleaning and shopping) and emotional care (such as talking through their concerns with them).

It is estimated by the Children's Society that 1 in 5 children are young carers and many are hidden and unidentified. The school recognises that young carers have the right to an assessment by the Local Authority to identify needs and support and the person they are caring for can have a reassessment of their needs.

The DSL will follow the LBTH guidance for schools, 'Young Carers in School: A guide for education practitioners to identify and support young carers in schools' (2020) and refer to the Young Carers program accordingly: Young.Carers@towerhamlets.gov.uk

42. CHILD ABDUCTION AND COMMUNITY SAFETY INCIDENTS

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a child 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.

All incidents of Child Abduction should be reported immediately to the Police and Children's Social Care.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst staff, children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation. All incidents that occur during the school day should be immediately reported to the DSL, and steps taken to ensure the safety and well-being of the children involved.

43. TAKING SAFEGUARDING ACTION

Any child, in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here". Key points for staff to remember are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child (including calling 999)

- report your concern as soon as possible to the DSL, no later than the end of the day but as soon as possible
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of concern on CPOMS as soon as possible
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

44. EARLY HELP

All staff are trained and prepared to identify children who may benefit from Early Help, which is providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life.

Our school is committed to ensuring everything possible is done to prevent the unnecessary escalation of issues or problems. Children, young people and their families will be offered help when needs and/or concerns are first identified and, as a consequence of the early help offered, children's circumstances should improve and, in some cases, the need for more intrusive and intensive services are lessened or avoided.

The Tower Hamlets Early Help Strategy recognises the important role schools have in identifying children and families who are at risk of poor outcomes without early intervention.

Our staff recognise that all children may benefit from Early Help but some children may benefit from Early Help more than others, including a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care; and
- is a privately fostered child.

We will work with children and families at the earliest possible point to help them by listening to their needs and developing a support plan which takes into account any access that may be required to additional resources, expertise or to consider any adjustments that can be made in school. We will also assist children and families who may need further support through the use of the “Early Help Assessment” and the organisation of a “Team Around the Family”, a team which consists of members of staff from the school, parent/carer(s), the child or children (if it’s appropriate) and other professionals from services who may be able to support the family.

The DSL will contact the LBTH Early Help Hub for support and advice if required:

LBTH Early Help Hub - 0207 364 5006 (option 2)

Alternatively, the DSL will complete an Early Help Enquiry form which can be accessed via <https://bit.ly/2AA2WNY>

The DSL will apply the LBTH Thresholds Guidance to decide what level of safeguarding response is required as part of the Early Help response. If in doubt about the level of need the DSL will telephone the LBTH Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for a discussion.

MASH - 020 7364 5006 (Option 3) 020 7364 5601/5606

Child Protection Advice Line - 020 7364 3444

If a child has been receiving early help support from the school and other agencies and there is no improvement in the child’s outcomes then the DSL will refer to Children’s Social Care.

45. HANDLING DISCLOSURES

When a child discloses that they have been or are being abused, they may feel ashamed, especially if the abuse is sexual, and feel frightened lest their abuser finds out they have made a disclosure. The child may have been threatened, they may have lost all trust in adults; or may believe that they are to blame for the abuse. Sometimes the child may not understand that what is happening is abusive.

Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child. During their conversations with the pupils, staff will:

- allow the child to speak freely
- remain calm
- allow silences
- do not ask leading questions
- tell the pupil what will happen next
- inform the DSL as soon as possible
- seek support if they feel distressed.

Victims should be taken seriously, supported and kept safe, and never made to feel that they are creating a problem for reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment.

The school will follow the advice of the MASH team with regards to when to inform parents of a disclosure and what to share with them with regards to the disclosure

46. CONFIDENTIALITY AND SHARING INFORMATION

Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. Serious Case Reviews have highlighted failures in safeguarding systems in which people did not share information at the earliest opportunity or did not share at all. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the DSL or a deputy DSL.

Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. All staff should understand that safeguarding requires a high level of confidentiality. Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL, the head teacher, or the Deputy.

Any member of staff can contact children's social care if they are concerned about a child but should inform the DSL as soon as possible that they have done so.

The DSL will have due regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to ensure that personal information is processed fairly and lawfully and they will adhere to the eight golden rules for sharing information (appendix 2). Information sharing will take place in a timely and secure manner.

The GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 do not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, as safeguarding and protecting children provide a legal basis for sharing information.

The school will gain consent unless doing so would put the child at further risk of harm. The school would always seek advice from Social Care and or the Data Protection Officer when appropriate.

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision to share has been taken. Child protection information will be stored securely separate from the pupil's school file. Child protection information is stored and handled in line with up-to-date guidance.

47. REFERRING TO CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

The DSL will make a referral to children's social care applying the LBTH Threshold Guidance if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, or the child is considered to be in need, that is a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services.

LBTH Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub:
020 7364 5006 (Option 3) 020 7364 5601/5606

Child Protection Advice Line:

020 7364 3444

The DSL will contact CPAL/MASH in the first instance to seek advice and guidance. When the DSL completes a MASH referral form and sends it securely to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, the referral form will be accurate and sufficiently detailed to enable the MASH Assessment and Intervention Team to make a decision on the level of statutory response required in accordance with the LBTH Thresholds Guidance.

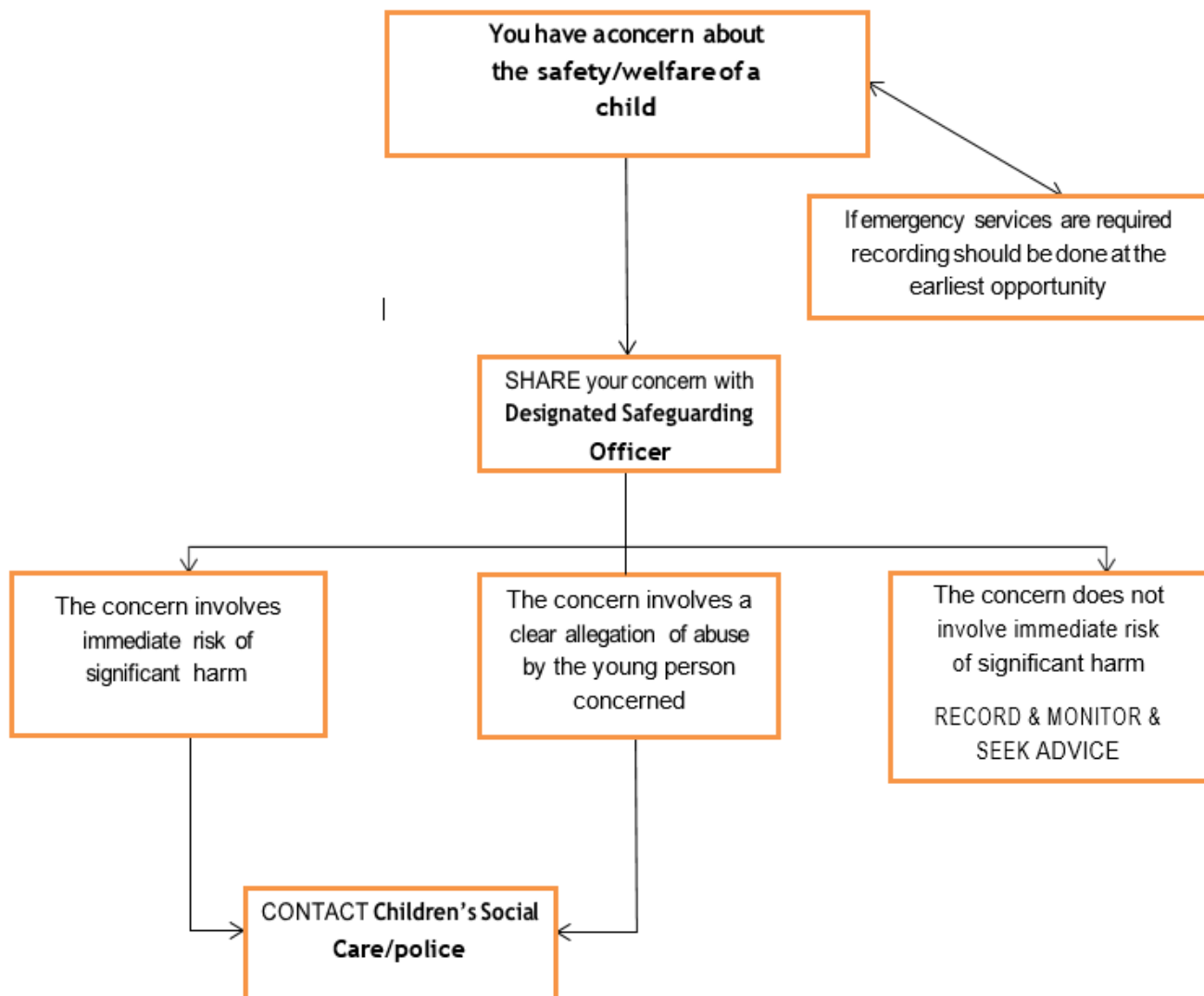
If the child is already known to Children's Social Care, then the DSL will communicate safeguarding concerns with the allocated Social Worker.

48. ESCALATION PROCEDURES

If, after a referral to Children's Social Care, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL will consider following local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.

In accordance with the Tower Hamlets Threshold Guidance (Appendix D) the DSL will first make contact with the team manager followed by the service manager followed by the divisional director. At every level of escalation there should be discussion and concerted effort to resolve any professional difference.

Making a Child Protection Decision - Flow Chart



Appendix 2: Eight **Golden Rules** for Information Sharing

1. **Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) are not a barrier to sharing information** but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.
2. **If there are concerns that a child may be at risk of significant harm or an adult at risk of serious harm**, then it is your duty to follow the relevant procedures without delay. Seek advice if you are not sure what to do at any stage and ensure that the outcome of the discussion is recorded.
3. **Be open and honest** with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
4. **Seek advice** if you are in any doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.
5. **Share with consent where appropriate** and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You should go ahead and share information without consent if, in your judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest, or where a child is at risk of significant harm. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case.
6. **Consider safety and well-being:** Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the person and others who may be affected by their actions.
7. **Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure:** Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
8. **Keep a record** of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.