



# **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2025/26**

St. Scholastica's Catholic Primary School

Head Teacher: Mrs Sandra Brierley

**Named Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)**

**Note:** All schools/settings must appoint a member of the senior leadership team to coordinate safeguarding arrangements.

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads Designated Safeguarding Governor
Emma Cousins	Nick Blackham Sandra Brierley

**Named personnel with designated responsibility regarding allegations against staff**

Designated Senior Manager (this would normally be the Head teacher)	Deputy Designated Senior Manager	Chair of Governors Nominated Governor
Sandra Brierley		Elaine Radburn

**Dates the Safeguarding Policy is reviewed**

Review Date	Changes made/Details of action plan Due Date	By Whom
September 2025	Updated to new Hackney Model Policy Format	Emma Cousins


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## Introduction

Everyone at **St. Scholastica's Catholic Primary School** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. School staff are particularly important in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as we are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children. Our school staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children to prevent concerns from escalating. Our school will work with Children and Families Service, the police, health services and other relevant agencies to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

This policy applies to all staff, including volunteers, contractors and/or apprentices, working in or on behalf of the school. It provides information about the actions the school expects from all staff, it will be updated annually and known to everyone working in the school and the governing body. It will be available to parents/carers on request and via our website.

This policy is in line with statutory guidance for schools and colleges;

[Keeping Children Safe In Education 2025:](#)

[Working Together To Safeguard Children 2023;](#)

[London Safeguarding Children Procedures 2025.](#)

Everyone working in or for our school must share the objective to help keep children and young people safe by:

- Providing a safe, **anti-racist and trauma informed** environment for children and young people to learn and develop in our school setting;
- Identifying and responding to 'early help' needs of children and families;
- Identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe at home, in the community, online and in our school setting;
- Maintaining a culture of vigilance and an attitude of 'It could happen here'.

## Our School's Commitment

**St. Scholastica's Catholic Primary School** is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all of our pupils. Each pupil's welfare is of paramount importance. Throughout this document 'children' includes everyone yet to have their 18th birthday.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

Protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable children to have the best outcomes.

Child Protection refers to procedures and actions undertaken regarding children who are at risk of being, or have been significantly harmed.

We as a school recognise that:

- Some children may be especially vulnerable to abuse including those missing education, those experiencing extra-familial risk, **including child on child abuse**, or with a special

educational need or disability;

- Children who are abused or neglected may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way; subsequently whilst at school their behaviour may be disruptive and/or challenging;
- Children can be both victims and perpetrators of child on child abuse;
- Children who harm others may have been maltreated themselves;
- Allegations against staff may be made however careful and safe our recruitment practices.

## **Our Approach to Safeguarding Children**

**St. Scholastica's Catholic Primary School** will ensure all staff are aware of their safeguarding and child protection responsibilities and that they are able to identify children and young people where concerns about their safety and welfare arise. We will ensure all staff and pupils know they can raise issues with any member of staff, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy DSL) and that their concerns will be taken seriously. There will always be a DSL (or Deputy DSL) on site and they will have appropriate training and understanding of how to manage concerns in an effective way with the welfare of children and young people as their primary focus.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **All staff and volunteers will:**

Fully comply with the school's policies and procedures, attend appropriate safeguarding training, inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead of any concerns and read Part 1 of [Keeping Children Safe In Education 2025](#).

### **Our Governing Body will ensure that:**

- The school has a safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures in place that are in accordance with statutory guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures, and the policy is made available to parents/carers on request and via our website;
- The school operates safer recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on staff and volunteers who work with children;
- The school follows the [7th Edition of the London Child Protection Procedures](#) and the statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe In Education 2025](#) for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers;
- A senior member of the school's leadership team is designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding (and deputy);
- There is a named Governor lead for safeguarding and there is good communication between them and Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) within the school;
- Staff undertake appropriate safeguarding/child protection training, at regular intervals;
- Comply with the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership Self Assessment auditing requirements;
- They remedy, without delay, any deficiencies or weaknesses regarding safeguarding practice and arrangements;
- A Governor is nominated to be responsible for liaising with the LA and /or partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Headteacher;
- Where services or activities are provided on the school premises by another service, group

or individual, the school will check they have appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and have 'hire agreements' with external groups and individuals;

- Policies and procedures are reviewed annually and provide information to the Local Authority about them and about how the above duties have been discharged.

### **Our Head Teacher will ensure that:**

- The policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body or Proprietor are fully implemented, and followed by all staff;
- All pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online, relationship education and extra-familial risks including **child on child abuse** and exploitation;
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputy to carry out their roles effectively including the assessment of pupils, attendance at initial child protection conferences, core group, Extra Familial Risk Panel (EFRP) and other necessary meetings;
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with the agreed [Whistle Blowing Policy](#);
- They have completed Safer Recruitment training;
- The procedure for managing allegations against staff is known to all staff and displayed in staff rooms;
- Operate the procedure for managing allegations effectively and refer relevant concerns to the [Local Authority Designated Officer \(LADO\)](#);
- That anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the DBS;
- A senior manager is appointed to deal with allegations against staff in the absence of the Headteacher.

### **Our Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (insert names) will :**

#### **Referrals**

- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise within our school and have access to the online London Child Protection Procedures;
- Consult with and/or refer cases of suspected abuse including extra-familial harm and child on child abuse to [Children and Families Service Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub \(MASH\)](#) and maintain a record of all concerns and referrals;
- Liaise with the Headteacher to inform them of any issues and ongoing investigations and ensure there is always cover for this role in the form of deputy DSLs;
- Attend and contribute to safeguarding and child protection meetings with partners as appropriate, including, but not limited to, children protection, child in need and Extra Familial Risk Panel (EFRP) meetings;
- Monitor and support Child in Need and Child Protection plans, reporting any unauthorised absences to the child's social worker as soon as possible;
- Keep detailed, accurate and securely stored written or electronic records, written in easily understandable language;
- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place).

## **Our Safeguarding Training will:**

- **Ensure all staff can** recognise how to identify signs of abuse and know when it is appropriate to make a referral to Children and Families Service;
- Have knowledge of the [CHSCP Dispute Resolution Policy](#), the [Local Authority Designated Officer \(LADO\)](#) role, the conduct of a child protection case conference and be able to attend and contribute to these;
- Ensure that all staff have access to and understand the school's safeguarding and child protection policy;
- Ensure that all staff have induction safeguarding training and receive regular updates;
- Access resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses at least every two years;
- Ensure accurate records of training, updates, policy dissemination and that all staff have read of Part 1 of KCSIE are kept.

## **Raising Awareness**

- Ensure the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is updated and reviewed annually and work with the Governing Body regarding this;
- Ensure parents/carers are routinely made aware of the safeguarding policy which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the school in this to avoid conflict later;
- When a child leaves the school, ensure the child protection file is copied for the new setting in a timely manner and transferred to the new school separately from the main pupil file, as well as ensure the pupil's Social Worker is informed.

## **Supporting Children and Working in Partnership with parents/carers**

- **St. Scholastica's Catholic Primary School** recognises that children's welfare is paramount. Good safeguarding and child protection practice and securing good outcomes for children relies on a positive, open and honest working partnership with parents/carers/carers;
- Whilst we may, on occasion, need to make referrals to Children and Families Service without consultation with parents/carers, we will make every effort to maintain a positive working relationship with them whilst fulfilling our duties to protect children;
- We will rely on the MASH Consultation Line to inform our decision making regarding seeking consent from parents/carers/carers regarding seeking consent to share information;
- Children will be given a proper explanation (appropriate to age & understanding) of what action is being taken on their behalf and why;
- We will endeavour to preserve the privacy, dignity and right to confidentiality of the child and parents/carers/carers whilst discharging our statutory duties;
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will determine which members of staff 'need to know' personal information for the purpose of supporting and protecting the child(ren) on the principle of those working directly with children will need to know more;
- Staff will not be enabled to further share this information further without the expressed permission of the DSL.

## Information about Safeguarding for Pupils

Through the curriculum and lessons pupils are taught to understand and manage risks they may encounter during school life and work out with staff how these risks may be overcome; taking into account their wishes and feelings. They are regularly reminded about online safety and bullying procedures and taught how to conduct themselves and behave in a responsible and respectful manner. Opportunities are provided for children to learn about democracy and the rule of law, positive relationships and safe choices. **Child on child abuse** is addressed in a supportive and age appropriate way.

All pupils know there is Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) responsible for their safety and welfare, who this is and that they have a right to speak to this member of staff, or any other, if they are worried or concerned. They are reminded that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, but that they will be listened to, heard, helped and informed of what steps can be taken to protect them from harm and that feedback will be sought, so that their views about actions are known. There is a display in the school identifying the DSLs and children are made aware of this.

## Partnership With parents/carers and Carers

**St. Scholastica's Catholic Primary School** recognises that it is essential to establish positive and effective working relationships with other agencies that are partners of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership, including Children and Families' Services and the MASH. There is a joint responsibility on all these agencies to share information to ensure the safeguarding of all children and work together to secure positive outcomes.

Our school will work openly and collaboratively with parents/carers/carers and seek consent (where possible) when sharing information with other agencies. We will inform parents/carers/carers of our responsibilities to safeguard their children. We will make this policy available via our website and provide additional safeguarding information via our Class Dojo platform where appropriate.

## Identifying children who may be at risk or may have been significantly harmed

Teachers, staff and volunteers in school are well placed to observe any physical, emotional or behavioural signs which indicate that a child may have additional needs or be at risk of, or suffering significant harm. The relationships between staff, pupils, parents/carers/carers and the public which foster respect, confidence and trust can lead to disclosures of abuse, and/or school staff being alerted to concerns.

**Harm** means ill-treatment or impairment of health and development, including, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;

**Development** means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development;

**Health** includes physical and mental health;

**Ill-treatment** includes sexual abuse and other forms of ill-treatment which are not physical.

**Abuse and Neglect** are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, another child, children or young people. There are four categories of abuse; physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

## **Definitions and Indicators of Abuse**

**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.

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

**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 oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (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 and clothing, 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 caretakers);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment;
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

As highlighted in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 our school understands extra-familial abuse and exploitation may affect children in our school/setting. The Designated

Safeguarding Lead has the skills and knowledge to support staff, children and families in contexts such as sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, county lines and serious youth violence.

## **Taking action to ensure that children are safe**

All staff must read and follow the statutory guidance for schools and colleges; [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 – Part One: Safeguarding information for all staff](#) and our school's/setting's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

It is not the responsibility of the school staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation, although seeking clarification from children and young people is encouraged. Accordingly, all concerns regarding the welfare of pupils will be recorded and discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) prior to any discussion with parents/carers/carers.

## **All School Staff must Immediately Report**

- Any suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way which is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play;
- Any explanation which appears inconsistent or suspicious;
- Behaviours which give rise to suspicions that a child may have suffered harm;
- Any concerns that a child may be suffering from inadequate care, ill treatment, or emotional maltreatment;
- Concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect, including child on child abuse or extra-familial risks and online harms;
- Any significant changes in a child's presentation, including non-attendance;
- Any hint or disclosure of harm or abuse about or by a child or young person;
- Concerns regarding person(s) who may pose a risk to children (e.g. those living in a household with children present), or a staff member;
- Information which indicates that the child is living with someone who does not have parental responsibility for them for a period of more than 28 days ([Private Fostering](#)).

## **Responding to Disclosure**

Disclosures or information that a child has been harmed or is at risk may be received from pupils, parents/carers/carers, other professionals or members of the public. The school recognises that those who disclose such information may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Accordingly all staff will handle disclosures with sensitivity. Such information cannot remain confidential and staff will immediately communicate what they have been told to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and make a record using clear, straightforward language.

Staff will not investigate but will, wherever possible, listen, record and pass on information to the DSL in order that s/he can make an informed decision of what to do next. (See Hackney Education's [Managing Disclosures Guidance](#)).

### **All staff will:**

- Listen to and take seriously any disclosure or information that a child may be at risk of harm;

- Seek clarification about the information (if necessary) without asking leading or probing questions;
- Make a written record of what the child has said using the Cause for Concern Form or the school's internal reporting mechanism;
- Try to keep questions to a minimum and of an 'open' nature e.g. 'Can you tell me what happened?' rather than 'Did x hit you?';
- Try not to show signs of shock, horror or surprise;
- Not express feelings or judgements regarding any person alleged to have harmed the child;
- Explain sensitively to the child or young person that they have a responsibility to pass the information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Reassure and support the child or young person as far as possible;
- Not promise secrecy;
- Explain that only those who 'need to know' will be told;
- Explain what will happen next and that the child will be involved as appropriate.

## Confidentiality

The school will operate with regard to [Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers \(2018\)](#), and have a clear and explicit Confidentiality Policy. However, where there is a concern that the child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration.

The school will ensure:

- Information is shared with Children and Families Service and/or Police where the child/young person is or may be at risk of, or experiencing, significant harm, including **child on child abuse and/or** online abuse;
- Pupil's and/or parent's/carer's confidentiality is respected;
- That any information shared is necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure;
- Allegations and/or disclosures of a historic nature will be managed in the same way as current safeguarding issues.

## Pupil Information

The school's record-keeping policy for child welfare and child protection is consistent with Hackney Education's guidance, which is known to all staff.

In order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them, our school requires accurate and up to date information regarding:

- Names and contact details of persons with whom the child normally lives;
- Names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above);
- Emergency contact details (if different from above);
- Details of any persons authorised to collect the child from school (if different from above);
- Any relevant court orders in place including those, which affect any person's access to the child (e.g. Residence Order, Contact Order, Care Order, Injunctions etc.);
- If the child is or has been subject to a child in need, child protection or care plan;
- Name and contact detail of GP;

- Any other factors which may impact on the safety and welfare of the child.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will collate, securely store and agree access to this information and ensure **more than one contact option is recorded for every child**.

All child protection documents will be retained in a 'Child Protection' file, separate from the child's main school file. The main file will clearly show an alert that a child protection file exists and the location of this. This child protection file will be securely stored and only accessible to the Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead. These records will be transferred to the next school or setting the child moves to, clearly marked 'Child Protection, Confidential, for attention of Designated Safeguarding Lead' as soon as is practicable but no longer than one working week.

### **Action by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead in their absence)**

Following any information raising concern, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Consider the child's wishes and feelings, but not promise confidentiality;
- Consider any urgent medical needs of the child;
- Have an immediate consultation with Hackney Children and Family Services' Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) (or the Children's Social Care team where the child is resident) if there has been a disclosure and/or allegation of abuse, including **child on child abuse**, or there are clear grounds for concerns about the child's safety and well-being;
- Consult with a member of [Children and Families Service's MASH](#) if they are uncertain whether or not a referral is required or review action when a child has suffered or is likely to suffer harm or [Early help and threshold criteria for intervention](#).

In consultation with Hackney Children and Family Services' MASH or children's social care in the borough the child resides, decide:

- Wherever possible, to talk to parents/carers, unless to do so may place a child at risk of significant harm, impede any police investigation and/or place the member of staff or others at risk;
- Whether to make a child protection referral to social care because a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm and if this needs to be undertaken immediately;
- Contact the designated officer for safeguarding in another agency if that agency is working with the family;

#### **OR**

- Not to make a referral at this stage, but retain the information in written notes on the child's school file;
- If further monitoring is necessary agree who and how this will be undertaken;
- If it would be appropriate to undertake an assessment and/or make a referral for other services including Early Help.

All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented. All referrals to Hackney Children and Family Services for children living in Hackney needs to be completed using the [Multi-agency Request for Support Form](#). For

children living outside Hackney the local authority where the child is resident will be contacted.

## Action following a Safeguarding Referral

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or other appropriate member of staff will:

- Maintain contact with the child's allocated Social Worker as required;
- Contribute to any Strategy Discussion and/or Strategy Meeting as required;
- Provide a report for, attend and contribute to any [Initial and Review Child Protection Conference](#);
- Report to and attend the [Extra-Familial Risk Panel](#) as appropriate;
- Share the content of this report with the parent/carer, prior to the meeting;
- Attend Core Group Meetings for any child subject to a Child in Need Meeting for any child subject to a Child in Need Plan or Child Protection Plan, or the Extra-Familial Risk Panel (EFRP);
- Where a child on a Child Protection Plan moves from the school or goes missing, immediately inform the child's Social Worker.

## Dealing with Disagreements and Escalation of Concerns

Effective working together depends on an open approach and honest relationships between agencies and professionals. **Dispute** resolution is an integral part of professional co-operation and joint working to safeguard children. Occasionally situations arise when workers within one agency feel that the actions, inaction or decisions of another agency do not adequately safeguard a child. The [CHSCP Dispute Resolution Policy](#) defines the process for resolving such professional differences and should be read alongside the London Child Protection Procedures and relevant internal policies on escalating matters of concern.

Professional disagreements can arise in a number of areas, but are most likely to arise around:

- Levels of need;
- Roles and responsibilities;
- The need for action;
- Progressing plans and communication.

Where professionals consider that the practice of other professionals is placing children at risk of harm, they must be assertive, act swiftly and ensure that they challenge the relevant professionals in line with this policy and be aware that:

- The safety of children and young people is the paramount consideration in any professional activity;
- Resolution should be sought within the shortest time scale possible to ensure the child is protected;
- As a guide, professionals should attempt to resolve differences through discussion within one working week or a timescale that protects the child from harm (whichever is shortest);
- Disagreements should be resolved at the earliest possible stage.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or other appropriate member of staff will:

- Contact the line manager in Children and Families Service (MASH) if they consider the response to a referral has not led to the child being adequately safeguarded and follow this up in writing;
- Contact the line manager in Children and Families Service if they consider that the child is not being adequately safeguarded by the child protection plan and follow this up in writing;
- Use the [CHSCP Dispute Resolution Policy](#) if this does not resolve the concern.

### **Providing a Safe and Supportive Environment**

At **St. Scholastica's Catholic Primary School** we understand that for safeguarding to be effective we have a collective responsibility to ensure that children, staff and visitors are empowered to speak out if they are concerned about any aspect of our school's/setting's life. This includes maintaining vigilance about risks and harms children may face at school, at home or in the community and online.

Our behaviour policy will work to enhance children's experiences of authority and reflect our understanding of behaviour as communication and potentially symptomatic of a child's experiences outside of school/setting. We commit to taking a 'safeguarding first' approach and if in doubt we will consult with external agencies to maintain a child centred focus.

## Safer Recruitment and Selection

St. Scholastica's Catholic Primary School pays full regard to the statutory guidance for schools and colleges; [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2025\) – Part Three: Safer Recruitment](#). We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the school and who is therefore likely to be perceived and experienced by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult. This includes volunteers, supervised volunteers and staff employed by contractors.

Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applications, verifying identity and academic/vocational qualifications, obtaining professional references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and checks with the [Disclosure and Barring Service](#) (DBS).

In line with statutory changes, underpinned by regulations, the following will apply:

- DBS and barred list checks will be undertaken for all posts that are deemed regulated activity, and for all other posts an enhanced DBS check will be undertaken unless they are supervised roles that are deemed not to meet the definition of regulated activity;
- This school is committed to keeping an up to date [Single Central Record](#) detailing the range of checks carried out on our staff;
- All new appointments to our school workforce who have lived outside the UK will be subject to additional checks as appropriate;
- Our school ensures that supply staff have undergone the necessary checks and will be made aware of this policy;
- Identity checks that must be carried out on all appointments to our school workforce before the appointment is made, in partnership with the Local Authority;
- Staff responsible for recruiting and appointing must be suitably qualified.

## Safe Practice

Our school will comply with the current [Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People](#) and ensure that information in this guidance regarding conduct, is known to all staff, visitors and volunteers who come into the school.

Safe working practice ensures that pupils are safe and that all staff:

- Are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation, intentions and actions;
- Work in an open, honest and transparent way;
- Work with other colleagues where possible in situations that could be open to question;
- Discuss and/or take advice from school management over any incident which may give rise for concern;
- Record any incidents or decisions made;
- Apply professional standards respectfully **and consistently** in relation to diversity issues;

- Be aware of information-sharing and confidentiality policies;
- Are aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.

## **Positive Handling**

School staff, including volunteers, are only empowered to physically restrain pupils with 'reasonable force' to prevent them from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.

School staff will familiarise themselves with the Department for Education's [Use of Reasonable Force](#) and [Searching, Screening and Confiscation](#) guidance and follow the school's Behaviour Policy. The school will offer training to staff in appropriate use of physical intervention and/or restraint.

## **School Training and Staff Induction**

The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and Governor with designated responsibility for safeguarding will undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and refresher training at two yearly intervals.

All other school staff, including non-teaching staff, will undertake appropriate induction training and safeguarding/child protection training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding effectively, which will be updated regularly, including (as a minimum) a yearly update. The school will maintain a register of who has undertaken training and when.

All staff (including temporary staff, volunteers, supervised volunteers and staff employed by contractors) are provided with the school's safeguarding policy and informed of the school's safeguarding arrangements on induction. The school will maintain a register of who has received this information and when.

## **Support, Advice and Guidance for Staff**

Staff will be supported by **Emma Ciusins and their deputies Nick Blackham and Sandra Brierley**. The DSL will be supported by Elaine Radburn (Nominated Governor).

The DSL will know how to access the online London Child Protection Procedures, be aware of the CHSCP's work and policies alongside Hackney Education's guidance.

If you are not sure whether or not to make a safeguarding referral you can contact the Children and Family Services' Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and request a consultation to discuss your concerns on **020 8356 5500** during office hours and **020 8356 2710** out of hours.

## **Allegations regarding person(s) working in or on behalf of the school (including volunteers)**

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2023\) – Part Four: Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff](#)

Where an allegation is made against any person working in, or on behalf of, the school that he or she 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.

Whilst we acknowledge such allegations may be false, malicious or misplaced, we also acknowledge they may be based in fact and/or founded. It is, therefore, essential that all allegations are investigated properly, in line with agreed procedures and outcomes are recorded. All school staff will maintain a culture of vigilance based on the notion that 'it could happen here'. Staff are expected to maintain highly professional behaviours and set appropriate professional boundaries at all times in line with the schools Code of Conduct. Staff will be encouraged to use the [Whistle Blowing Policy](#) if they have concerns regarding the conduct or behaviour of a colleague and they feel that matter has not been addressed appropriately by the school.

### **Low level concerns - Keeping Children Safe In Education 2025**

As part of our whole school approach to safeguarding, we will ensure that we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Creating a culture in which all concerns about adults (including allegations that do not meet the harms threshold (see [Part Four - Keeping Children Safe In Education 2025](#)) are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical. We will endeavour to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early; minimise the risk of abuse; and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of (insert name of school) are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the school/setting.

### **What is a low level concern?**

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold set out at paragraph. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college 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 LADO.

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

- Being over friendly with children;
- Having favourites;
- Taking photographs of children on their own mobile phone;
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

It is crucial that any such concerns, including those which do not meet the harm threshold, are shared responsibly and with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from potential false allegations or misunderstandings

### **Initial Action by person receiving or identifying an allegation or concern**

- Treat the matter seriously and keep an open mind;
- Make a written record of the information using the Record Form (Appendix 2) or the school's internal mechanism for reporting concerns, including the time, date and place of incident/s, persons present and what was said and sign and date this;
- Immediately report the matter to the Headteacher or designated person (unless the allegation is against the Headteacher or designated person, in which case the Chair of Governors must be reported to).

### **Initial Action by the Headteacher (or designated person)**

- Obtain written details of the concern or allegation, but do not investigate or interview child, adult or witnesses;
- Contact the [Local Authority Designated Officer \(LADO\)](#) within 1 working day and seek their advice on how to proceed;
- Discuss with the LADO next steps using the London Child Protection Procedures Flow Charts Allegations/Concerns Against Staff;
- Inform the Chair of Governors of the allegation.

### **Subsequent Action by the Headteacher (or designated person)**

- In consultation with the LADO conduct a disciplinary investigation, if an allegation indicates the need for this;
- Contribute to the child protection process by attending **Allegations Against Professionals** meetings and other meetings as required;
- Maintain contact with the LADO throughout the process;
- Ensure clear and comprehensive records regarding the allegation, actions taken and outcome are retained on the staff member's personnel file;
- Consider whether a referral to the DBS should be made.

## Further Information on Safeguarding Issues

Safeguarding covers more than the contribution made to child protection in relation to individual children. It also encompasses issues such as pupil health and safety, bullying, arrangements for meeting the medical needs of children providing first aid, school security, drugs and substance misuse, gang related activity and promoting positive behaviour. Determining the most appropriate agency to consult with or refer to should be made by referring to the [Hackney Wellbeing Framework](#).

**All** staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk. Other safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of include:

### Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical.

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, can have a significant effect on a child's wellbeing and in very rare cases has been a feature in the suicide of some young people.

All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying must be reported and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. All pupils and parents/carers receive a copy of the anti-bullying procedures on joining the school and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in the (PSHE) curriculum. If the bullying is particularly serious, or the anti-bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the Headteacher and the DSL will consider implementing safeguarding procedures.

For further information please see the [DfE's Guidance](#).

### Online Safety

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

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material;
- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users;
- Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm.

The school recognises that its pupils will use mobile phones and computers at some time. They are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that some men, women and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, behaviours, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. Cyber-bullying by pupils via emails and texts will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and managed through our anti-bullying procedures.

Chatrooms and social networking sites are the most obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful content and behaviour, which pupils are not allowed to access in school. Some pupils will undoubtedly 'chat' on mobiles or social networking sites at home and the school will encourage parents/carers to consider measures to keep their children safe when using social media. **As a school/setting we will take steps to tackle misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories through teaching opportunities with children.**

## **Filters and monitoring**

Governing bodies and proprietors must be doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school or college's IT system. As part of this process, governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their school or college has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place. Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, governing bodies and proprietors should consider the age range of their pupils, the number of pupils, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs vs risks. The appropriateness of any filters and monitoring systems are a matter for individual schools and colleges and will be informed in part by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty.

[The UK Safer Internet Centre](#) has published guidance as to what "appropriate" might look like. Whilst filtering and monitoring are an important part of the online safety picture for schools and colleges to consider, it is only one part. Governors and proprietors should consider a whole school approach to online safety. This will include a clear policy on the use of mobile technology in the school. Many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via cellular networks in particular and the school and college should carefully consider how this is managed on their premises. Whilst it is essential that governing bodies and proprietors ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place, they should be careful that "over blocking" does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regard to online teaching and safeguarding.

Staff training, including Governors and proprietors should ensure that the nature of online risks is understood and the school's role in filtering and monitoring children's online lives must be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach.

**As technology advances and with the advent of Artificial Intelligence we will be agile and proactive in our responses, ensuring our filtering and monitoring system can effectively respond to the potential threats.**

**The DSL will keep their skills and knowledge up to date by accessing appropriate and timely training.**

## Photography and Images

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely understandable and acceptable reasons. However, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have safeguards in place.

To protect pupils we will:

- Seek their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for e.g. on our website or in newspapers or publications);
- Seek parent/carer consent;
- Use only the pupil's first name with an image;
- Ensure pupils are appropriately dressed;
- Only use school equipment to make images of children (no personal devices are permitted for this purpose);
- Encourage pupils to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

## Looked after children and previously looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe.

In particular, they should ensure that appropriate staff have access to the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents/carers, or on an interim or full care order) and the child's contact arrangements with birth parents/carers or those with parental responsibility. They should also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The designated safeguarding lead<sup>49</sup> should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the Virtual School Head in the authority that looks after the child.

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

## The Designated Teacher

Our governing body has appointed a designated teacher who will work with local authorities to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked after. With the commencement of sections 4 to 6 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, our designated teacher has a responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.

Our designated teacher will have appropriate training and the relevant qualifications and experience.

We will adhere to the statutory guidance: [Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children](#) which contains further information on the role and responsibilities of the designated teacher.

## **The Virtual School**

As a school we understand the additional experiences and vulnerabilities of Children Looked After by the local authority. We have a named Designated Teacher who will liaise with the Virtual School as required. [Virtual School Heads](#) manage pupil premium plus for looked after children; and receive this funding based on the latest published number of children looked after by the local authority.

The designated teacher will work with the Virtual School Head to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan. The designated teacher should also work with the Virtual School Head to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children.

## **Children potentially at greater risk of harm**

Whilst all children should be protected, we recognise that some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm than others (both online and offline).

## **Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)**

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse and/or neglect and/or exploitation and/or complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour, and mental health.

Hackney Local Authority should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the designated safeguarding lead should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This should be considered as a matter of routine. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both local authorities and schools and colleges to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Where children need a social worker, this will inform our decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or to a child missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

## **Children who are absent from education**

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. It is important the school or college's response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports

identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

When parents/carers inform our school that they wish to 'home educate' their child, our school will inform the Education Attendance Service (EAS), who will implement the 'Elective Home Education' procedure. Hackney Education is responsible for the delivery of CME (Children Missing from Education) duties defined by the Education Act Amendments and we will refer to the [Pupils Out Of School Team](#) as necessary.

### **Elective home education (EHE)**

Many home educated children have a positive learning experience. We would expect the parents/carers' decision to home educate to be made with their child's best education at the heart of the decision. However, this is not the case for all. Elective home education can mean that some children are not in receipt of suitable education and are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

In accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, we will make a return to the local authority when a pupil's name is deleted from the admission register.

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, we will recommend that local authorities, school, and other key professionals work together to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers/carers where possible. This would be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child. This is particularly important where a child has special educational needs or a disability, and/or has a social worker, and/or is otherwise vulnerable. Where a child has an Education, Health and Care plan local authorities will need to review the plan, working closely with parents/carers and carers.

### **Children requiring mental health support**

We understand that schools and settings have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils. 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. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure they have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.

**St. Scholastica's Catholic Primary School** has a senior mental health lead in a school/college who is a member of, or supported by the senior leadership team, and could be the pastoral lead, special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) or the named person with oversight for SEND in a college or designated safeguarding lead.

Schools and colleges can access a training grant to pay for DfE quality assured senior mental health lead training, helping them to implement a holistic 'whole school or college' approach to mental health and wellbeing. Further information on how schools and colleges can apply for a grant and identify the most appropriate training for them – can be found at Guidance: [Senior mental health lead training](#).

## **Alternative Provision**

We acknowledge that when we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs.

The cohort of pupils in Alternative Provision often have complex needs, our governing body are aware of the additional risk of harm that their pupils may be vulnerable to. We will obtain written information from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at their establishment (i.e. those checks that schools would otherwise perform on their own staff). This includes written confirmation that the alternative provider will inform the commissioning school of any arrangements that may put the child at risk (i.e. staff changes), so that we (the commissioning school) can ensure itself that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on new staff.

We will endeavour to ensure we always know where a child is based during school hours. This includes having records of the address of the alternative provider and any subcontracted provision or satellite sites the child may attend. They should regularly review the alternative provision placements they make. We will review placements frequently enough (at least half termly) to provide assurance that the child is regularly attending and the placement continues to be safe and meets the child's needs. Where safeguarding concerns arise, the placement should be immediately reviewed, and terminated, if necessary, unless or until those concerns have been satisfactorily addressed.

The Department for Education has issued two pieces of statutory guidance to which commissioners of Alternative Provision to which we will have regard:

- [Alternative Provision](#) DfE statutory guidance and
- [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK](#) ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) – DfE statutory guidance.

## **Children who harm others**

Our school recognises that the harm caused to children by abusive, exploitative and harmful behaviour of other children can be significant. Children who harm others should be held responsible for their behaviour and the school staff are alerted to the fact that they are likely to pose a risk to other children in the school, home and community.

Where this harm involves sexual abuse, serious physical or emotional abuse, the safeguarding procedures set out in this policy will be applied. This school recognises that children who harm others are likely to have considerable needs themselves and may have experienced or be experiencing significant harm.

Where a child has caused significant harm to another child, through sexual abuse or serious

physical or emotional abuse, the school will make separate referrals to Children and Families Service of the victim(s) and perpetrator(s). The school will be mindful that these concerns may sit in contexts unknown to the school that involve extra-familial harms.

The London Borough of Hackney has produced [guidance regarding Multi-agency Planning \(MAP\) Meetings for children and young people who present a risk of demonstrating harmful sexual behaviour](#).

Our school will be mindful of the sections in the [London Child Protection Procedures concerning 'Harming Others'](#) and work closely with social care, the police and other agencies following a referral.

## **Child on Child Abuse**

[Child on Child](#) abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between children and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate). Peer-on-peer abuse can take various forms, including: serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), relationship abuse, domestic violence, child sexual exploitation, youth and serious youth violence, harmful sexual behaviour, and/or gender-based violence. See below for more detailed information.

Both Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

## **Child Sexual Exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

The definition of child sexual exploitation is as follows:

Child sexual exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Child sexual exploitation is a complex form of abuse and it can be difficult for those working with children to identify and assess. The indicators for child sexual exploitation can sometimes be mistaken for 'normal adolescent behaviours'. It requires knowledge, skills, professional curiosity and an assessment which analyses the risk factors and personal

circumstances of individual children to ensure that the signs and symptoms are interpreted correctly and appropriate support is given. Even where a young person is old enough to legally consent to sexual activity, the law states that consent is only valid where they make a choice and have the freedom and capacity to make that choice. If a child feels they have no other meaningful choice, are under the influence of harmful substances or fearful of what might happen if they don't comply (all of which are common features in cases of child sexual exploitation) consent cannot legally be given whatever the age of the child.

Child sexual exploitation is never the victim's fault, even if there is some form of exchange: all children and young people under the age of 18 have a right to be safe and should be protected from harm. CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

One of the key factors found in most cases of child sexual exploitation is the presence of some form of exchange (sexual activity in return for something); for the victim and/or perpetrator or facilitator.

Where it is the victim who is offered, promised or given something they need or want, the exchange can include both tangible (such as money, drugs or alcohol) and intangible rewards (such as status, protection or perceived receipt of love or affection). It is critical to remember the unequal power dynamic within which this exchange occurs and to remember that the receipt of something by a child/young person does not make them any less of a victim. It is also important to note that the prevention of something negative can also fulfil the requirement for exchange, for example a child who engages in sexual activity to stop someone carrying out a threat to harm his/her family.

Whilst there can be gifts or treats involved in other forms of sexual abuse (e.g. a father who sexually abuses but also buys the child toys) it is most likely referred to as child sexual exploitation if the 'exchange', as the core dynamic at play, results in financial gain for or enhanced status of, the perpetrator. Where the gain is only for the perpetrator/facilitator, there is most likely a financial gain (money, discharge of a debt or free/discounted goods or services) or increased status as a result of the abuse. If sexual gratification, or exercise of power and control, is the only gain for the perpetrator (and there is no gain for the child/young person) this would not normally constitute child sexual exploitation, but should be responded to as a different form of child sexual abuse.

If, as a school, we are concerned a child is being sexually exploited we will follow the procedures set out in this document and make reference to the [guidance provided by CHSCP](#). This further [Governmental guidance](#) can be useful when considering cases of CSE.

## **Child Criminal Exploitation**

As set out in the [Serious Violence Strategy](#), published by the Home Office, criminal exploitation is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

## **County Lines**

As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, [County Lines](#) is the term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

## **Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges**

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any sex. They can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

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. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Schools and colleges should consider the following:

- It is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and more likely that sexual harassment will be perpetrated by boys. Schools and colleges should be aware of the importance of:
- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- Not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- Challenging behaviours (which are potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts, vaginas and penises. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
- Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can be especially

vulnerable. Disabled and deaf children are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children;

- 'Upskirting' has now become a criminal offence and therefore requires a safeguarding response if happening in school.

## **The Extra-Familial Risk Panel**

Hackney [Extra Familial Risk Panel \(EFRP\)](#) coordinates safeguarding interventions in cases where a child, or a group of children are:

- At risk of, or already experiencing harm caused by people (including other children) outside their family and/or;
- At risk of, or already causing harm to children outside their family.

Our school will respond to issues of risk or harm outside the family home as child protection issues and consult with and/or refer to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) following the same procedures as for any form of harm or abuse.

## **Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism**

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

Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance. [Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims.](#)

## **Children with special educational needs and disabilities**

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges, with [research stating](#) that SEND children can be up to four times more likely to be abused due to additional vulnerabilities. As a school we will ensure a culture of vigilance that recognises that barriers can exist when recognising **abuse, neglect and exploitation** in this group of children. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- The potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

## **Female Genital Mutilation**

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM.

If, as a school, we are concerned we will follow the procedures set out in this document and make reference to the [guidance provided by CHSCP](#).

Where a teacher discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl

who is aged under 18, there is a mandatory duty upon that individual to report it to the [police](#).

## **FGM Mandatory Reporting Duty**

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a [mandatory duty](#) upon teachers, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

## **Further information on so-called ‘honour-based’ violence**

So-called ‘honour-based’ violence (HBV) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving “honour” often involves a Draft for consultation 67 wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV.

## **Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism**

We as a school will fulfil our responsibilities under the [Prevent Duty](#), it is essential that staff are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools’ wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences.

We aim to build pupils’ resilience to radicalisation by [promoting fundamental British values](#) and enabling them to challenge extremist views. The Prevent duty is not intended to stop pupils debating controversial issues. On the contrary, the school will provide a safe space in which children, young people and staff can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments. We will be mindful of the risk of children being exposed to extremist materials via the internet.

If, as a school, we are concerned we will follow the procedures set out in this document and make reference to the [guidance provided by Hackney Education](#).

## **Domestic Violence and Abuse**

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduces the statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they

see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government will issue statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.

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

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of peer on peer abuse is sometimes referred to as ‘teenage relationship abuse’. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of ‘domestic abuse’ (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

As a school, if we are concerned about the life lived experience of children who are, or may be, living in a household where domestic violence and abuse are present, we will adhere to our safeguarding procedures and consult with Hackney MASH. To inform our decision making we will consult with the [information provided by Hackney Council](#).

## **Operation Encompass**

[Operation Encompass](#) operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child’s circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child’s needs. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools does make a referral to children’s social care if they are concerned about a child’s welfare. More information about the scheme and how schools can become involved is available via Hackney Education Safeguarding Team.

## **Extended School and Off-Site Arrangements**

Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own safeguarding policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures **and staff training**.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and/or other activities, we will check that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place. We will also undertake appropriate and robust risk assessments for the venue, location and activity to be undertaken in accordance with the school's risk assessment protocol.

## Appendix 1

### Cause for Concern Form (Page 1):

Name of child:	Date of incident:
Class and year:	Time of incident:
Location of incident:	Date of record:
Name of person reporting:	Time of record:

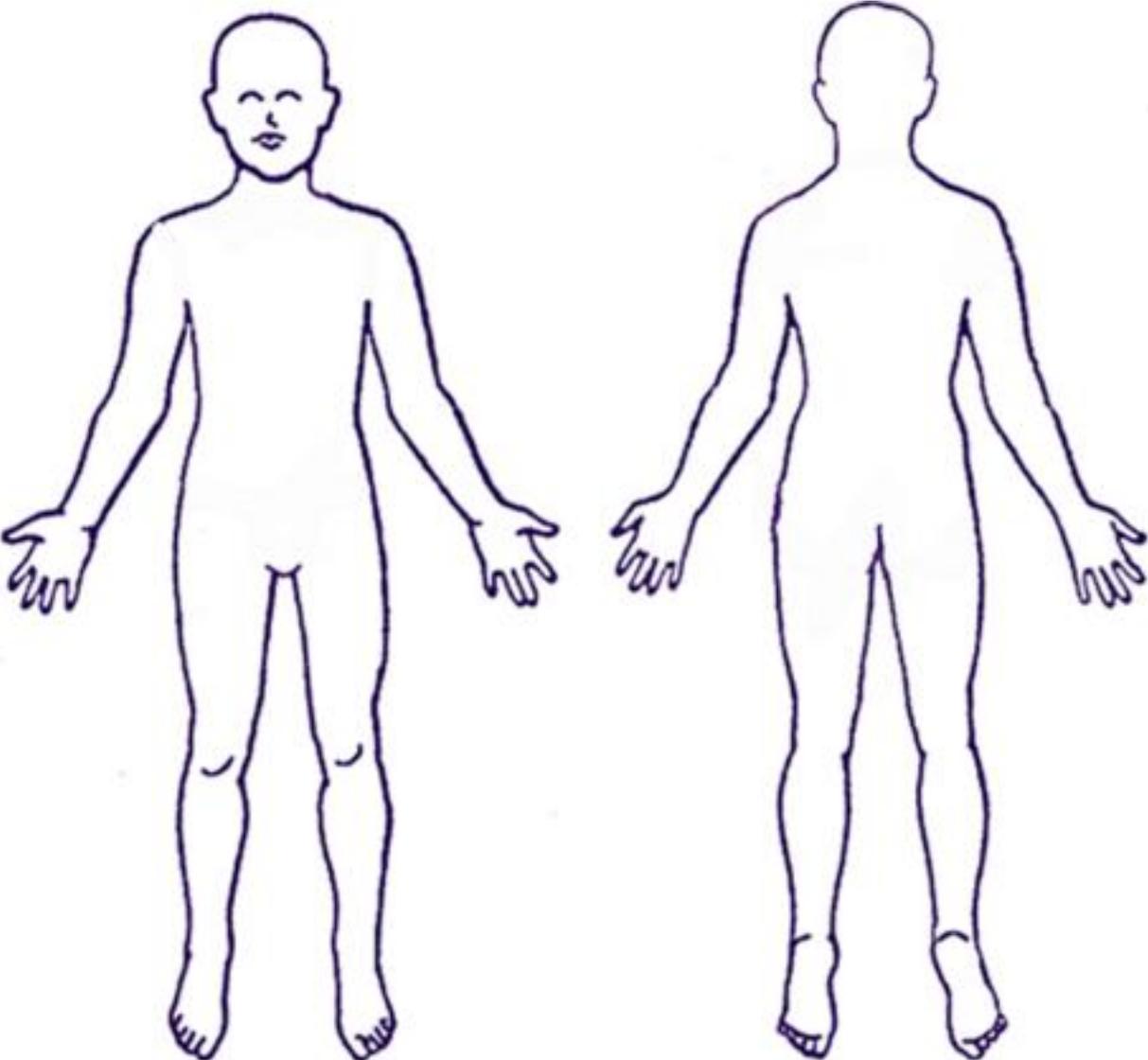
<p>Concern/Incident – Describe your concern using clear, straightforward language:</p>	<p>Opinion: How does this fit with what you know about the child?</p>
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Hackney Education Model Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2023/24

## Appendix 1

### Cause for Concern Form (Page 2) – Body Map

This body outline can be used to record marks and/or bruises and the date of occurrence or observation and should be kept in the Child Protection File of the child.



## Appendix 2

### MASH Consultations and Online Referral Form

If a case is already allocated within Hackney Children and Families Services, please contact the child's allocated unit to discuss your concerns.

If you are worried about a child who is not open to Hackney Children and Families Services, where you feel your concern is urgent and you need to speak to a social worker to agree a plan of action today, please call MASH on 020 8356 5500 or email [MASH@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:MASH@hackney.gov.uk):

- the phone line is open 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays
- outside of these hours, please contact the Emergency Duty Team on 020 8356 2710

If you're unsure about what support a child and family needs, or whether you should make a referral to MASH, please call MASH and ask for a consultation with a member of the team.

How does the consultation line work?

- it's for professionals only
- for cases that are not already open to the Council's service
- you must have consulted your designated safeguarding lead first
- you will need to use the usual MASH number – 020 8356 5500 – and ask for a consultation
- experienced members of staff from MASH will respond
- MASH will listen to your concerns and offer advice and guidance about the most appropriate next steps – their advice may include:
  - a request for you to have further conversations with the child and family about the concerns and – with their consent – other members of the family's network
  - a written referral to MASH
  - a referral to another service

MASH will keep a log of calls to monitor the consultation line's use, but calls will not be recorded on their files. It is important that anyone contacting MASH make their own agency records of discussions.

### Referral form

Please complete a MASH referral form if you wish to request either early help or statutory social work support for a family after consultation with the MASH.

[MASH Request For Support Form](#)

Information submitted via the form will only be reviewed during office hours.

Please note, it is expected that you will have spoken to the family about the referral you are making to MASH, prior to contacting MASH, in all cases except where it is felt that doing so will place a child at immediate risk of harm.

All decisions in MASH about the most appropriate next steps for a child and family are made in line with the [Hackney Child Wellbeing Framework](#).

## Appendix 3

### Hackney Key Contacts and Guidance

#### Useful Contact Details:

- Hackney Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 020 8356 5500
- Hackney MASH Out of Hours: 020 8356 2710
- Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT) @ Police: 020 8217 6537
- Hackney Education Safeguarding in Education Team: 020 8820 7255
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 020 8356 4569
- City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership: 020 8356 4183
- NSPCC- 24-hour Helpline: 080 8800 5000
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS): [www.gov.uk/dbs](http://www.gov.uk/dbs)

#### Useful guidance documents:

##### Hackney Well-being Framework:

[Hackney-Child-Wellbeing-Framework.pdf](#)

##### London Child Protection Procedures:

<http://www.londoncp.co.uk/>

##### Working Together to Safeguard Children:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419595/Working\\_Together\\_to\\_Safeguard\\_Children.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf)

##### Keeping Children Safe in Education:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1181955/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_2025.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181955/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2025.pdf)

##### What to do if you are worried a child is being abused:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419604/What\\_to\\_do\\_if\\_you\\_re\\_worried\\_a\\_child\\_is\\_being\\_abused.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)

##### Information Sharing Guidance for Practitioners:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419628/Information\\_sharing\\_advice\\_safeguarding\\_practitioners.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419628/Information_sharing_advice_safeguarding_practitioners.pdf)

##### Hackney Education Whistle Blowing Policy:

<https://www.hackneyservicesforschools.co.uk/extranet-document/whistleblowing-policy>