



# Stephen Hawking School - CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

September 2021



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## Our Vision for Stephen Hawking School

Stephen Hawking School is dedicated to raising the standard of educational achievement for children between the ages of two and 11 years with severe or profound learning difficulties.

Our school offers a safe, positive and challenging environment for our pupils. We have high expectations of all children which, we believe, helps them to realise their potential. These high expectations are supported by teachers, many of whom have specialist qualifications in the education of children with learning difficulties, and support staff who receive considerable on-site training.

The school is committed to the development and delivery of high quality relationships with families and local community organisations to ensure that the children attending the school achieve their full potential and become respected and active members of the local community.

The school is committed to a high level of team work in school, with parents/carers, other schools and agencies. This ensures enthusiasm for learning and the best possible experience and education for all.

We are committed to upholding the highest standards of safeguarding at Stephen Hawking. We have the following policies in place to support these standards:

- Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Prevent Policy
- Staff safer code of conduct
- Complaints Procedure
- Whistleblowing Policy

Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare is everyone's responsibility. Those that come into contact with our children should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

This policy is available on the staff shared computer drive (in the 'Policies' folder) and on the school website ([www.stephenhawking.towerhamlets.sch.uk](http://www.stephenhawking.towerhamlets.sch.uk))

All school policies relating to safeguarding will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident, new legislation or guidance calls for the need for a review.

Procedures within this CP policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors and they have been written in accordance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021' and 'Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership' supplementary guidance (THSCP) on Child Protection Procedures and the Management of Allegations.

**COVID-19.** Requirements for local interventions will continue to be reviewed, as the impact of COVID-19 on schools develops over the year.

## 1. CORE SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

- The welfare of the child is paramount and underpins all discussions, decision making, and actions taken at the school.
- All concerns disclosed and reported 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 what action to take and what support to provide.
- All staff including supply staff, contractors and volunteers have an equal responsibility to act immediately on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm or has been harmed.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that all pupils and staff involved in safeguarding and child protection issues will receive appropriate support.

These 6 core principles are embedded within the school's safeguarding arrangements; its safeguarding policies, procedures and systems; and underpin the whole school approach to safeguarding at Stephen Hawking School.

## 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/carers 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 (Local maintained schools only)
- Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 (Independent schools only, including academies and Free Schools)
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (Independent schools only, including academies and Free Schools)
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Teacher Standards 2012
- Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018 (Updated December 2020)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- UKCIS Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes: Advice for Education Settings Working with Children and Young People (December 2020)
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges: Advice for Schools and Colleges on how to prevent and respond to reports of sexual violence and harassment between children (Updated July 2021)

#### 4. TOWER HAMLETS SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP SUPPLEMENTARY SAFEGUARDING GUIDANCE

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

- London Child Protection Procedures revised 6th Edition (London Safeguarding Children Board, March 2021)
- Tower Hamlets SCP Multi-Agency Safeguarding Thresholds Guidance
- Tower Hamlets SCP Supplementary Guidance for Schools and Education Settings on Child Protection Procedures - September 2021
- 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 2021

## 5. TOWER HAMLETS SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP

The Children 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 statutory safeguarding partners have published arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs. More information about the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership can be found on the website: <http://www.childrenandfamiliestrust.co.uk/the-lscb/>

The school has been named as a ‘relevant agency’ and as such is under a statutory duty to cooperate with the THSCP arrangements.

The school will engage with the borough’s Designated Safeguarding Lead Forums, co-operate with the Rapid Review process and any Local Learning Reviews,<sup>1</sup> participate in the THSCP multi-agency safeguarding training offer, and co-operate with the 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

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on the Rapid Review process, Local Learning Reviews and Child Death Reviews, Working Together 2018 Chapters 4 and 5 should be consulted. Working Together 2018 paragraphs 25-27 provide more information on the expectation of school’s role within the safeguarding partnership arrangements.

- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

The phrase 'child protection' refers to the processes followed to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

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/Trustees/Proprietor 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, and ensure that 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.

In accordance with the statutory requirement the named member of the Governing Body who takes leadership responsibility for safeguarding at the school is Dr Arrash Arya Yassaee and they are referred to as the Safeguarding Link Governor.

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 ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding arrangements within the school on a day-to-day basis.

The school has one DSL: Sasha Sullivan (Lead) and three Deputy DSLs Kirsty Tucker, Liz Baxter & Rachel Baxter. The Safeguarding Governor is Dr Arrash Arya Yassaee.

All staff should recognise that as frontline workers they are in an important position to identify concerns early, provide help and support to children, promote children's welfare, and prevent concerns from escalating.



All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

All staff have a responsibility to report safeguarding concerns immediately to the DSL. At Stephen Hawking School we use CPOMS, this is then picked up by all DSL

If in doubt about any safeguarding matter, staff know to always speak to the DSL.

All staff are expected to keep safeguarding values at the core of their daily conduct. The best interests of the child should determine their decision making, behaviour and any action taken.

## 8. CHILDREN WHO MAY BE POTENTIALLY MORE AT RISK OF HARM

All staff should recognise that all children are vulnerable but that some children may be more vulnerable than others and at more risk of harm. Children known to a Social Worker, Looked After Children and Care Leavers are likely to have suffered abuse at some point in their childhood and may be more vulnerable to further abuse including exploitation. Staff need to be aware that other children who may be potentially more at risk of harm include

A Child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- has a mental health need;
- 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 or county lines;
- 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; and
- is a privately fostered child;
- is persistently absent from education, 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.

## 9. CHILDREN IN NEED OF A SOCIAL WORKER

Children who have been allocated a social worker may have experienced abuse including neglect and belong to a family that has many complex circumstances. Staff should recognise that these children will have experienced adversity and trauma that can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged, and have a negative impact on their attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

When making decisions about safeguarding, carrying out risk analysis, making a safeguarding response to concerns such as unauthorised and persistent absence, 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 pastoral and academic support alongside that provided by statutory services. School is also committed to providing further pastoral and academic support to children who have had historic contact with a Social Worker, in recognition that the abuse and trauma is likely to have an impact on the child beyond the duration of the involvement of statutory services.

At Stephen Hawking School we have an allocated social worker from Tower Hamlets. The social worker is shared between the 3 special schools in the borough. Some children have their own allocated social workers from Tower Hamlets.

Where appropriate the social workers will try to attend Annual Reviews, TAC, LAC, CIN, CP or MDT meetings.

## 10. CHILDREN REQUIRING MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

All staff have 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 need to recognise that mental health may be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff should be aware of the trauma and mental health impact on a child who has had adverse childhood experiences including abuse, bereavement and separation of parents. Staff should also be aware that the pandemic has had a negative impact on the mental health of many children, some of whom have never previously experienced difficulties with their mental health. However, all staff should be clear that only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health difficulty.

## 11. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND PREVIOUS LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse including neglect.

Staff need to have the skills, knowledge and understanding to safeguard Looked After Children in recognition of their heightened vulnerability.

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 Designated Teacher works alongside the Virtual School Head teacher; to complete relevant paperwork and attend meetings deemed necessary for the pupil.

## 12. SEND CHILDREN

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or physical health issues 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 (including prejudice-based bullying), without outwardly showing any signs;

- children not understanding that what is happening to them is abuse; and
- communication barriers when reporting abuse and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

For some disabled children, their dependency on parents and carers for practical assistance in daily living, including intimate personal care, may increase their risk of exposure to abusive behaviour. Some children may also have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. Looked After Disabled Children may be particularly susceptible to possible abuse because of their additional dependency on residential and hospital staff for day to day physical care 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.

All staff are regularly trained to understand and be aware of the additional barriers that exist when safeguarding SEND children. 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.

### 13. 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.

## **Partnership between parents/carers and the school (Attendance Policy)**

Our Attendance policy is available on our website, and an annual attendance report is attached to each child's Annual Review.

### **Our daily procedure is:**

- Our home-school liaison officer (HSLO) will telephone parents to discuss the reason for absence
- The HSLO will inform classes if the absent child will be brought into school by parents
- Class staff will inform the HSLO if the child still does not arrive in school
- The HSLO will phone parents again
- Class staff will inform the HSLO if a child has gone home ill during the day.

### **Long term absence:**

Hospitalisation/long term illness:

- Prior to admission to hospital establish with parents the expected length of absence and agree the best times to check on progress
- Send a get-well card and/ or visit

### **Family holidays:**

The LA policy is that no child should take holiday during term time. Governors' policy on this is very clear:

- The parents must meet with the headteacher prior to the holiday starting, completing a standard form
- The benefit of the holiday versus the impact on school must be considered
- Permission will only be given for a maximum of 10 consecutive days at any one time.
- The date of return must be given, along with travel details (eg copies of tickets) and a contact address and phone number.
- If there are any unavoidable delays, the parents must keep in touch with the school to keep us informed of progress.

### **When there are concerns about attendance**

When there are concerns about attendance the following actions are taken by the school:

- The HSLO regularly meets the Attendance Welfare Advisor (AWA) to check registers and discuss absences
- When attendance is of concern, the HSLO will write to the parents to arrange a meeting to discuss the reasons and find ways to further support the family.
- Where letters have been written to individual families the H-SW will inform the AWA
- If attendance does not improve, the school will arrange a multi-disciplinary meeting for parents and other professionals (e.g. nurse, doctor, AWA, Headteacher) involved with the child to attend.

- If there are no genuine reasons for absences then the AWA may begin legal proceedings against both parents if applicable.

## **Reports from AWA**

### **Strategies employed by school and evaluation of their strategies.**

- First day absence contact by HSLO.
- Focus on pupil with high level of absences.
- Referring to AWA in accordance with referral criteria.
- Gradual re-integration of pupil returning from long term absences due to illness or hospitalisation.
- HSLO actively working with parents/making first day contact.
- Workshops at school for parents.
- Attendance discussed with parents during annual reviews

### **Strategies employed by AWA and evaluation of their effectiveness**

- Regular meeting with HSLO.
- Register check and annual register inspection.
- Advice and guidance on LEA policy related to attendance.
- Following up referrals.
- Multi-Agency meeting & liaison with other professionals
- Home Visits
- Attending Team Around the Child Meetings

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](mailto:Saadia.Anwer@towerhamlets.gov.uk) 020 7364 3426 / 07562 431 817

## **14. 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.

## 15. 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 school's Whistleblowing Policy is displayed in all staff room, intranet and external internet and staff are aware they need to follow its guidance if they have any concerns.

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 available including:

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

## 16. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF & REPORTING OF LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS

Allegations of harm may indicate that a person who works with children might pose a risk of harm to children if they continue in that role. When an allegation is made against a member of staff including supply staff and volunteers, the school's Managing Allegations Procedures should be followed, and all action taken needs to be in line with KCSIE 2021 Part 4 and THSCP Supplementary Guidance- Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff – September 2021.

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 staff must report all allegations, irrespective of the source, directly to the Head Teacher and ensure that it is put in writing, signed and dated. If the subject of the allegation is the head teacher then the allegation should be directly reported to the Chair of Governors.

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.

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.

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](mailto:Melanie.Benzie@towerhamlets.gov.uk) or [LADO@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto: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, which are found in the school's Staff Code of Conduct.

## 17. STAFF TRAINING

We provide whole school safeguarding training and this is updated within all the required timescales. Registers are kept and, if staff have been absent, the DSL will ensure they have the information they need. Each new school year begins with a brief safeguarding update / reminder session and these are



carried out at various points during the year. New staff (including those that arrive midway through the year) are inducted regarding child protection policies and procedures and required to read relevant documentation. All staff read the relevant policies and KCSIE 2021 Part 1 via Smartlog, and this is monitored by the DSL and School Business Manager (SBM). DSLs have all received the appropriate training to carry out the role

## 18. VISITORS

Visitors to the school must sign in via the 'Inventry' system and are handed a copy of our Safeguarding leaflet, so they are aware of the procedures that they need to follow whilst in the building.

DBS documents need to be supplied to the Admin Team before entering the building.

By signing in, visitors are agreeing to adhere to all school policies and uphold the values of the school. More details on this can be found in our Prevent Policy.

Any visitor who works directly with children will be in a room with a vision panel and may accompanied by other school staff, as appropriate.

## 19. EXTENDED SCHOOL AND OFF-SITE ARRANGEMENTS

Our extended learning, e.g. clubs, and off-site activities are subject to risk assessments and all the school's child protection policies and procedures apply to these activities.

Where other organisations provide services or activities on the site they are made aware of the school's safeguarding procedures so we can ensure they have the correct procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures (including, if applicable, the Childcare Disqualification 2018 Regulations). When pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits, the provider must give the school a copy of their own risk assessment

When pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits Individual risk assessments for the pupils and specific activity risk assessments are completed. Parent permission is sort and adequate and appropriate staffing is provided.

Where services or activities are provided separately by another organisation, the school will seek assurance that the organisation has effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place. The school will ensure that all safeguarding requirements are set out clearly in the lease or hire agreement with the organisation, as a condition of use and occupation of the school premises; and that failure to comply would lead to the termination of the agreement.

## 20. 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 must consider whether children are at risk of harm and exploitation in environments outside the family home. All staff should therefore apply a Contextual Safeguarding approach when safeguarding children in the setting.

## 21. 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 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 school is aware of the borough's [LBTH Neglect Guidance](#) toolkit and all staff should understand their important frontline role in identifying children who may be suffering from Neglect.

## 22. VOICE OF THE CHILD

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, because they know that their concerns will be taken seriously by staff and action will be taken to safeguard and protect them.

[KCSIE 2021 Part 2 requires schools to have a Child Protection Policy that refers to the systems in place to facilitate children voicing their concerns and reporting abuse. According to KCSIE these systems need to be accessible, understood by all children and promoted throughout the school.

Please see our Pupil voice policy

## 23. SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

## 24. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. 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. Apart from age other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, include gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

CSE can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence 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).

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. Some children may not realise they are being exploited, as they may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship. Children may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

Staff should be vigilant and be aware of the following indicators of CSE, which is by no means an exhaustive list, and reports all concerns immediately to the DSL:

- Children who are in possession of multiple phones and overly anxious to check their phones
- Children who experience sudden changes in behaviour e.g. looking agitated, children who want to leave the school premises at lunchtime
- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- 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.

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

## 25. CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION INCLUDING COUNTY LINES

Child Criminal Exploitation 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 through County Lines, forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin

to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to

All Staff should be aware that girls as well as boys can be risk of CCE. It is important for staff to note that boys or girls being criminally exploited are at higher risk of being sexually exploited.

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

- Children who are in possession of multiple phones and overly anxious to check their phones
- Children who experience sudden changes in behaviour e.g. looking agitated, children who want to leave the school premises at lunchtime
- 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 using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools (mainstream and special), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children’s homes and care homes. Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

Many of the indicators of children involved in County Lines are as described above under CCE. However, in addition they can include children who:

- go missing from education and/or home and subsequently found in areas away from their home;
- have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime);
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs;
- are exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection;
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a ‘traphouse or cuckooing’ or hotel room where there is drug activity;
- owe a ‘debt bond’ to their exploiters;
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing

## 26. 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, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. 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.

## 27. ONLINE HARMS

Children should have the right to explore the digital environment but also the right to be safe when on it. However, the use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Examples of which include child sexual exploitation; child criminal exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation/grooming; and forms of peer on peer abuse. Technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm.

In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse their peers online, this 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.

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

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 them for sexual, criminal; financial or other purposes;
- Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual or non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes), and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying.
- Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. When pupils are at risk of phishing, school can reports concerns to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer).

When there are concerns about a child in this area, staff should notify the DSL, who will consider referring the child into the Cyber Choices programme ([cyberchoices.uk](http://cyberchoices.uk)). It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.



We use the LGfL filtering and monitoring system in school. This is fully auditable and trackable for the mutual protection and privacy of all staff, pupils and parents, as well as to support data protection.

The School's E-Safety Policy and Acceptable User Agreements exist as separate documents and can provide more details on how we ensure the children know how to keep themselves safe online, where this is appropriate to individual children. It is acknowledged that the majority of not all of our pupils are unable to access the internet independently due to their physical & mental disabilities.

We recognise the risks that children may be exposed to on line. These risks are fully addressed by our e-safety policy.

School is committed to ensuring that Online Safety is a running and interrelated theme throughout its safeguarding arrangements including policy and procedure, the curriculum, staff training and induction, the role of the DSL, and parental engagement.

At SHS staff and /or visitors are not permitted to use personal smart technology whilst in the presence of pupils. This and other relevant information is held within the E safety policy. Visitors to the school are provided with a Health and Safety and safeguarding information for visitor's leaflet on arrival this states our policy on photography social media, school data, smart technology and WiFi The School's Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy. Where a school or college permit the use of mobile phones within the setting, it should be made clear how the setting manages children's access to the internet via 4G or 5G]

[Insert a statement about the school's ongoing risk assessment and reviewing of Online Safety at the school]

Staff should report Online Safety concerns about pupils to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as with all other safeguarding concerns. When it comes to the safety and well-being of the child, the response to the risks and harms that children may experience in the online or digital environment should be no different than the offline, face to face world. For most children there is little distinction between the online and face to face, physical environments, as the two intersect with one another in their daily lives. Staff should recognise that children's experience of abuse in the digital environment may be even more pronounced, where the identity of the abuser is unknown and the abuse can continue 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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.

## 28. DOMESTIC ABUSE

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse recognises that domestic abuse may occur in different types of relationships, including ex-partners and family members. Domestic Abuse may involve a range of abusive behaviours including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected”.

Staff should be aware that 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. Experiencing 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. Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of peer on peer abuse is sometimes referred to as ‘teenage relationship abuse’.

School has signed up to the Metropolitan Police’s Operation Encompass system and on receipt of a notification from the Police will provide appropriate support to the child or children concerned, who attend the school. 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 inform the school’s Designated Safeguarding Lead before the child or children arrive at school the following day. The purpose of Operation Encompass is to enable the school to provide ‘silent support’ and is not intended to replace statutory procedures.

## 29. SO-CALLED HONOUR-BASED ABUSE

All forms of so-called Honour Based Abuse 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 Honour Based Abuse, or already having suffered Honour Based Abuse.

If staff have a concern regarding a child who might be at risk of Honour Based Abuse or who has suffered from Honour Based Abuse, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will follow local safeguarding procedures.

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

[Cross-reference to the HM Government Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance on FGM, Updated 30<sup>th</sup> July 2020]

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. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should **not** be examining pupils or students. Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. However, teachers should notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead of this action as well as reporting the disclosure of FGM in line with school's safeguarding procedures.

Staff need to understand that the duty on teachers to report to the police does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures and report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If in doubt, staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

In England and Wales, the practice of Forced Marriage is a criminal offence under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

[Cross-reference to the Forced Marriage Unit's Statutory Guidance and Multi Agency Guidelines]

### 30. 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 is part of the school's 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.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home).

All staff have received training to raise their awareness of risks related to Extremist Islamism and the Far Right. Training takes place on a three year cycle, however will be brought forward if the need arises. In this, staff were alerted to 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. They are reminded of this at other times throughout the year in briefings, meetings and other relevant sessions.

The Executive Head Teacher with the support of the SLT completes and reviews the school's Prevent Risk Assessment and Prevent Checklists annually.

Training, both on safeguarding and on curriculum development, help staff to understand how to support children with issues relation to radicalisation. In PHSE, RSE, topic work, texts used in English, assemblies, etc. there are opportunities for

pupils to explore issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and how the school promotes fundamental British Values as part of SMCS (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education).

In LBTH the Prevent Education Officer is Eleanor Knight  
[Eleanor.Knight@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:Eleanor.Knight@towerhamlets.gov.uk).

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

### 31. PEER ON PEER ABUSE

Staff must be aware that children may be harmed by other children.

Peer on Peer Abuse can happen both inside and outside of school including online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of peer on peer abuse.

Staff should treat all reports of peer on peer abuse very seriously and make it clear that all forms are unacceptable. Abuse is abuse and will never be dismissed as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. School adopts a Zero Tolerance Approach to peer on peer abuse.

All staff should recognise that even though there are no reported cases of peer on peer abuse among pupils, such abuse may still be taking place and it is simply not being reported.

Staff should be aware that it is more likely that boys will be perpetrators of peer on peer abuse and girls will be victims of peer on peer abuse. However, all forms of peer on peer abuse are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at the school.

Staff should recognise that peer on peer 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

- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes 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 and/or permission with the attention of viewing their buttocks or genitals (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification. It 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.

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

It is a requirement of KCSIE 2021 Part 2 for the school’s Child Protection Policy to detail procedures in place to minimise the risk of Peer on Peer Abuse.

It is a requirement of KCSIE 2021 Part 2 for the school’s Child Protection Policy to outline how allegations of peer on peer abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with.

It is a requirement of KCSIE 2021 Part 2 for a school’s Child Protection Policy to include clear processes how victims, perpetrators and other children affected by peer on peer abuse are supported at the school.

## 32. PEER ON PEER 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 from primary to secondary phases and in colleges. It can also occur online. It can also occur through a group of

children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

As part of school's wider safeguarding culture, staff should maintain a 'it could happen here' approach in regard to child on child sexual violence or sexual harassment and understand that children may be experiencing such forms of peer on peer abuse, including that facilitated by technology, regardless of the number of reports the DSL receives.

In response to reports including disclosures school will reassure all victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

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

Sexual violence offences are defined under the Sexual Offences Act 2003

**Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Assault by Penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body



or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Sexual Assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (Schools should be aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent, or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault.)

**Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.)

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs.

All Staff need to be aware of the following:

- children under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity;
- the age of consent is 16
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

Sexual Harassment is 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Sexual Harassment may include the following:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;



- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence such as:
  - consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos.
  - sharing of unwanted explicit content;
  - upskirting
  - sexualised online bullying
  - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media
  - sexual exploitation, coercion and threats

[**Insert** here what response and actions school will take when reports of peer on peer sexual violence and sexual harassment are brought to the attention of the DSL, making sure it is in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 Part 5. This should cover the Immediate Response, Risk Assessments, the Ongoing Response and Support for Victim and Perpetrator]

### 33. Youth Produced Sexual Imagery

Youth Produced Sexual Imagery is one of the terms professionals use to describe the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by children and young people under the age of 18 online. The term 'nudes' is used by young people and covers all types of image sharing incidents. Alternative terms used by children include 'dick pics' or 'pics'.

The sharing of nudes and semi-nudes can happen publicly online, in 1:1 messaging or via group chats and closed social media accounts. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's AirDrop which works offline. Nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams may include more than one child or young person.

Incidents may also occur where:

- children and young people find nudes and semi-nudes online and share them claiming to be from a peer
- children and young people digitally manipulate an image of a young person into an existing nude online
- images created or shared are used to abuse peers e.g. by selling images online or obtaining images to share more widely without consent to publicly shame. Such images can be shared via web pages and social media accounts called 'Bait Out' pages/accounts.

Creating and sharing nudes and semi-nudes of under-18s (including those created and shared with consent) is illegal.

When handling disclosures of Youth Produced Sexual Imagery, staff must be aware that it is illegal for staff to view or share such imagery. Staff should immediately report the disclosure to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## 34. BULLYING (INCLUDING CYBERBULLYING)

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

- Repeated;
- Intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally;
- Often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

We report all relevant incidents to LBTH and our responses to any bullying are reflected in our Staff Code of Conduct, Behaviour Policy and our E-Safety Policy.

## 35. HOMELESSNESS

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSLs have access to contact details and referral routes in to the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.

### 36. 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. Pupils at Stephen Hawking School would all require considerable advocacy support to enable them to participate in a meaningful way. Therefore, individual cases will be considered and assessed with regards to the appropriateness of such a request. Primary children can be supported using an appropriate guide for 5-11-year olds. The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available and would be used where appropriate.

### 37. CHILDREN WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN PRISON

Children with family members in prison are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders (NICCO) (Barnardo's in partnership with HM Prison and Probation Service) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

### 38. 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.

If staff become aware that a child may be privately fostered, they should alert the DSL. The DSL will then notify the Local Authority to allow checks that the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child. 210.

See DfE statutory guidance 'Children's Act 1989 Private fostering for comprehensive guidance on private fostering' for more details

### 39. YOUNG CARERS

Young carers are children who help to look after a relative with a disability, illness, mental health condition, or drug or alcohol problem. It also involves caring for a brother or sister. It may involve doing jobs around the home such as cooking,

cleaning or helping someone get dressed. It may also involve giving emotional support. Some children start giving care at a very young age and don't necessarily realise they are carers. Other children may become carers overnight. We recognise that the siblings of pupils attending Stephen Hawking School are considered young carers owing the nature of our pupils' disabilities. We offer support to siblings and other family members through the "Saturday Sibling Group", which meets monthly. [currently on hold due to COVID]

It is estimated by the Children's Society that 1 in 5 children are young carers and many are hidden and unidentified. 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 seek information and support from the LBTH Young Carers Program when identifying young carers and refer accordingly: [Young.Carers@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:Young.Carers@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

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#### 40. 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.

#### 41. MODERN SLAVERY

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

Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the National Referral Mechanism is available in the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance.

#### 42. 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) after discussing with SMT and DSL
- report your concern as soon as possible to the DSL, no later than the end of the day
- 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 – CPOMS
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

#### 43. 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.

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.

All staff need to recognise that all children may benefit from Early Help at any point in their childhood, but some children may benefit from Early Help more than others. These are children with known vulnerabilities, which are listed on page 9 of this policy.

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 must refer the child to Children's Social Care.

#### 44. HANDLING DISCLOSURES

When a child discloses that they have been or are being abused including exploitation and neglect, 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.

All staff should reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual

violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

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.

At Stephen Hawking School, all staff are alert to the fact that most of our pupils do not have the capacity to make a disclosure using conventional methods of communication. They are alert to any changes in a child's behaviour, presentation, attendance at school or any other changes, which may cause concern. This is reported to the DSL via our on line recording and reporting system; Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS).

Where possible, the school will notify parents / carers of a disclosure and discuss concerns with them, looking ways to support the situation appropriately with the family's support and consent. However, there are some circumstances where Local Authority protocol requires that we refer a case to social care without notifying the parents first. This is because the disclosure, and/or significant and concerning changes to a child's behaviour or presentation, implies that the child is at immediate risk of significant harm, e.g. a child makes a direct allegation of abuse such a being hit with an implement, has a distinct injury and/or is experiencing pain and/or discomfort and for which no reasonable and consistent explanation is available. The concern must be reported to the MASH/Child Protection Advice Line. If a less distinct injury is noticed or if the child makes a reference to having been physically punished but no injury is evident and no pain/discomfort is reported, the DSL should raise this with parents/carers where possible. If there is a reasonable explanation and there is no pattern of unexplained injuries or other concerns, the incident must still be recorded. All of this is recorded using the school's CPOMS system.

The school will seek advice from the MASH / Child Protection Advice Line about whether or not they should inform parents of a disclosure.



## 45. 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 designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. 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, Deputy DSL or the headteacher.

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 seven golden rules for sharing information. 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.

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 the school's Retention and Destruction Policy.

## 46. 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

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.

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

#### 47. 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.

Appendix 1: MASH Poster

Appendix 2: School Record of Concern Form (if not online)

Appendix 3: MASH Interagency Referral Form

### **Appendix 1**

Tower Hamlets  
Safeguarding  
Children  
Board



# MULTI – AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB (MASH)

**0207 364 3444**  
**/ 5601 / 5606**

direct line 9.00am – 5.00pm weekdays  
(not including public holidays)

Designated  
Safeguarding  
Lead:.....

Date:.....

## Appendix 2

## **CPOMS**

CPOMS is the market leading software solution for monitoring Safeguarding, wellbeing and all pastoral issues.

Gone are the days of extensive paper forms and burdensome filing cabinets and instead staff feel secure in the knowledge that the information they report is shared instantly with the relevant people immediately and securely. As a result of using CPOMS, staff are enabled to focus on teaching and providing support instead of administration.

Senior Leaders can build chronologies around students and produce powerful reports on vulnerable pupil groups for Case Conference Meetings, Governors, OFSTED, ESTYN and ISI at the touch of a button.

CPOMS is currently used by over 10,000 establishments spanning the UK, Ireland, Africa, Asia, Canada, USA and wider Europe.

Initially brought to market in its' infancy in 2011, CPOMS has since evolved into a 4th generation all-encompassing safeguarding solution.

It is driven by a team of specialists with extensive experience in the Education Sector and feedback from our longstanding and loyal customer base.

We passionately believe and have seen in action how CPOMS has revolutionised recording processes within a wide range of settings from Nurseries and Schools to Diocese, Sports Clubs, Independent Schools and FE Colleges.