The LETTA Trust

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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1. LETTA's vision and safeguarding aims

Our vision is that **every child** in **every school** in our Trust:

- loves **learning**, achieves their very best, has fun at school and feels excited about the future
- knows how to make friends and get along well with **people**; to treat them with fairness, compassion and respect
- grows **healthy** and strong, believes in themselves and has the confidence and resilience to follow their dreams
- feels part of their **community**, proud of their school and inspired to make a positive difference in the world

Every LETTA Trust school aims to ensure that its pupils are safe and happy. As such we fully recognise our child protection duty to ensure that:

- we take swift and appropriate action to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- our staff are all fully aware of their statutory responsibilities in respect to safeguarding and are well trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding concerns
- our pupils are well equipped with the skills needed to keep themselves safe
- we provide a safe environment in which children can learn and develop

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026), and the Academy Trust Governance Guide. We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners. This policy is also underpinned by the following legislation:

- part 3 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school
- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- Statutory Guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and The Crime and Policing Act 2026), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children."
- 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

- The Human Rights Act 1998 which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)
- The Equality Act 2010 which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and Childcare Act 2006, which set out who is disqualified from working with children
- the Data Protection Act 2018, Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 and the UK GDPR
- the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
- our funding agreements and articles of association
- Operation Encompass statutory guidance, which explains that the police must notify any relevant education establishment of any incidents involving domestic abuse
- locally agreed multi-agency procedures that have been put in place by the 3 safeguarding partners:
    - London Child Protection Procedures revised 7th Edition (London Safeguarding Children Board, updated 2024)
    - Tower Hamlets SCP Multi-Agency Safeguarding Thresholds Guidance
    - 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 Child Protection Procedures - September 2023
    - Tower Hamlets SCP Supplementary Guidance for Schools and Education Settings on Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff – September 2023

3. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical 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
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.

Neglect is a form of abuse and is 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. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

Making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes (Including those generated by AI): is where children share nude or semi-nude images, such as photographs, videos or live streams. This also includes images that are digitally altered or wholly AI-generated (sometimes called 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes') that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video. The sharing of nude or semi-nude images requires a safeguarding response whether they are consensual or non-consensual.

Children include everyone under the age of 18 or 25 if a care leaver.

The following 3 **safeguarding partners** are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- the local authority (LA)
- integrated care boards for an area within the LA
- the chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim, or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

Alleged perpetrator(s) and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

4. Equality statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, both online and offline, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face. We give special consideration to children who:

- have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or health conditions (see section 10)
- are young carers
- may experience discrimination due to their race, age, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- are pregnant or in receipt of paternity/maternity leave
- are married or in a civil partnership
- have English as an additional language
- are privately fostered
- are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- are asylum seekers
- are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- are looked after or previously looked after (see section 12)
- are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions
- whose parent or carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated
- have a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- are children accessing alternative provision

5. Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, Trustees and members of the Local Governing Boards. Our policy and procedures also apply to clubs and off-site activities.

Our schools play a crucial role in preventative education. This is in the context of a whole-school approach to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain, and a culture of zero tolerance of racism, sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and sexual violence/harassment. This will be underpinned by our:

- behaviour policy
- pastoral support system
- planned programme of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE)

5.1 All staff

- read and understand at least part 1 of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026), in full, and review this guidance at least annually
- sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance and understand it

- reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents. This includes making parents aware of what we ask children to do online
- provide a safe space for pupils to speak out and share their concerns

All staff understand:

- our systems which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff code of conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and the deputies (DDSLs), the behaviour policy, the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education and the online safety policy which includes the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring
- the early help assessment process and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment
- the process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
- at a basic level, the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially Section 17 (S17) and section 47 (S47) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments
- what to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- the signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM and radicalisation
- the importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- the fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online
- the fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children
- what to look for to identify children who need help or protection
- the process for community-based Family Help assessments
- the safeguarding risks associated with the consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos (including AI-generated material/deepfakes)

Section 15 and appendix 4 of this policy outline in more detail how staff are supported to do this.

5.2 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

See appendix 6 for the name and contact information of the DSL and DDSLs and other key safeguarding contacts in school. The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school. This includes online safety, and understanding our filtering and monitoring processes on school devices and school networks to keep pupils safe online.

During term time, the DSL is available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Out of school hours staff can contact the DSL by email and log concerns on CPOMS

(individual schools may use an alternative system where applicable). In an emergency staff contact MASH or the police.

When the DSL is absent, the deputies act as cover. If the DSL and deputies are not available, the most senior member of staff will act as cover. There is a DSL for Saturday School and Holiday Club.

The DSL and Deputies are responsible for following the guidance as laid out in Annex C of KCSIE 2026. The DSL has the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and support other staff to do so
- contribute to the assessment of children
- refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly

The DSL will also:

- keep the headteacher informed of any issues
- liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate
- discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children's social care colleagues to prepare the school's policies
- be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support
- be aware of the role of, and ensure that pupils are supported by, an appropriate adult in accordance with statutory requirements in the case of a police investigation or search.

The DSL takes the lead on supporting pupils during standard and non-standard transition points and ensuring that relevant information for the safeguarding of these children is shared. This includes ensuring that safeguarding files are sent separate from the main pupil file to the new school within the first 5 days of the child starting there and that appropriate follow-up is done if the school is not receiving safeguarding information from the previous school the child attended.

If the school has not received the safeguarding records for new pupils within the first 5 days of the pupil starting during standard and non-standard transition points, then the school will proactively reach out to the previous school for the transfer of safeguarding files.

The responsibilities of the DSL and DDSLs are set out in job descriptions.

5.3 Those in governance roles

All those in governance roles read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety. They are aware of obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our schools' local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

The Trust Board:

- ensures there is a trust-wide approach to safeguarding and that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development
- approves this policy annually, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the CEO to account for its implementation
- checks that the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards, are in place in our schools
- ensure that reviews are carried out by the LT member responsible for filtering and monitoring, with the support of the DSL and IT team
- review the Department of Education Cyber Security standards for Schools and Colleges and ensure that what needs to be done to meet this standard has been implemented

The local governing board:

- facilitates a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of the work of the school
- appoints a link governor to monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding at the school in conjunction with the full local governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL

Legal and statutory duties of those in governance
In order to fulfil their safeguarding and governance responsibilities, all governors must ensure they fully understand and comply with the following statutory obligations:

- Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED): Governors must be familiar with and act in accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026*, which outline duties related to equality, discrimination, and the rights of children and staff

- Data Protection Act 2018, Data (use and access) act and UK GDPR: Governors must understand their responsibilities to process and store personal data lawfully, fairly, and securely. All governors must read and adhere to the requirements set out in *KCSIE 2026*

The CEO makes sure that:

- the DSLs have the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job
- all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, and that such training is regularly updated and is in line with advice from the safeguarding partners
- make sure staff understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training
- online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies
- make sure the DSLs takes lead responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems in place as part of their role
- schools have procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors). Appendix 3 of this policy covers this procedure

- that this policy reflects that children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised
- headteachers implement this policy effectively in their schools

Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll):

- seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed
- make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate
- make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply

The CEO or Chair of the Local Governing Board acts as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher (see appendix 3). The CEO will decide whether the threshold is met to refer the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Where required, the CEO will liaise directly with the LADO in line with statutory guidance.
If an allegation is made against the CEO, the Chair of the Trust Board will act as 'case manager'. Section 15 of this policy has information on how Trustees and governors are supported to fulfil their role.

5.4 The headteacher
The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:
    - are informed of systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
    - understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect
- communicating this policy to parents and carers when their child joins the school and via the school website
- ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
- ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training including online safety, and updating the content of the training regularly
- acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see appendix 3)
- making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this
- ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met in any Nursery or 2 year old classes
- making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person
- when the school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the headteacher will continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and will take action to be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs
- overseeing the safe use of technology including AI, mobile phones and cameras in the setting

5.5 Virtual school heads

There is a local authority Virtual School Head who has a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of pupils with a social worker. They work with DSLs, SENCOs and social workers.

Virtual School Heads also have a non-statutory responsibility to promote the educational achievement of children in kinship care (children who live with a relative or close family friend).

6. Confidentiality

The government's information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in section 14, and allegations of abuse against staff in appendix 3. See also the Information Governance Policy. You will need to break confidentiality if, at any time, the health or safety of the person seeking help or any other person is at risk, for example:

- there is a disclosure or evidence of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect
- suicide is threatened or attempted
- there is disclosure or evidence of self-harm including drug or alcohol misuse
- there is evidence of mental illness
- someone is receiving threats of violence or theft from peers

What to do if confidentiality needs to be broken:

- inform the person seeking your help about the need to break confidentiality
- explain that you have to pass on what you have heard to the DSL and let them know they can come with you to speak to the DSL
- discuss the concern with the DSL immediately, preferably with the person's consent but make sure you do so even without consent
- the DSL will decide what action is needed and who needs to be informed. They will keep a written record of all action taken. Discuss with the person seeking help any action taken
- you may be able to continue to support him or her if you and the DSL think it appropriate
- if you are unsure as to whether to break confidentiality, speak to the DSL. You do not have to give names but can explain the situation to check things through

You should note that:

- timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding
- Information must be shared on a 'need-to-know' basis, but you do not need consent to share information if a child is suffering, or at risk of, serious harm
- You must never promise a child that you will not tell anyone about an allegation, this is not be in their best interests
- 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

- the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018, Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 and UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe
- if staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or if to gain consent would place a child at risk

If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:

- there's no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies
- the DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children
- the DSL should consider that:
    - parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
    - the basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care
    - rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains

Regarding anonymity, all staff will:

- be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system
- do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved
- consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities

The government's information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information
If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL (or deputy)
Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in section 14, and allegations of abuse against staff in appendix 3

7. Recognising abuse and taking action

All staff are expected to be able to identify and recognise all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation and shall be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled

- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education health and care plan)
- is a young carer
- is bereaved
- is showing signs of being drawn into antisocial or criminal behaviour, including being affected by gangs and county lines and organised crime groups and/or serious violence, including knife crime
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online
- 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
- is suffering from mental ill health
- has returned home to their family from care
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as female genital mutilation or forced marriage
- is a privately fostered child
- has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending
- is missing education, or persistently absent from school, or not in receipt of full-time education
- has experienced multiple suspensions and is at risk of, or has been permanently excluded

Staff, volunteers and those in governance must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

NB: In this and subsequent sections, you should take any references to the DSL to mean "the DSL (or deputy DSL)".

7.1 If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger

Make a referral to children's social care and/or the police **immediately** if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger. **Anyone can make a referral.** The following link to the GOV.UK webpage is for reporting child abuse to your local council: Report child abuse to a local council - GOV.UK

Tell the DSL (see section 5.2) as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

7.2 If a child makes a disclosure to you

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

- listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret

- write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it
- sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly (see 7.1), and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so.

The following information may be useful to record:

- behaviour or emotional state and any changes
- relationship with other children and staff
- attendance
- appearance and dress, particularly if there are concerns about neglect
- any comments, drawings or accounts of family life or parental behaviour
- any injuries or marks to the body, showing location, date and explanations for the injury. Any unexplained injury should be discussed with the designated teacher
- records should be stored securely and separately from the child's academic records

When you report suspected abuse the DSL or social worker will need to know:

- what your concern is
- how and why your concerns have arisen. What you have seen or heard to make you believe the child is at risk from abuse
- if anyone else shares your concern or has other concerns
- the child's name, age, ethnicity, gender and any disability or special needs
- i f any other agencies or professionals are involved with the child
- f you have discussed your concerns with parents and how they responded
- what the child wants to happen next (if they have confided that to you)

Bear in mind that some children may:

- not feel ready, or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected
- not recognise their experiences as harmful
- feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers

None of this should stop you from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL if you have concerns about a child.

7.3 If you discover that FGM has taken place or a pupil is at risk of FGM
Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs".
FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.
Possible indicators that a pupil has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a pupil may be at risk, are set out in appendix 4 of this policy.

Any teacher who either:

- is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth

Must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a mandatory statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it. Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.

Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a **pupil under 18** must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff must not examine pupils if FGM is suspected.

Any member of staff who suspects a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out must speak to the DSL.

7.4 If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger)
Figure 1 below, before section 7.7, illustrates the procedure to follow if you have any concerns about a child's welfare.Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Share details of any actions you take with the DSL as soon as practically possible.

Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' below). Share any action taken with the DSL as soon as possible.

Early help assessment
If early help is appropriate, the DSL will lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. We will discuss and agree, with statutory safeguarding partners, levels for the different types of assessment, as part of local arrangements.

The DSL will keep the case under constant review and the school will consider a referral to local authority children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.

For Early Help advice contact Tower Hamlets Early Help Hub on 020 7364 5006 - choose Option 2

Referral

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children's social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so. If you make a referral directly (see section 7.1), you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

The local authority will make a decision within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow 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 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.

LBTH Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub: 020 7364 5006 (Option 3) 020 7364 5601/5606
Child Protection Advice Line: 020 7364 3444

7.5 If you have concerns about extremism
If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children's social care. Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' above). Inform the DSL or deputy as soon as practically possible after the referral.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include the police or Channel, the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of becoming involved with or supporting terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- think someone is in immediate danger
- think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- see or hear something that may be terrorist-related

7.6 If you have a concern about mental health
Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. However, staff will be alert to behavioural signs including significant changes in behaviour,

ongoing difficulty sleeping, withdrawing from social situations, not wanting to do things they usually like, and physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves.

Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

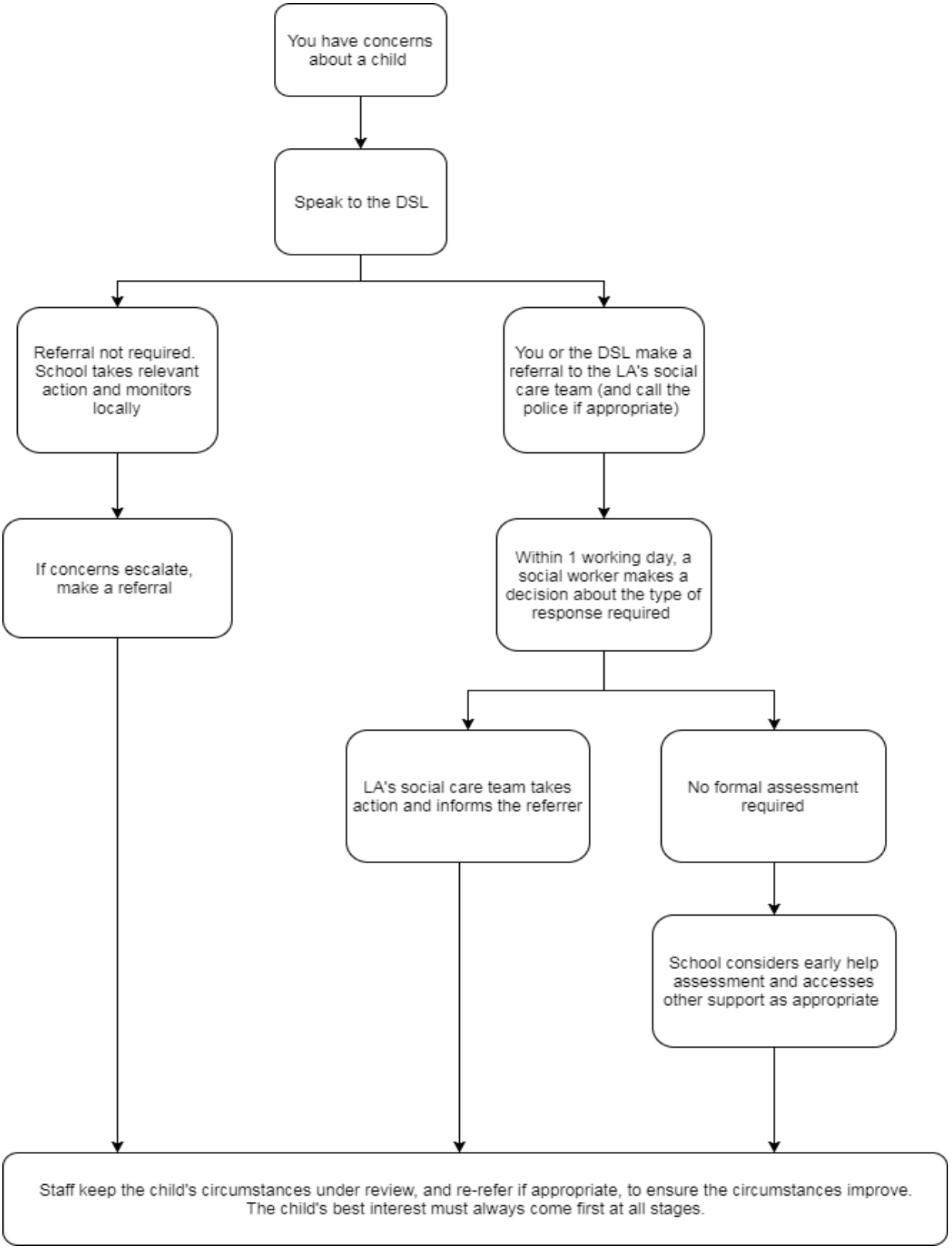
Staff are alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action by following the steps in section 7.4.

If you have a mental health concern that is **not** also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree on a course of action. See also the Department for Education guidance on mental health and behaviour in schools for more information.

Figure 1: procedure if you have concerns about a child's welfare (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger)

(Note – if the DSL is unavailable, this should not delay action. See section 7.4 for what to do.)



7.7 Concerns about a staff member, trainee teacher, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor
If you have concerns about a member of staff (including a trainee teacher, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the headteacher as soon as possible. If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, speak to the CEO or the Chair of the Local Governing Board. The headteacher, CEO or Chair of the Local Governing Board will then follow the procedures set out in appendix 3, if appropriate.

Where you believe there is a conflict of interest in reporting a concern or allegation about a member of staff (including a trainee teacher, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) to the headteacher, report it directly to the CEO, Chair of the Local Governing Board or the local authority designated officer (LADO).

If you receive an allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organisation was using the school premises for running an activity for children, follow our school safeguarding policies and procedures, informing the LADO, as you would with any safeguarding allegation.

Where appropriate, the school will inform Ofsted of the allegation and actions taken, within the necessary timescale (see appendix 3 for more detail).

Any concerns or allegations made against a member of a Local Governing Board, a Trustee, or a Member of the Trust must be escalated in line with the procedures outlined in Appendix 3 of this policy.

7.8 Allegations of abuse made against other pupils
We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up', as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for pupils.

We also recognise that boys and girls have different experiences of child-on-child abuse. All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and is taken seriously. Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school's behaviour and anti-bullying policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- could put pupils in the school at risk
- is violent
- involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos, including the making or sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos (including AI-generated material and deepfakes)
- involves harmful sexual behaviour or attitudes linked to misogyny, misandry or the normalisation of inappropriate behaviour
- involves harmful online content, including extreme misogynistic or misandrist views or content promoted by online influencers, where this may indicate a safeguarding concern

- involves behaviour that causes concern about the safety or wellbeing of the pupil or other pupils.

Procedures for dealing with allegations of child-on-child abuse
If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do **not** investigate it
- the DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- the DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed
- the DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate

Creating a supportive environment in school and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse
We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, and of creating a supportive environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents.
To achieve this, we will:

- challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images
- be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems (as described in section 7.10 below)
- ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously
- be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners
- support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed
- consider intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment
- ensure staff are trained to understand:
    - how to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports
    - that even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of "it could happen here"
    - that if they have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:
        - children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to

        - a friend may make a report
        - a member of staff may overhear a conversation
        - a child's behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
    - that certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation
    - that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy
    - the important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it
    - that they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns
    - that social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side

The DSL takes the lead role in organising disciplinary action and support for the perpetrator(s). Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations are going on, e.g. by the police. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident doesn't (in itself) prevent our school from coming to its own conclusion about what happened and imposing a penalty accordingly. We consider these matters on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether:

- taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution – we liaise with the police and/or LA children's social care to determine this
- there are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing

7.9 Self-generated intimate images and/or videos
This approach is based on guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety.

Your responsibilities when responding to an incident
If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual making or sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos (including AI-generated material and deepfakes), you must report it to the DSL immediately

You must **not**:

- view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL)
- delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it
- ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility)
- share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers
- say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved

You should explain that you need to report the incident, and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

Initial review meeting

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff – this may include the staff member who reported the incident and the safeguarding or leadership team that deals with safeguarding concerns. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

- whether there is an immediate risk to pupil(s)
- if a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care
- if it is necessary to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed)
- what further information is required to decide on the best response
- whether the image(s) has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown)
- whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services
- any relevant facts about the pupils involved which would influence risk assessment
- if there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual
- whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved (in most cases parents/carers should be involved)

The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children's social care if:

- the incident involves an adult
- there is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example owing to special educational needs)
- what the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
- the imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the images or videos is under 13
- the DSL has reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the making or sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming)

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy.

Further review by the DSL
If at the initial review stage a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks.
They will hold interviews with the pupils involved (if appropriate).
If at any point in the process there is a concern that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

Informing parents and carers
The DSL will inform parents and carers at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the pupil at risk of harm.

Referring to the police
If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done by dialling 101.

Recording incidents
All incidents of making or sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be securely recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in Section 16 of this policy also apply to recording these incidents.

Curriculum coverage
In Y6 Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding self-generated intimate images and/or videos as part of our computing curriculum. Teaching covers the following in relation to self-generated intimate images and/or videos:

- what it is
- how it is most likely to be encountered
- the consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment
- issues of legality
- the risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation

Pupils also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:

- specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images
- the receipt of such images

Teaching follows best practice in delivering safe and effective education, including:

- putting safeguarding first
- approaching from the perspective of the child
- promoting dialogue and understanding
- empowering and enabling children and young people
- never frightening or scare-mongering
- challenging victim-blaming attitudes

7.10 Reporting systems for our pupils
Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the child's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. We recognise the importance of ensuring pupils feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns or allegations. To achieve this, we:

- build trusting relationship with the pupils in our care so there is always an adult a child feels they can talk to
- put systems in place for pupils to confidently report abuse
- ensure our reporting systems are easily accessible for pupils
- make it clear to pupils that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback

7.11 Child protection conferences

If a Child Protection Conference is called following an investigation it is essential that the school is represented by someone who has informed knowledge of the child. This would normally be the DSL or the child's teacher. It may be appropriate for other staff involved with the child in the school to attend but this should only be on a need to attend basis.

Parents will usually be invited to attend Child Protection Conferences and will have access to any written report. If a member of staff has information that they feel unable to share with the parents or carers, they should contact the chair of the conference prior to the meeting.

7.12 Monitoring children subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP)

If at the Child Protection Conference it is decided that a child is at risk of significant harm then the child will be made the subject of a Child Protection Plan (CPP). The school will be officially notified and given the name of the key worker who will be a Social Worker from the Local Authority in which the child lives.

It is particularly important to keep a careful watch on the attendance and well-being of pupils who are the subject of CPPs. The key worker must be notified as soon as attendance breaks down or if there are other concerns as discussed and agreed at the Child Protection Conference and specified in the Child Protection Plan. There must be close and continuous liaison with the key worker, which may include attendance at core group and other meetings.

Even when a child is the subject of a CPP and/or the case is open to an allocated social worker any new or additional concerns about the child's well being must be reported to the Child Protection Advice Line.

7.13 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 THSCP Multi-Agency Escalation and Resolution Policy the DSL will first make contact in writing 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. It is important that the DSL at each point of escalation puts the concerns in writing.

7.14 Safeguarding implications of restrictive physical intervention and police searches (including strip searches)

Restrictive physical intervention

In line with the LETTA Trust's restrictive physical intervention policies, staff may only use reasonable force as a last resort where necessary to prevent a pupil from injuring themselves or others, committing an offence or causing serious damage. Staff must recognise the potential impact of physical intervention on pupils and ensure the pupil's wellbeing is considered and reviewed following any incident.

Prohibition of staff-led strip searches

School staff must never conduct a strip search of a pupil. Under no circumstances must any member of staff carry out a search that involves the removal of more than outer clothing (such as a coat, jacket, or gloves). A strip search can only be conducted by a police officer, and must follow relevant statutory guidance, police codes of practice (such as PACE Code C), and safeguarding requirements

School duty of care and the appropriate adult role
Where the police conduct a strip search of a pupil on school premises, the school retains its duty of care towards the pupil. The school will ensure that the pupil is supported by an appropriate adult throughout the process in accordance with statutory requirements. This adult will advocate for the pupil, support their dignity and emotional well-being, and ensure correct legal procedures are followed. Parents or carers must be informed immediately, unless there is an exceptional safeguarding reason not to do so.

8. Online safety and the use of mobile technology

In accordance with the Department for Education's guidance, Mobile Phones in Schools (February 2024), the use of mobile/smart phones throughout the school day or when in contact with pupils is prohibited. Please refer also to the Online Safety Policy policy that includes information about using mobile phones and personal devices in school and the EYFS Policy.

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. To address this, we:

- have robust processes in place, including filtering and monitoring systems, to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors
- protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
- set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
- establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

The 4 key categories of risk
Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

1. **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism
2. **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as child-on child pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
3. **Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying
4. **Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

To address the risks above we:

- educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:
    - the safe use of social media, the internet and technology
    - keeping personal information private
    - how to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
    - how to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than a victim
- train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, the risks of online radicalisation, and the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring. All staff members will receive refresher training as required and at least once each academic year
- educate parents and carers about online safety via our website, workshops and communications sent directly to them.
- make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:
    - staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present
    - staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras
- make all pupils, parents and carers, staff, volunteers and visitors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's IT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology
- explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones
- make sure all staff, pupils and parents and carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation
- put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems
- carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community
- provide regular safeguarding and children protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, in order to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively
- review the child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly

This section summarises our approach to online safety and mobile phone use. For comprehensive details about our school's policy on online safety and the use of mobile phones.

8.1 Artificial intelligence (AI)

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.

At LETTA we recognise that AI has many uses, including enhancing teaching and learning, and in helping to protect and safeguard pupils. However, AI may also have the potential to facilitate abuse (e.g. bullying and grooming) and expose pupils to harmful content. For example, in the form of

'deep fakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real. Generative Artificial Intelligence is being misused to create sexualised images and videos of children especially girls. We will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully pupils in line with this policy and our anti-bullying policy. Staff should be aware of the risks of using AI tools whilst they are still being developed and should carry out risk assessments for any new AI tool being used by the school.

9. Notifying parents or carers

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents or carers. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure. Other staff will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

If we believe that notifying the parents or carers would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. We will work with the police and/or local authority children's social care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent. The DSL will, along with any relevant agencies (this will be decided on a case-by-case basis):

- meet with the victim's parents or carers, with the victim, to discuss what's being put in place to safeguard them, and understand their wishes in terms of what support they may need and how the report will be progressed
- meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss support for them, and what's being put in place that will impact them, e.g. moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) behind any decision(s)

10. Pupils with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues

We recognise that pupils with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Children with disabilities are more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group, including:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration
- pupils being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other pupils
- the potential for pupils with SEN, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges, which includes the risk that they do not understand that what is happening to them is abuse
- cognitive understanding such as being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in school or the consequences of doing so

We offer extra pastoral support for these pupils from members of the Inclusion Team. Any abuse involving pupils with SEND involves both the DSL (or deputy DSL) and the SENCO.

11. Pupils with medical conditions

An incident relating to the management of a child's medical condition (including allergies) does not itself warrant a referral to local safeguarding partners.

A safeguarding referral will be made where an incident highlights concern that the child might be at an increased risk of being neglected, abused or exploited by persons inside or outside of their family because of their medical condition. For example, information about the child's medical condition might be withheld from the school, or the child may be repeatedly sent to school without essential medication, putting them at risk.

12. Young carers

The Trust recognises that caring responsibilities can impact on a child's attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing, and early identification is essential to ensure young carers receive support at the right time and by the appropriate services including additional support from external partners, or local authority and health service.

13. Pupils with a social worker

Pupils may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children. Where we are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:

- responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks
- the provision of pastoral and/or academic support

14. Looked-after and previously looked-after children

We ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. In particular, we will ensure that:

- appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
- the DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads

The Inclusion Leader is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with statutory guidance. The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant experience to perform the role. As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

- work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
- work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how pupil premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans

15. Pupils who are lesbian, gay or bisexual

The Trust recognises that a child being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself a risk factor for harm. However, pupils who are (or who are perceived by other children to be) lesbian, gay, or bisexual can sometimes be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying

We recognise that these pupils who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB) can be targeted by other children. See our behaviour and anti-bullying policy for more detail on how we prevent all forms of bullying. We also recognise that LGB children are more likely to experience poor mental health. Any concerns of this kind must be reported to the DSL.

16. Pupils who are gender questioning

We are aware of the potential vulnerabilities of children who are questioning their gender, including the possibility of complex mental health and psychosocial needs, such as relating to relationships with family, peers or their broader social environment.

We will take a strong, proactive stance on all forms of bullying based on gender. See our behaviour policy for more detail. Schools will ensure that children and their families are aware that, while the Trust will appropriately sanction any cases of bullying or harassment and take a strong stand against bullying, it must also be conscious of the rights of pupils and staff in relation to their religion or belief.

When supporting a pupil questioning their gender, we will take into account the principle of taking a careful approach. The DSL will lead in these cases.

16.1 Involving parents in cases of pupils questioning their gender

Where a child who is questioning their gender asks for support from the school, we will engage parents as a matter of priority. However, in the rare circumstances where involving parents might put

a pupil at greater risk than not involving them, the DSL will determine a course of action needed to safeguard the child before contacting parents or any decisions are taken.

Where a child confides in a member of staff about their feelings but does not ask the school to make changes to how they are treated, the school will only break any confidence if there is a related safeguarding risk.

16.2 Considering requests for support with social transition

The school will not initiate any action regarding social transition. However, when a pupil or their parent requests that the school makes changes or puts support in place to facilitate the pupil presenting as the opposite biological sex ("social transition"), we will work together with parents to determine what is in the best interests of the child and other children.

Members of staff will not adopt any changes relating to social transition unless a decision has been made by the Headteacher and a child's parents have been involved (as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026).

In making decisions about supporting social transition, the school will ensure compliance with its obligations in respect of safeguarding legislation and equality and human rights law, ensuring that any assessment of discrimination is informed by the school's evaluation of the welfare and best interests of the child and other children. We will make decisions in line with the following principles:

- The first step when considering a child's request for support with social transition will be to consider what is in the best interests of the child and other children. A decision relating to social transition may not be the same as a child's wishes
- Except in the rare circumstances where involving parents or carers would constitute a greater risk to the child, parents/carers will be engaged as a matter of priority and their views will carry great weight and be properly considered
- Social transition is an active intervention that may have significant effects on the child in terms of their psychological functioning and longer-term outcomes, so the school will take a highly cautious approach
- The school will comply with obligations under the Equality Act and Human Rights Act when considering requests for support with social transition

The school will ensure that the decision-making process is documented and records are kept. The circumstances or needs of a child may change over time, and the school may need to review its original decision and will involve the DSL in doing so.

16.3 Rules on single-sex spaces

Pupils are not allowed into toilets, changing rooms, or showers designated for the opposite biological sex, with no exceptions.

16.4 Rules on single-sex sports

Schools within the LETTA Trust may teach and play some sports or games, or activities of a competitive nature, in single-sex groups where the physical strength, stamina or physique of the average girl would put her at a disadvantage in competition with the average boy (or vice versa). The school can separate children according to their biological sex in these circumstances. Some sports may need to be played in single-sex groups from a certain age to ensure children's safety.

Where single-sex sports are implemented for safety reasons, there are no exceptions and pupils must not be allowed to participate in sports designed for the opposite sex.

17. Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies

17.1 Complaints against staff

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff.

17.2 Other complaints

Please refer to the LETTA Trust Complaints Policy

17.3 Whistle-blowing

Please refer to the LETTA Trust Whistleblowing policy

18. Record keeping

We hold records in line with our records retention schedule.

All safeguarding concerns are recorded on CPOMS (individual schools may use an alternative system where applicable). This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as local authority children's social care or the Prevent programme. If in any doubt about whether to record something or how, discuss it with the DSL. Records will include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome

Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child. Any non-confidential records will be readily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the school.

If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded as soon as possible, securely, and separately from the main pupil file.

To allow the new school/college to have support in place when the child arrives, this should be within:

- **5 days** for an in-year transfer, or within
- **the first 5 days** of the start of a new term

In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

Where safeguarding information is stored electronically and online, the school has cybersecurity measures in place, which meets the Department for Education's Cybersecurity Standards, to ensure the data is safe and not vulnerable to evolving cyber-crime.

Local safeguarding procedures and record keeping
The Tower Hamlets Early Help Assessment (eHA) form should be used for the purpose of recording information on concerns about the wellbeing of a child. This offers the benefit of the eHA Form being already in process if a decision is subsequently reached that an assessment on the child should be completed on the eHA Form. Forms are completed online Enquiry for Early Help - Tower Hamlets - Your role - forms

When a child joins the school and full records have been requested and not received then the Attendance and Welfare Service (AWS) should be notified. The AWS will support your efforts to obtain the records and will also in turn notify the Specialist Attendance and Welfare Advisor (AWA) for Children Missing Education. Similarly, where a pupil moves to another school or local authority area and no request for records is received then a referral should be made to the AWS for follow-up. Full records of actions taken are kept in relation to cases where pupils change school. These records are used for reference if any issues subsequently arise in relation to the whereabouts of the child and the steps taken by the school at the time when the child moved.

Records related to concerns about the wellbeing of a child should be sent separately from the academic records in a sealed envelope marked private and confidential to the DSL at the receiving school. A full copy of these particular records should always be retained by the sending school and kept locked in a secure location in the event of a query being received at a future date. In addition:

- appendix 2 sets out our policy on record-keeping specifically with respect to recruitment and pre-appointment checks
- appendix 3 sets out our policy on record-keeping with respect to allegations of abuse made against staff

19. Training

19.1 All staff
All staff members undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including on whistle-blowing procedures and online safety, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse, exploitation or neglect. This training is regularly updated and is:

- integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning
- in line with advice from the 3 safeguarding partners
- include online safety, including an understanding of the expectations, roles and responsibilities for staff around filtering and monitoring

- in line with the Teachers' Standards to support the expectation that all teachers:
    - manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment
    - have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils

All staff have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of becoming involved with or supporting terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. Staff also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including on online safety, as required but at least annually (for example, through emails and staff meetings). Additionally, we ensure that our training includes a focus on relevant aspects of Section 3 of the EYFS Framework, including relevant content for children aged 0-5, at least biennially and then additionally whenever EYFS statutory guidance is updated.

Contractors who are provided through a private finance initiative (PFI) or similar contract also receive safeguarding training. Volunteers receive appropriate training on induction.

19.2 The DSL and DDSLs
The DSL and DDSLs undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years. In addition, they update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments). They also undertake Prevent awareness training.

19.3 Those in governance roles
All Trustees and members of the local governing boards receive training about safeguarding and child protection at induction, which is regularly updated. This is to make sure that they:

- have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge
- can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding

19.4 Recruitment interview panels
At least one person conducting any interview for any post at the school has undertaken safer recruitment training. This covers, as a minimum, the contents of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and is in line with local safeguarding procedures. See appendix 2 of this policy for more information about our safer recruitment procedures.

19.5 Staff who have contact with pupils and families
All staff who have contact with children and families have 1-1 meetings weekly with their line manager to provide them with support, coaching and training and allow for confidential discussions of sensitive issues.

20. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the CEO in consultation with HTs and DSLs. Compliance will be assured through the above mentioned staff.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Trust Board and then shared with HTs.

21. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour and anti-bullying policy
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Health and safety policy
- Attendance policy
- Online safety including mobile phone use and IT acceptable use policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Relationships and health education policy
- Medical needs policy
- First aid policy
- Curriculum policy
- Educational visits policy
- Remote learning and communication with families policy
- Inclusion policy including looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Information governance policy

These appendices are based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

Appendix 1: Types of abuse

Abuse, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

Physical abuse 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.

Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone. Emotional abuse 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
- not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- 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 participating in normal social interaction
- seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation
- verbal abuse such as criticism, belittling, or name-calling or corruption of children

Sexual abuse 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 penetration with an object or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing
- 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 (including via the internet)

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect is 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 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)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Appendix 2: Safer recruitment and DBS checks - policy and procedures

Recruitment and selection process

To make sure we recruit suitable people, we ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training. We put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Advertising

When advertising roles, we make clear:

- our school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- that safeguarding checks are undertaken
- the safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role involves contact with children
- whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account

Application forms

Our application forms:

- include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)
- include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders

Shortlisting

Our shortlisting process involves at least 2 people and:

- considers any inconsistencies and gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- explores all potential concerns

Once we have shortlisted candidates, we ask shortlisted candidates to:

- complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we ask for includes:
    - if they have a criminal history
    - whether they are included on the barred list
    - whether they are prohibited from teaching
    - information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
    - any relevant overseas information
- sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true

We will carry out an online search on all shortlisted candidates as part of our due diligence and safer recruitment processes to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online. Candidates will be informed of this check in their application packs and/or shortlisting communications.

Seeking references and checking employment history
We obtain references before the interview. Any concerns raised are explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview. When seeking references we:

- don't accept open references
- liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher or principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations
- obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed
- secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children
- compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate
- resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed
- ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source

Interview and selection
When interviewing candidates, we:

- probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this
- explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children
- record all information considered and decisions made

Pre-appointment vetting checks
We will record information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below. In addition to these checks, we also carry out an online search and check that any ID documents are genuine. Furthermore, we check that candidates taking up a management position (including headteachers, principals, and deputy/assistant headteachers) are not subject to a prohibition from management (Section 128) direction made by the Secretary of State

New staff
All offers of appointment are conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, we:

- verify their identity

- obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken
- obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. These could include, where available:
    - for all staff, including teaching positions: criminal records checks for overseas applicants
    - for teaching positions: obtaining a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to teach
- check that candidates taking up a management position* are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state. Management positions are most likely to include, but are not limited to, headteachers, principals, deputy and assistant headteachers.
- we ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. When we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought
- where an individual has worked in a post in a school or college that brought them into regular contact with children or young persons which ended not more than three months prior to their appointment

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

Existing staff

In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:

- there are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children
- an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is
- there has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- we believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct; or
- we believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009; or
- we believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- the individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

Agency and third-party staff
We obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors
We ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:

- an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- an enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors. We do not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances. We check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, we ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Trainee teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we ensure that all necessary checks are carried out. Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children. In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

Volunteers
We:

- never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment
- ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought

Those in governance roles
All Members, Trustees and members of the Local Governing Boards have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information so they can work in regulated activity. The Chair of the Trust Board will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state. All Members, Trustees and members of the local governing boards also have the following checks:

- section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008)
- identity
- right to work in the UK
- other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

Staff working in alternative provision settings
When we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we obtain written confirmation from the provider that they have carried out the appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working there that we would otherwise perform.

Adults who supervise pupils on work experience
When organising work experience, we ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm. We also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

External Speakers

We encourage the use of external agencies or speakers in our schools to enrich the experiences of pupils. We vet those external agencies, individuals or speakers who we engage to provide such learning opportunities or experiences to ensure that we do not unwittingly use agencies with messages that are inconsistent with, or are in complete opposition to, the Trust's values and ethos.

All External Agencies and Speakers are asked to read the External Speakers' Agreement, at the point of booking.

Appendix 3: allegations of abuse against staff including concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

Section 1: allegations that may meet the harms threshold

LBTH Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): Melanie Benzie
Email: Melanie.Benzie@towerhamlets.gov.uk or LADO@towerhamlets.gov.uk
Telephone: 0207364 0677

This section is based on 'Section 1: Allegations that may meet the harms threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

See link for local advice from the 3 safeguarding partners re managing allegations against staff.
THSCP Supplementary Managing Allegation Guidance

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place both inside and outside of school

If we're in any doubt as to whether a concern meets the harm threshold, we consult our local authority designated officer (LADO).

We deal with any allegation of abuse quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' leads any investigation. This is the headteacher, or the CEO or Chair of the Local Governing Board where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation. The case manager will be identified at the earliest opportunity.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.
If we receive an allegation of an incident happening while an individual or organisation was using the school premises to run activities for children, we will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures and inform our LADO.

Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved
Suspension of the accused is not the default position, and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that there might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative. Based on an assessment of risk, we consider alternatives such as:

- redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned
- providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children
- redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children
- moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents/carers have been consulted
- temporarily redeploying the individual to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school or other work for the academy trust

If in doubt, the case manager will seek views from the school's personnel adviser and the designated officer at the local authority, as well as the police and children's social care where they have been involved.

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive, or to cause harm to the subject of the allegation
False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)
Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

Procedure for dealing with allegations
In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the case manager will take the following steps:

- conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below
- discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether

alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate

- where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to children's social care
- **if immediate suspension is considered necessary**, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details
- **if it is decided that no further action is to be taken** in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation
- **if it is decided that further action is needed**, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate
- provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case, signposting them to the Employee Assistance programme and considering what other support is appropriate
- inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice
- keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child – no information will be shared regarding the staff member)
- make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child

We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations. This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the school will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

Additional considerations for supply teachers and all contracted staff
If there are concerns or an allegation is made against someone not directly employed by the school, such as a supply teacher or contracted staff member provided by an agency, we will take the actions below in addition to our standard procedures:

- we will not decide to stop using an individual due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our LADO to determine a suitable outcome
- the headteacher will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual, or redeploy them to another part of the school, while the school carries out the investigation
- we will involve the agency fully, but the school will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the LADO as required
- we will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary)

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

Allegations made against a member of the Local Governing Board, Trustee, or Member
Allegations against a member of the Local Governing Board (other than the Chair) must be reported immediately to the Chair of that school's Local Governing Board, who will act as the Case Manager and consult with the LADO. The CEO (Jo Franklin) must also be informed.

Allegations against the Chair of a Local Governing Board or a Trustee must be reported immediately to the Chair of the Trust Board, who will assign an appropriate Case Manager and consult with the LADO.

Allegations against the Chair of the Trust Board must be reported immediately to the Chair of Members (representing the Trust's Members) and/or reported directly to the LADO. The Chair of Members (or an independent Member designated by them) will act as the Case Manager.

If any staff member believes there is a conflict of interest in reporting a governance allegation within the Trust, they must report the concern directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO - Melanie Benzie: 020 7364 0677).

Timescales
We deal with all allegations as quickly and effectively as possible and endeavour to comply with the following timescales, where reasonably practicable:

- any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious should be resolved within 1 week

- if the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action should be taken within 3 working days
- if a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, this should be held within 15 working days

However, these are objectives only and where they are not met, we will endeavour to take the required action as soon as possible thereafter.

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution
The case manager will discuss with the local authority's designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated
If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the school will make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.
If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the school will consider whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension
If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.
The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports
If a report is:

- determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate
- shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations
If an allegation is:

- determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the LADO and case manager will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate
- shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

Confidentiality and information sharing
The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.
The case manager will take advice from the LADO, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
- how to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality
- what, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- how to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

Record-keeping
The Case Manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above. Records will be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the DPA 2018, Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, and UK GDPR.

The records of any allegation that, following an investigation, is found to be malicious or false will be deleted from the individual's personnel file (unless the individual consents for the records to be retained on the file).

For all other allegations (which are not found to be malicious or false), the following information will be kept on the file of the individual concerned:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- notes of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- a declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference

In these cases, the school will provide a copy to the individual, in agreement with children's social care or the police as appropriate.

We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

References
When providing employer references, we will:

- not refer to any allegation that has been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any repeated allegations which have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious
- include substantiated allegations, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions

Learning lessons
After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, the case manager will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether there

are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
- the duration of the suspension
- whether or not the suspension was justified
- the use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual

For all other cases, the case manager will consider the facts and determine whether any improvements can be made.

Non-recent allegations
Abuse can be reported, no matter how long ago it happened. We will report any non-recent allegations made by a child to the LADO in line with our local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations.

Where an adult makes an allegation to the school that they were abused as a child, we will advise the individual to report the allegation to the police.

Section 2: concerns that do not meet the harm threshold or low level concerns

The section is based on 'Section 2: Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

This section applies to all concerns (including allegations) about members of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, which do not meet the harm threshold set out in section 1 above.

All staff must understand their responsibility to report ***all concerns*** about staff conduct which have taken place at the school or outside of the school including online environments, no matter how small or insignificant they might be perceived to be. Concerns may arise through, for example:

- suspicion
- complaint
- safeguarding concern or allegation from another member of staff
- disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school
- pre-employment vetting checks

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner to safeguard the welfare of children.

Definition of low-level concerns
The term 'low-level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, **and**
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being overly friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- humiliating pupils

Sharing low-level concerns
We create a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to confidently share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately. We create this culture by:

- ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
- empowering staff to share any low-level concerns as per section 7.7 of this policy
- empowering staff to self-refer

- addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting individuals to correct it at an early stage
- providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised
- helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system

Responding to low-level concerns
If the concern is raised via a third party, the headteacher will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

- directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously
- to the individual involved and any witnesses

The headteacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine further action, in line with the Code of Conduct. The headteacher will be the decision-maker in respect of all low-level concerns. They may wish to collaborate with the DSL.

Record keeping
All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing on CPOMS (individual schools may use an alternative system where applicable). In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any action taken and the rationale for decisions and action taken. Records will be:

- kept confidential, held securely and comply with the DPA 2018, Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, and UK GDPR
- reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold as described in section 1 of this appendix, we will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority
- retained at least until the individual leaves employment at the school

Where a low-level concern relates to a supply teacher or contractor, we will notify the individual's employer, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

References
We will not include low-level concerns in references unless:

- the concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the designated officer at the local authority and is found to be substantiated; and/or
- the concern (or group of concerns) relates to issues which would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance

Assessing adult-involved self-generated intimate images and/or videos sharing incidents

This section is based on Annex A of the UK Council of Internet Safety's advice for education settings.

All adult-involved nude and semi-nude image sharing incidents are child sexual abuse offences and must immediately be referred to police/social care. However, as adult-involved incidents can present as child-on-child nude/semi-nude sharing, it may be difficult to initially assess adult involvement.

There are two types of common adult-involved incidents: **sexually motivated incidents** and **financially motivated** incidents.

Sexually motivated incidents

In this type of incident, an adult offender obtains nude and semi-nudes directly from children and young people using online platforms.

To make initial contact, the offender may present as themselves or use a false identity on the platform, sometimes posing as a child or young person to encourage a response and build trust. The offender often grooms the child or young person on social media, in chat rooms or on gaming platforms and may then move the conversation to a private messaging app or an end-to-end encrypted (E2EE) environment where a request for a nude or semi-nude is made. To encourage the child or young person to create and share nude or semi-nude, the offender may share pornography or child sexual abuse material (images of other young people), including AI-generated material.

Once a child or young person shares a nude or semi-nude, an offender may blackmail the child or young person into sending more images by threatening to release them online and/or send them to friends and family.

Potential signs of adult-involved grooming and coercion can include the child or young person being:

- contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person
- quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications which may include the offender sharing unsolicited images
- moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform
- coerced/pressured into doing sexual things, including making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (including those generated by AI)
- offered something of value such as money or gaming credits
- moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform
- threatened or blackmailed into carrying out further sexual activity. This may follow the child or young person initially sharing the image or the offender sharing a digitally manipulated image of the child or young person to extort 'real' images

Financially motivated incidents

Financially motivated sexual extortion (often known as 'sextortion') is an adult-involved incident in which an adult offender (or offenders) threatens to release nudes or semi-nudes of a child or young person unless they pay money or do something else to benefit them. Throughout 2022 and 2023, there has been a considerable increase in reporting of these incidents.

Unlike other adult-involved incidents, financially motivated sexual extortion is usually carried out by offenders working in sophisticated organised crime groups (OCGs) overseas and are only motivated by profit. Adults are usually targeted by these groups too.

Offenders will often use a false identity, sometimes posing as a child or young person, or hack another young person's account to make initial contact. To financially blackmail the child or young person, they may:

- groom or coerce the child or young person into making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (including those generated by AI) and financially blackmail them
- use images that have been stolen from the child or young person taken through hacking their account
- use digitally manipulated images, including AI-generated images, of the child or young person

The offender may demand payment or the use of the victim's bank account for the purposes of money laundering.

Potential signs of adult-involved financially motivated sexual extortion can include the child or young person being:

- contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person. They may be contacted by a hacked account of a child or young person
- quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications which may include the offender sharing an image first
- moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform
- pressured into taking nudes or semi-nudes
- told they have been hacked and they have access to their images, personal information and contacts
- blackmailed into sending money or sharing bank account details after sharing an image or the offender sharing hacked or digitally manipulated images of the child or young person

Children missing from education

We closely monitor attendance, absence, suspensions, and exclusions. A child being absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation (county lines).

In accordance with the DfE's *Working together to improve school attendance*, we follow up on absences and address persistent absence as part of our safeguarding duty. This prevents the risk of these children becoming children missing education in the future. Staff address daily absence and persistent absence as soon as these problems emerge as part of the school's early help response. Staff are alert to children already known to be vulnerable especially Children known to a Social Worker and Looked After Children, since absence from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community. Staff are also be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may become absent or missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- are at risk of harm or neglect
- are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- come from Gypsy, Roma, or families who travel for work
- come from the families of service personnel
- go missing or run away from home or care
- are supervised by the youth justice system
- cease to attend a school
- come from new migrant families

We follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse, exploitation and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes:

- making sure the school holds more than 1 emergency contact number for each pupil
- 1st day - call parent if a child is absent without the parent or guardian having informed the school. Check siblings are in school
- 2nd day – call emergency contacts for the child
- 3rd day - home visit (depending on outcome of 2nd day)
- if following home visit child is still missing, inform LA and police
- if the child is considered to be at risk in any way, these steps will be escalated
- informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named
- adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points

When a pupil does not return to school and the whereabouts of the child and their family are not known, the school will make reasonable enquiries and refer the child to the Attendance & Welfare Advisor to support with those enquiries to ascertain the child's whereabouts, and only after these steps have been taken refer to the Local Authority using a Missing Children referral form.

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

Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing

education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

Elective home education

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 headteacher 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.

Child criminal exploitation

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people. Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- misusing drugs and alcohol
- going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- regularly missing school or education
- not taking part in education

If a member of staff suspects CCE, they discuss this with the DSL. The DSL triggers the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people. It can include children who have been moved for the purpose of exploitation. This may constitute modern slavery.

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. It may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

CSE can include both physical contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity. It can also happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam. CSE may also occur without the victim's immediate knowledge, for example through others copying videos or images. In addition to the CCE indicators above, indicators of CSE can include a child:

- having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant

If a member of staff suspects CSE, they discuss this with the DSL. The DSL triggers the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

CSE may also occur without the victim's immediate knowledge, for example through others copying videos or images. It can include children who have been moved for the purpose of exploitation. This may constitute modern slavery.

Child-on-child abuse

Child-on-child abuse is when children abuse other children. This type of abuse can take place inside and outside of school. It can also take place both face-to-face and online, and can occur simultaneously between the 2.

Our school has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. We recognise that even if there are no reports, that doesn't mean that this kind of abuse isn't happening. Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (this is sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- 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 (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

Where children abuse their peers online, this can take the form of, for example, 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 don't want to receive such content.

If staff have any concerns about child-on-child abuse, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as appropriate. In particular, section 7.8 and 7.9 set out more detail about our school's approach to this type of abuse.

When considering instances of harmful sexual behaviour between children, we will consider their ages and stages of development. We recognise that children displaying harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced their own abuse and trauma, and will offer them appropriate support.

Domestic abuse

Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse and/or violence at home where it occurs between family members. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse (abuse in intimate personal relationships between children) and child/adolescence to parent violence and abuse. It can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or emotional. It can also include ill treatment that isn't physical, as well as witnessing the ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. Children who witness domestic abuse are also victims.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children.

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school (usually the designated safeguarding lead) before the child or children arrive at school the following day.

In response to safeguarding reports received about children involving Domestic Abuse, the school will make contact with Children's Social Care for advice and guidance. Where appropriate, the DSL will complete a DASH Risk Assessment with the individual reporting as a victim of domestic abuse.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL and DDSLs are aware of contact details and referral routes into the local housing authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity (where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures).

For general enquiries about support for young people who might be at risk of or experiencing homelessness in the borough, please contact Tower Hamlets Housing Options: Host@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Children with family members in prison

These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children. The DSL ensures that there is a support plan in place for these pupils at school.

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.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following parental separation can be stressful and lead to conflict in families. This can be stressful for children too. 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.

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (including FGM and forced marriage)

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

Abuse committed in this context often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

All forms of HBA are abused and are handled and escalated as such. All staff are alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered it. If staff have a concern, they speak to the DSL, who activates local safeguarding procedures.

FGM

The DSL makes sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to be alert to children affected by FGM or at risk of FGM.

Section 7.3 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM. Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- a pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- a mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- a family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues
- a girl:
    - having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
    - finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
    - spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
    - having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
    - avoiding physical exercise or missing PE
    - being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period

- demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
- being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
- asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
- talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM include:

- the girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- a parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- a family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues
- a girl:
    - having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
    - having limited level of integration within UK society
    - confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
    - talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents/carers stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
    - requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
    - talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
    - being unexpectedly absent from school
    - having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

It is also illegal to cause a child under the age of 18 to marry, even if violence, threats or coercion are not involved.

Staff receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the 'one chance' rule, i.e. we may only have one chance to speak to the potential victim and only one chance to help them.

If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the pupil about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL. The DSL will:

- speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place
- activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer
- seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or fmu@fco.gov.uk
- refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school counsellor, as appropriate

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).

Preventing radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence

Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to:

- negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
- undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
- intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results outlined in either of the above points

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 of terrorism 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.

Schools have a duty to prevent children from becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

We assess the risk of children in our school becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. This assessment is based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.

We ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place, and equip our pupils to stay safe online at school and at home.
There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period. Staff are alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

The government website Educate Against Hate and charity NSPCC say that signs that a pupil is being radicalised can include:

- refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- changes in friendship groups and appearance
- rejecting activities they used to enjoy
- converting to a new religion
- isolating themselves from family and friends
- talking as if from a scripted speech
- an unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- a sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- increased levels of anger
- increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- possessing extremist literature
- being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem, or be victims of bullying or discrimination. It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour – staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong.

If staff are concerned about a pupil, they follow our procedures set out in section 7.5 of this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL. In LBTH the Prevent Education Officer is Eleanor Knight Eleanor.Knight@towerhamlets.gov.uk.

Staff **always** take action if they are worried.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur:

- between 2 children of any age and sex
- through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children

- online and face to face (both physically and verbally)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school.

If a victim reports an incident, staff make sure they are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim is never given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment nor made to feel ashamed for making a report.

When supporting victims, staff will:

- reassure victims that the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them
- regularly review decisions and actions, and update policies with lessons learnt
- look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, and decide on a course of action where we identify any patterns
- consider if there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled inappropriate behaviour to occur and whether revising policies and/or providing extra staff training could minimise the risk of it happening again
- remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting signs that a child has experienced sexual violence, and show sensitivity to their needs

Some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows that girls, children with SEN and/or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBTQ+) children are at greater risk. Staff are 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
- challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them

If staff have any concerns about sexual violence or sexual harassment, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as appropriate. In particular, section 7.8 and 7.9 set out more detail about our school's approach to this type of abuse.

Serious violence

Indicators which may signal that a child is at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime may include:

- increased absence from school
- change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups

- significant decline in performance
- signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing
- signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- unexplained gifts or new possessions (this could indicate that the child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation (see above))

Risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include:

- being male
- having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
- having experienced child maltreatment
- having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery

Staff are aware of these indicators and risk factors. If a member of staff has a concern about a pupil being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they report this to the DSL.

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

Typically young carers provide a combination of personal care (such as helping to dress or bath them), practical care(such as cooking, cleaning and shopping) and emotional care (such as talking through their concerns with them).

To support young carers in school 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' (January 2023) and refer to the Young Carers Program accordingly: Young.Carers@towerhamlets.gov.uk

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.

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 to the National Referral Mechanism is available in the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance. The DSL will refer all potential child victims of modern slavery to the Local Authority via MAST

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff. If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we check their ID and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors are expected to sign in and wear a visitor's badge.

Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and:

- will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or
- the organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an appropriate level of DBS check has been carried out (if this is provided, we will not ask to see the DBS certificate)

All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views, and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff.

External speakers agreement

We understand the importance of visitors and external agencies to enrich the experiences of our pupils. In order to safeguard our pupils, we expect all visiting speakers to read and adhere to the statements below:

- any messages communicated to pupils support fundamental British Values and our school values
- any messages communicated to students are consistent with the ethos of the school and do not marginalised any communities, groups or individuals
- activities are matched to the needs of pupils

- any messages communicated to students do not seek to glorify criminal activity or violent extremism or seek to radicalise students through extreme or narrow views of faith, religion or culture or other ideologies
- visitors are accompanied by members of staff at all times when they are in contact with pupils

Non-collection of children

Where children are uncollected at the end of the school day whether due to the parents/carers being unavoidably delayed for a prolonged period or due to all efforts to contact the parents/carers being unsuccessful and there is serious concern about safeguarding their welfare (as opposed to children where the parents are just late in collecting them) then it is essential that the protection of the welfare of the child is the priority.

Where parents/carers do not collect a child from a school/setting on time staff should make a record of this using the school's safeguarding record system. If the problem is repeated then the parents/carers should be asked to cooperate in the completion of an assessment on the EHA form, so that the school/setting can work with the parent/carer to find solutions to the problem.

If the parent/carer has contacted the school/setting to explain reasons for lateness then the school/setting should make arrangements for the child to be able to safely remain to allow time for the parent/carer to get there or for her/him to arrange for another, known, responsible adult to collect their child. In the event that there is no contact at all from the parents/carers or there is good reason to believe that the parent/carer would not be in a fit state to look after their child and there is serious concern about safeguarding their welfare (as opposed to children where the parents are just late in collecting them), staff should telephone the MASH to get advice (or the Children's Social Care Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team or the Police if after normal office hours)

Parents arriving to collect a child when affected by alcohol or substance abuse

If when a parent or carer arrives at a school to collect their child it is thought that they are suffering from the adverse effects of misuse of alcohol or other substances, a decision needs to be taken regarding whether the child's safety may be placed at risk by releasing the child to the parent or carer. Parents or carers cannot normally be prevented from taking their own children but if it is believed that the child would be placed at serious risk then the Head designate can intervene to ensure the child's safety. The Head designate could try to reason with the parent or carer and, for example, could assist the parent or carer in contacting another adult who is in a suitable position to collect and look after the child.

If a school feels the child is at risk of significant harm from the parent or carer then they should immediately telephone the Child Protection Advice Line to get advice or the Children's Social Care out of hours team or the police if after normal office hours.

The event should be recorded on an EHA form. If this is a situation that occurs regularly, the DSL would complete a full EHA form with the parent and possibly get help for them from local drug and alcohol services, accessed through the Primary Care Trust.

Missing pupils

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible.
A pupil is treated as missing as soon as a member of staff cannot account for them and a check of the immediate area does not locate them. Staff act on suspicion and do not wait for certainty. Any member of staff, including a member of staff who is off site, who believes a pupil may have left the site or cannot be accounted for reports this immediately to the school office. If the office does not answer, they contact the DSL or another member of the senior leadership team directly. No member of staff will be criticised for raising a concern that turns out to be unfounded.

If a child goes missing, we will:

- inform the most senior member of staff on site, who takes charge of the response and is the single point of decision
- search the school building and grounds to a pre-agreed search plan, checking exits, boundaries and known exit routes first, securing gates and reviewing CCTV (where available) as the search proceeds
- contact the child's parent or carer
- contact the police on 999 if the child has not been found within five minutes of being reported missing, and immediately, without waiting, where the child has an EHCP or identified SEND, is known or suspected to be at risk of leaving the site, is in the early years, or where a road, water or other significant hazard is close to the school
- record the time of each action as it is taken

Where a pupil is identified as being at risk of leaving the site, their individual risk assessment will set out a personalised response, including likely exit routes and destinations, named key adults, communication needs, and how the pupil should be approached when found. The risk assessment is reviewed following any incident or near miss.

A near miss, such as a pupil reaching a boundary, using an unsupervised exit route, or an access point found unsecured, is recorded on the CPOMs (individual schools may use an alternative system where applicable) on the same day and triggers a review of that pupil's risk assessment and of the access point concerned.

Following any incident in which a pupil leaves the site or cannot be accounted for, we will:

- record all times, decisions and actions on the school's safeguarding record system on the same day; records are not amended afterwards other than by a clearly attributed and dated addition
- notify the CEO immediately, and the LADO where the conduct of an adult is in question
- hold a debrief led by the headteacher within 48 hours, and provide a written summary to the CEO within five school days with an action plan naming owners and dates
- offer a meeting to the parents or carers, and arrange support for the pupil and for the staff involved

These procedures apply equally on educational visits and off-site activities, where the group leader takes the role of the most senior member of staff on site.

Appendix 5: LA safeguarding contact details

LBTH Early Help Hub:

0207 364 5006 (option 2)

Alternatively, the DSL will complete Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST) which can be accessed via https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Children-and-families-services/Early-Years/MAST-Request-for-support-form.docx

For all Early Help enquiries, please email **EarlyHelp@towerhamlets.gov.uk**

Social Inclusion Panel

When an EHA has been completed and a Team Around the Family is in process, the school can refer to the borough's Social Inclusion Panel in support of a co-ordinated and targeted plan to bring about improvement in the child's outcomes.

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.

LA multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH):

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

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 to the allocated Social Worker.

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.

Local authority designated officer (LADO)

Melanie Benzie - 020 7364 0677

LADO@towerhamlets.gov.uk or LADO@towerhamlets.gcsx.gov.uk

Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST)
020 7364 3444 / 5601 / 5606 / 5358 / 7796 / 3342 / 7828 / 6469 / 3181

If there is a concern about the welfare of a child or young person and you would like to talk it through then you should contact the Tower Hamlets Children Services' Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST).

The Duty Officer will be able to discuss the concern, assist in deciding whether a referral is appropriate and facilitate the reporting of a referral in accordance with Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership (THSCP) Procedures and to offer advice.

When there is a specific concern of a child protection nature whereby it is thought that a child has been harmed or at risk of being harmed then the MAST should then be contacted on 0207 364 3444 / 5601 / 5606 / 5358 / 7796 / 3342 / 7828 / 6469 / 3181 in the first instance to discuss the matter followed by the completion of the LBTH MAST Request for Support Form to MAST@towerhamlets.gov.uk.

The MAST operates between 9.00am and 5.00pm except at weekends and on public holidays. If the concern arises outside of the hours operated by the MAST and it is believed the child may be at immediate risk the Children's Social Care Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team or the Police should be contacted without delay.

Important contact information:

The Multi Agency Support Team (MAST) Note – information should only be emailed following prior discussion with the Duty Officer.	MAST@towerhamlets.gov.uk.
Children's Social Care Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team (5.00pm onwards and weekends)	020 7364 4079

September 2026

LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER FOR ALLEGATIONS (LADO)

Melanie Benzie

Tel: 020 7364 0677

Email: LADO@towerhamlets.gov.uk

September 2026

Appendix 6: LBTH Multi Agency Support Team (MAST) Request for Support Form

If you are concerned about a child or family, use this form to get support from the team at Tower Hamlets Council and our partners.

You can expect feedback within 24 to 48 hours upon submission of this referral form. We are dedicated to actively collaborating with you and other relevant services to guarantee every child receives the necessary support.
**Please indicate the relevant option by placing a tick in the corresponding box.*

Agency
We work with several agencies and partner organisations in Tower Hamlets.

Do you work for an agency or partner organisation?

Yes		**No**	

Anonymous reporting
If you are not working for an urgency or partner organisation, do you want to make this referral anonymously? If you are reporting anonymously, by reporting this anonymously we will not be able to email you confirmation of the report and will not be able to let you know about the outcome.

Yes		**No**	

Consent
If a child is giving consent, they must be over 16.
Someone with parental responsibility is an adult who is a biological parent or an adult that has a court order to care and make decisions about the welfare of the child daily

Child over 16		Someone with parental responsibility		Neither	

If you have selected 'Neither,' Consent should be given by the child or family before making a referral, unless the child is at risk of immediate significant harm.

Is the child at risk of immediate significant harm?

Yes		**No**	

What's your name (if you are not reporting anonymously)?

What is your first name?	
What is your last name?	

Referrer's agency

What agency do you work for?

Name and Details	

What is your role at your Organisation/ Institute?

What is your phone number?

What is your email address?

Child's name

What is the child's first name?	
What is the child's last name?	

Date of Birth

Do you know the date of birth of the child?	**Yes**		**No**	

Date of Birth or expected date of birth.	**Day**		**Month**		**Year**	
Sex at Birth	**Male**		**Female**		**Not Known**	

Child's ethnicity What is the child's ethnic group?

Choose from the following: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British, Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveler, Roma, Any other White background, White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, Any other Mixed or Multiple background, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Indian, Chinese, Any other Asian background, Caribbean, Somali, Other African, Any other Black, Black British or Caribbean background, Arab, Other, Prefer not to say, Don't know.

Child's religion
What is the religion of the Child?

Choose from the following: Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Prefer Not to say, Don't Know, No Religion, Other.

Does the child have a disability or special educational need?

Yes		**No**		**Don't Know**	

Child's Education

Is the child being educated?

Yes, at School	
Home schooled	

Not in education	
Don’t know	

Name of the School:

Child’s Address

Do you know the child’s address?	**Yes**		**No**	

If ‘Yes’, provide the following	
Postcode	
Address	

Child’s first Language

Choose from the Following: Don't know, English, British Sign Language, Bengali, Italian, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Chinese, Polish, Romanian, Greek, Russian, Arabic, Somali, German, Turkish, Other (Please Mention)

Sign language
We are able to offer a British Sign Language interpreter to anyone who needs it.

Does the child need a British Sign Language interpreter?	**Yes**		**No**		**Don’t Know**	

Child's immigration status
What is the child’s immigration status?

British or Irish citizen, habitually resident in UK, Ireland, Channel Islands, or Isle of Man, or deported from another country	
EEA citizen residing in the UK prior to 31 December 2020: worker	
EEA citizen residing in the UK prior to 31 December 2020: self-employed	
EEA citizen residing in the UK prior to 31 December 2020: settled status	
EEA citizen residing in the UK prior to 31 December 2020: other	
EEA citizen residing in the UK prior to 31 December 2020: A family member of one of the above groups	
Non-UK: Granted refugee status	

Non-UK: Exceptional Leave to Remain	
Non-UK: Indefinite Leave to Remain	
Non-UK: Limited Leave to Remain	
Non-UK: Other protection (e.g. humanitarian, discretionary, family of Northern Ireland and stateless persons under Immigration rules)	
Don't know	

Is the child a young carer?	**Yes**		**No**		**Don't Know**	

What is the child's NHS number? (Optional)	
What is the child's unique pupil number? (Optional)	

Has the child or their family ever been the subject of a Children Social Care assessment?

Yes		**No**		**Don't know**	

Is there a Private Fostering agreement for the child?

Yes		**No**		**Don't know**	

Are there any other children in the household?

Yes		**No**		**Don't know**	

Number of other children	
How many other children are there in the household?	

Other children's information

Child's first name	
Child's last name	

Is there a Private Fostering agreement for child	**Yes**		**No**		**Don't know**	
Do you know the child's date of birth?	**Yes**		**No**			

Date of Birth	**DD**		**MM**		**YYYY**	
Child's Sex	**Male**		**Fema**		**Don't**	

			le		**know**	

What is the child's ethnic group?	
What is the child's religion?	

Does the child have a disability or special educational need?	**Yes**		**No**		**Don't Know**	

Is the child being educated?

Yes, at School	
Home Schooled	
Not in Education	
Who provides education for the child?	

Has the child previously been referred to Children's Services?	**Yes**		**No**		**Don't Know**	

What is the child's first language?	

Does the child need an interpreter to translate for them?	**Yes**		**No**		**Don't Know**	
Does the child need a British Sign Language interpreter?	**Yes**		**No**		**Don't Know**	

What is the child's immigration status?	
What is the child's NHS number? (Optional)	
What is the child's unique pupil number? (Optional)	

Principal carer's details

Do you know the child's principal carer's information?	Yes		No	

Principal/main carer

The person who has most parenting time with child

Principal carer's first name	
Principal carer's last name	
Principal carer's relationship	

What is Principal carer's relationship to child	
Parent	
Guardian	
Carer	
Other Family Member	
Other	

Principal carer's sex

Male		Female		Not Known	

Do you know the principal carer's date of birth?	Yes		No	

Principal carer's date of birth	DD		MM		YYYY	

Principal carer's ethnicity

Choose from the following: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British, Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveler, Roma, Any other White background, White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, Any other Mixed or Multiple background, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Indian, Chinese, Any other Asian background, Caribbean, Somali, Other African, Any other Black, Black British or Caribbean background, Arab, Other, Prefer not to say, Don't know.

Principal carer's first language

Don't know, English, British Sign Language, Bengali, Italian, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Chinese, Polish, Romanian, Greek, Russian, Arabic, Somali, German, Turkish, Other (Please Mention)

Principal carer's contact number

Principal carer's sign language

Does the principal carer need a British Sign Language interpreter?

Yes		**No**		**Don't know**	

Does the child have another parent, guardian or carer in their household?

Yes		**No**		**Don't know**	

If the child has another parent, guardian or carer in their household, do you know the other parent, guardian or carer's details?

Yes		**No**	

If 'Yes', please fill the following details

Other parent, guardian, or carer details	
Other parent's first name	
Other parent's last name	
Relationship to the child and contact number	
Parent	
Guardian	
Carer	
Other family member	
Ethnic group	

Are there any other significant people in the child's life? Other significant people in the child's life, this might be grandparents, aunts, uncles, or other family members.

Yes		No		Don't know	

If the child has any other significant people in child's life, details of the person.

What is this person's first name?	
What is this person's last name?	
What is the relationship to child	
Parent	
Guardian	
Carer	
Other family member	
Other (Please mention)	

Has anyone in the household ever had a Child Protection Plan?

Yes		**No**		**Don't know**	

If anyone in the household ever had a Child Protection Plan, please provide details of the person with a Child Protection Plan, dates and all relevant information.

Has anyone in the household ever been looked after by a local authority?

Yes		**No**		**Don't know**	

Child looked after by a local authority details
Please provide details of name of person being looked after, dates and all relevant information

Child in need

Under Section 17 Children Act 1989, a child is considered “in need” if:

- They are unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without services from the Local Authority.
- Their health or development is likely to be significantly impaired without such services.
- They have a disability, which includes conditions like blindness, hearing impairments, mental disorders, and permanent illnesses or congenital deformities

Has anyone in the household ever been a ‘child in need’?

Yes		**No**		**Don’t know**	

Child in need details

Which children are or were considered to be a 'child in need? Please tell us the name of the child, the dates they were in need and any other relevant information.

Early help

‘Early help’ describes any service that supports children and families as soon as problems emerge.

Has anyone in the household ever received support from Early Help?

Yes		**No**		**Don’t know**	

Early help details

Which children are or were receiving 'early help? Please tell us the name of the child, the dates they were receiving early help and any other relevant information.

Are any other agencies or professionals working with the family?

Yes		**No**		**Don’t know**	

If ‘Yes’, please provide the following

What is the name of the professional working with the family?
What is the role of the professional working with the family?
What is the name of the agency or organisation working with the family?
What is the contact email address for this agency or organisation?
What is the contact phone number for this agency or organisation?

Level of need

More information on level of need: The Four Levels of Need

Level 1: No Additional Needs	
Level 2: Early Help	
Level 3: Children with Complex Multiple Needs	
Level 4: Children in Acute Need	
Don't know	

Family strengths

What is currently working well for the child and family? Share positive aspects or abilities within the family that can be further supported.

Worry

What are you most worried about?

Describe your concerns for the family or any issues that require assistance or support

Further information

Please provide us with any further information about the child's development and any other presenting issues.

Current situation

How safe do you think a child is? On a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 means the child is at risk of harm and 10 means the child is safe.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Please tell us how you reached this score?

Action

Please tell us if any action has taken place to help the family resolve the difficulties, they are experiencing

Supporting documents

Do you have any relevant supporting documents, like assessments or the latest review that you would like to upload? (Attach and submit the files)

Appendix 7: DSL and DDSL contacts

Role	Name	Phone	Email
Bygrove Primary School			
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Fiona Durnian	0207 538 4925	fdurnian@letta.org.uk
Deputy DSLs	Mara Ponte	0207 538 4925	mponte@letta.org.uk
	Isha John	0207 538 4925	ijohn1@letta.org.uk
	Bradley Fields	0207 538 4925	bfields@letta.org.uk
	Afia Bibi	0207 538 4925	abibi3@letta.org.uk
	Emma Savage	0207 538 4925	esavage@letta.org.uk
	Rebecca Hart	0207 538 4925	rhart@letta.org.uk
Headteacher	Fiona Durnian	0207 538 4925	fdurnian@letta.org.uk
Chair of LGB	Stuart Poyser	0207 538 4925	spoyser@letta.org.uk
Columbia Primary School			
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Lee Huckle	0207 739 3835	lhuckle@letta.org.uk
Deputy DSLs	Oliver Woodward	0207 739 3835	owoodward@letta.org.uk
	Akosua Acheampong	0207 739 3835	aacheampong@letta.org.uk
	Holly Macentee Creighton	0207 739 3835	hmcreighton@letta.org.uk
	Reha Bibi Ahmed	0207 739 3835	rahmed@letta.org.uk
Headteacher	Oliver Woodward	0207 739 3835	owoodward@letta.org.uk
Chair of LGB	Anita Barzey	0207 739 3835	abarzey@letta.org.uk
Hermitage Primary School			
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Akua Dankwa	0207 702 1037	adankua@letta.org.uk
Deputy DSLs	Max Lawson	0207 702 1037	mlawson@letta.org.uk
	Tracey Pace	0207 702 1037	tpace@letta.org.uk
	Shorif Ahmed	0207 702 1037	sahmed@letta.org.uk
	Rachel Wild	0207 702 1037	rwild@letta.org.uk
Headteacher	Max Lawson	0207 702 1037	mlawson@letta.org.uk
Chair of LGB	James Hall	0207 702 1037	jhall@letta.org.uk
Stebon Primary School			

Designated safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Debbie Silvester	0207 987 4237	dsilvester@letta.org.uk
Deputy DSLs	Roksana Hussain	0207 987 4237	rhussain2@letta.org.uk
	Rabia Begum	0207 987 4237	rabiabegum@letta.org.uk
	Tara Yates	0207 987 4237	tyates@letta.org.uk
	Sana Khokhar	0207 987 4237	skhokhar@letta.org.uk
	Oliver Wing	0207 987 4237	owing@letta.org.uk
	Zena Meighan	0207 987 4237	zmeighan@letta.org.uk
Headteacher	Roksana Hussain	0207 987 4237	rhussain2@letta.org.uk
Chair of LGB	Michael Keating	0207 987 4237	mkeating@letta.org.uk
Virginia Primary School			
Designated safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Barbara Lo Giudice	020 7739 6195	blgiudice@letta.org.uk
Deputy DSLs	Amanda Carr	020 7739 6195	acarr@virginia.towerhamlets.sch.uk
	Ruth Coombe	020 7739 6195	rmead@virginia.towerhamlets.sch.uk
	Salma Haris	02077396195	sharis@letta.org.uk
Headteacher	Barbara Lo Giudice	020 7739 6195	blgiudice@letta.org.uk
Chair of LGB	Kathy Darby	020 7739 6195	kathdarby@tiscali.co.uk
The LETTA Trust			
CEO	Jo Franklin	0203 405 1120	jfranklin@letta.org.uk