

# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Columbia Market Nursery School

September 2020

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Columbia Market Nursery School is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for children, staff and visitors and promoting a climate where children and adults will feel confident about sharing any concerns which they may have about their own safety or the well-being of others. We aim to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by protecting them 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 all children to have the best outcomes.

The health, safety and well-being of all our children are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our school. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe in our school. We will always put the best interests of the children first. Parents are made aware of our safeguarding responsibilities during the induction procedures and at all times while children are attending the school.

In our school we respect our children. The atmosphere within our school is one that encourages all children to do their best. We provide opportunities that enable our children to take and make decisions for themselves.

Our teaching of personal, social, emotional and health education and citizenship, as part of the curriculum, helps to develop appropriate attitudes to our children and makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations, and how to behave in response to them.

The Safeguarding policies are reviewed with Governors and Staff and policies will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident, new legislation or guidance calls for the need for a review.

This policy ensures that all staff in our school are clear about the actions necessary with regard to a child protection issue. Its aims are:

- To identify the names of responsible persons in the school and explain the purpose of their role.
- Describe what should be done if anyone in the school has a concern about the safety and welfare of a child who attends the school.
- To raise the awareness of all staff and identify responsibility in reporting possible cases of abuse;
- To ensure effective communication between all staff when dealing with child protection issue;
- To lay down the correct procedures for those who encounter an issue of child protection.
- To show the ways we work in partnership with parents to keep children safe.
- To show how child welfare and safety issues are reflected in our curriculum.

- Identify the particular attention that should be paid to those children who fall into a category that might be deemed “vulnerable”
- Set out expectations in respect of training
- Ensure that those responsible for recruitment are aware of how to apply safeguarding principles in employing staff
- Set out expectations of how to ensure children are safeguarded when there is potential to come into contact with non-school staff, e.g. volunteers, contractors etc.
- Outline how complaints against staff will be handled
- Clarify how children will be kept safe through the everyday life of the school
- To show the ways we work in partnership with parents to keep children safe
- To show how child welfare and safety issues are reflected in our curriculum.
- Outline how the implementation of this policy will be monitored

The procedures within the Child Protection policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors and that they have been written in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 and Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership supplementary guidance (THSCP)].

## 1. CORE SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

- The welfare of the child is paramount and underpins all discussions and decision making.
- All children have the right to have a life free from harm, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, all have equal rights to protection.
- All staff including supply staff and volunteers have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- The DSL will ensure that all pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support.

## 2. PURPOSE OF POLICY

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

### 3. SAFEGUARDING LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

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

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (maintained schools only)
- Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 (Independent schools only, including academies and Free Schools)
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (Independent schools only, including academies and Free Schools)
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Teacher Standards 2012
- Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020
- COVID-19: Safeguarding in Schools, Colleges and Other Providers
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015

### 4. THSCP SUPPLEMENTARY SAFEGUARDING GUIDANCE

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

- London Child Protection Procedures revised 5th Edition (London Safeguarding Children Board, March 2020)
- Tower Hamlets SCP Multi-Agency Safeguarding Thresholds Guidance
- Tower Hamlets SCP Supplementary Guidance for Schools and Education Settings on Child Protection Procedures - September 2020
- Tower Hamlets SCP LADO Procedures and Flowchart re Allegations made against staff working in the children's workforce - Information about reporting and managing allegations
- Tower Hamlets SCP Supplementary Guidance for Schools and Education Settings on Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff – September 2020

## 5. TOWER HAMLETS SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP

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

- **Local Authority**

James Thomas, Corporate Director of Children's Services London Borough of Tower Hamlets

- ***Clinical Commissioning Group***

Selina Douglas, Managing Director TH CCG

- **Police**

Marcus Barnett, Commander, Central East Basic Command Unit, Metropolitan Police

Keith Makin is the THSCP's Independent Scrutineer who will act as a critical friend to all partners and agencies. All staff have been made aware of the new local arrangements especially the Governing body, senior leadership team, and the DSL. As a named relevant agency, the school is under a statutory duty to cooperate with the THSCP arrangements.

The school will engage with the borough's Designated Safeguarding Leads forums, THSCP safeguarding training offer, and the school will participate in the borough's section 175/157 and section 11 Safeguarding Self-Evaluation process submitting the completed self-evaluation when requested.

## 6. KEY DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing the impairment of a child's physical and mental health or development

- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

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

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

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

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

## 7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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

Designated Safeguarding Lead Lynn Cottle

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Kim Waters

Headteacher Lynn Cottle

Safeguarding –Link Governor Victoria Crawley

Chair of Governors Tonje Pettersen

The role of the DSL includes:

- ensuring all staff read and understand the school’s safeguarding policies and that procedures are followed by all staff
- advising and supporting staff as they carry out their safeguarding duty
- encouraging a whole school approach to safeguarding, which is when paramountcy of the welfare of the child underpins all systems, policies, procedures, and decision making
- promoting a culture of listening to the voice of the child and ensuring that there are formal and informal opportunities for that voice to be heard
- ensuring timely and accurate referrals are made to children’s social care, the police, or other agencies

- participating in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings
- liaising with the case manager and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where allegations are made against staff
- making staff aware of training courses and the latest local safeguarding arrangements available through the local safeguarding partner arrangements
- transferring the child protection file to a child's new school and proactively contacting the new school in advance to help ensure a successful transition
- undergoing the required 2 day refresher training every 2 years as a minimum and receiving regular updates to maintain the knowledge and skills to carry out the role, including Prevent awareness training.

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

If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is not available please contact Kim Waters Deputy Safeguarding Lead

All Staff are expected to keep safeguarding values at the centre of their conduct. The best interests of the child should determine their behaviour and action.

For example, effectively listening to the child; promoting positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils; referring concerns immediately to the DSL

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

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

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

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

## 9. CHILDREN IN NEED OF A SOCIAL WORKER

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children who have been allocated a social worker may have experienced abuse, neglect and belong to a family that has many complex circumstances. The school recognises that these children will have experienced adversity and trauma that can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health. When making decisions about safeguarding, analysing risks and providing pastoral and academic support, the school will take seriously the fact that the child in need of a social worker will require enhanced support alongside that provided by statutory services.

## 10. CHILDREN REQUIRING MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

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

If there are any concerns please refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will work with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator to ensure support is provided.

## 11. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS

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

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will work with the Virtual School Headteacher to devise an appropriate action plan to safeguard and promote the educational outcomes of Looked After Children.

## 12. SEND CHILDREN

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

- 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.

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

## 13. CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION AND CHILDREN MISSING

The school closely monitors attendance, absence and exclusions. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation, child criminal exploitation or mental health problems. The school follows up on absences as part of its safeguarding duty. Staff must also be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

Parents are contacted on the first day of absence. Absences are always followed up to ensure the child is attending fully.

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

Contact: LBTH CME Officer, Tower Hamlets Education Safeguarding Service,  
[Saadia.Anwer@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:Saadia.Anwer@towerhamlets.gov.uk) 020 7364 3426

## 14. WHISTLEBLOWING

Columbia Market Nursery School is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. Our whistle blowing policy supports this commitment. It gives employees and others with genuine concerns about malpractice or wrong doing in the school, a way to voice those concerns without fear of victimisation

### **Objectives**

Sometimes people are reluctant to act upon their concerns because they think that they are being disloyal, or because they are afraid that they might be victimised if they speak up.

The purpose of this policy is to provide you with the help and support you need to speak up and be confident that you can do so safely. We will take your concerns seriously and ensure that they are dealt with promptly and fairly

### **Process**

How to raise a concern

- Speak to any member of SMT or write to the Chair of Governors
- You will receive a response within 5 working days (term time)
- You will be asked to meet to discuss your concerns. Before the meeting, it would be helpful if you write down what you consider the problem to be, giving names, dates and places where possible. If there are any other documents that you think might be helpful, please try to bring these with you

We will write to you within 10 days of your initial meeting to:

- acknowledge that your concern has been received;
- outline our understanding of what the issues are and;
- indicate how we propose to deal with the matter if appropriate.

If SMT/Chair of Governors decides that it is appropriate for an investigation to be carried out, advice from the Local Authority will be sought and followed. Where it is necessary to safeguard children or vulnerable adults, the appropriate procedures will be followed. In addition, where it is established that the complaint involves issues of bullying or unlawful discrimination, it will be necessary to seek appropriate professional advice. Investigations will never be conducted by anyone in your line management structure.

If an investigation is carried out, you will always be informed of the final outcome. It might not be possible to give you full details of the outcome if it contains personal details of a third party, because we have a duty to protect personal information under the Data Protection Act

#### Anonymous allegations

You are encouraged to raise your concern in person, because concerns that are expressed anonymously are difficult to investigate. However, anonymous allegations may be investigated depending on

- the seriousness of the issues raised;
- the credibility of the allegation and;
- the likelihood of being able to confirm the allegation from attributable sources.

#### How will the school treat whistleblowers?

- If you make an allegation in good faith but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you. If you knowingly make malicious allegations, disciplinary action may be taken against you
- Disciplinary action will be taken against any member of staff who tries to stop another employee from raising a concern or who is responsible for any act of recrimination or victimisation against an employee who raises a concern
- If you raise a concern, you will be given the opportunity to feed back any issues or problems you may have experienced as a result. This will take place outside your line management structure. The purpose of this is to ensure that employees who have raised concerns in good faith do not suffer as a result

#### **Responsibility for Policy**

Headteacher and Chair of Governors

This is available for all staff

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

## 15. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

When an allegation is made against a member of staff including supply staff and volunteers, the school's procedures will be followed. The procedures are compliant with KCSIE 2020 part 4 and THSCP supplementary guidance- Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff – September 2020.

An allegation is made against a member of staff including supply staff and volunteers when a member of staff has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;

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

## COMPLAINTS/ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST STAFF

Columbia Market Nursery School takes seriously all complaints made against members of staff. Procedures are in place for pupils, parents and staff to share any concern that they may have about the actions of any member staff or volunteer. All such complaints will be brought immediately to the attention of the Headteacher or the Designated Safeguarding Leads if the Headteacher is not available and nothing should be said to the colleague involved. In cases where the Headteacher is the subject of the allegation or concern, they will be reported to the Chair of Governors, in order that they may activate the appropriate procedures. These procedures are used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a teacher or member of staff (including volunteers) in a school or college that provides education for children under 18 years of age has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm children.

The Local Authority's Designated Officer(s) (LADO) should be informed of all allegations that come to a school's attention and appear to meet the criteria. Contact can also be made with LA's Schools Safeguarding Coordinator who will liaise with the LADO.

Local Authority Designated Officer Melanie Benzie [LADO@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

Many cases may well either not meet the criteria set out above, or may do so without warranting consideration of either a police investigation or enquiries by local authority children's social care services. In these cases, local arrangements will be followed to resolve cases without delay.

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

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

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

**LBTH Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):**  
Melanie Benzie

**Email:**

[Melanie.Benzie@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:Melanie.Benzie@towerhamlets.gov.uk) or  
[LADO@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

**Telephone:**

0207364 0677

## 16. STAFF TRAINING

Staff training takes place annually. If any staff are unable to attend the training separate training is arranged for them. All new staff, agency staff, volunteers and students are given training in safeguarding as part of their induction. All staff receive safeguarding updates and bulletins at staff meetings. Safeguarding policies and KCSIE 2020 Part 1 are given to staff to read. A discussion with questioning is held to ensure understanding.

## 17. SAFER RECRUITMENT

The school's safer recruitment procedures comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 part 3 and the local safeguarding partner arrangements by carrying out the required checks and verifying the applicant's identity, qualifications and work history. At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

Staff are made aware of the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and the statutory guidance. Due to working with young children under eight years of age have been made aware of the Regulations and their obligations to disclose relevant information to the school.

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

The school maintains a Single Central Record of recruitment checks undertaken, which is regularly reviewed for compliance.

## 18. VISITORS

Visitors are required to make an appointment before visiting the nursery. If possible the visit will take place outside of school hours. Their identity is checked when they enter the building. Visitors are required to complete the visitor's book, they sign in and agree to

keep children safe and are supplied with a visitors leaflet explaining their duty whilst on school premises. Building contractors who are engaged by or on behalf of the school to undertake works on site will be made aware of this policy and the reasons for this.

Individuals and organisations that are contracted by the school to work with or provide services to pupils will be expected to adhere to this policy and their compliance will be monitored. Any such contractors will be subject to the appropriate level of DBS check, if any such check is required (for example because the contractor is carrying out teaching or providing some type of care for or supervision of children regularly). Contractors for whom an appropriate DBS check has not been undertaken will be supervised if they will have contact with children. We will always check the identity of contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

## 19. EXTENDED SCHOOL AND OFF-SITE ARRANGEMENTS

Staff who work within the nursery school provide breakfast and after school and are made aware of the Childcare Disqualification 2018 Regulations. Children within the nursery take part in visits from the nursery, the majority of who are accompanied by their parents. Small local trips which involve staff are risk assessed and two members of staff take part. All staff are aware of the safeguarding arrangements that are in place.

## 20. STAFF/PUPIL ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS

### E-SAFETY

The growth of different electronic media in everyday life and an ever developing variety of devices including PCs, tablets, laptops, mobile phones, webcams etc. place an additional risk on our children.

Internet chat rooms, discussion forums or social networks can all be used as a means of contacting children and young people with a view to grooming them for inappropriate or abusive relationships. The anonymity of the internet allows adults, often pretending to be children, to have conversations with children and in some cases arrange to meet them. Access to abusive images is not a “victimless” act as it has already involved the abuse of children. The internet has become a significant tool in the distribution of indecent photographs of children and should be a concern to all those working with children at this school.

Staff protect children from accessing harmful material by running workshops for parents explaining the dangers and how to use parental controls.

## MOBILE USE AND CAMERA USE

### **USE OF MOBILE PHONES AND CAMERAS IN SCHOOL**

Mobile phones and personal cameras are not to be used in the school by staff, parents or visitors.

Visitors to the school are requested to switch off their mobile phones whilst they are on the school site and keep them out of reach of children, either in a bag or pocket or else handed in to reception for collection on their departure.

Parents are not allowed to use mobile phones on the premises and are not allowed to film or take photographs on their phone on the school premises.

#### **MOBILE PHONE USE POLICY**

##### **The purpose and importance of the mobile phone policy:**

Columbia Market Nursery School recognizes that staff may need to have access to mobile phones on site during the working day. However, there have been a number of queries raised within the local authority and nationally regarding the use of mobile phones and other devices in educational settings.

The concerns are mainly based around these issues:

- Staff being distracted from their work
- The use of mobile phones around children
- The inappropriate use of mobile phones.

##### **Ensuring the safe and appropriate use of mobile phones:**

Staff to bring in mobile phones for their own personal use. However, they must be kept in the staff room or their lockers at all times and are not allowed to be used in the classrooms, toilets or gardens at any time. If staff fail to follow this guidance, disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the school disciplinary procedures.

If staff need to make an emergency call, they must do so either in the main office or in the staff room.

Staff must ensure that there is no inappropriate or illegal content on the device.

Mobile phone technology may not be used to take photographs anywhere within the nursery grounds. There are iPads and digital cameras available within the nursery and only these should be used to record visual information within the consent criteria guidelines of the local authority and the nursery.

Members of staff may only contact a parent on school approved mobile phones.

When children undertake a school trip or journey, mobile phone use by adult leaders should be limited to contact with the school office or venues being visited, except in emergencies and then only by approved telephones.

##### **Use of mobile phones by volunteers and visitors:**

Upon their initial visit volunteers and visitors are given information informing that they are not permitted to use mobile phones on the premises. If they wish to make or take an emergency call they use either the main office or in the staff room.

21.

## 22. IDENTIFYING ABUSE

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

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

## 23. INDICATORS OF ABUSE

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

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

**Emotional** - the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally

inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

**Neglect** - the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

The school is aware of the borough's [LBTH Neglect Guidance](#) and understands its important role in identifying children who may be suffering from Neglect.

## 24. SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

## 25. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

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

Some of the following can be indicators of CSE:

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

Children are informed about keeping themselves safe through the Personal Social and Emotional curriculum. Columbia Market Nursery School is an inclusive community and through our work in all areas to give parents and children a sense of self-worth and belonging. We want to make sure that families have trust and feel safe

As well as exploring important values, including British Values such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for of those with different faiths and beliefs. We believe that these are values that spread across the world in different communities and will be explored in a way that is meaningful for young children.

Through delivery of the Early Years PSED curriculum children will be able to express personal views and or values, ask questions, have respect, develop good personal and social skills, be able to resolve conflicts, co-operate and participate, understand what is right or

wrong, true or false, understand the consequences of their actions and understand their own feelings and emotions. The staff also support the development of thinking critically as part of effective learning.

The list below shows how the school will put this into operation.

British Values Policy in Action

(What it looks like in practice)

We are a UNICEF Rights Respecting School.

An understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process; Children given opportunity to make decisions

Voting for favourite stories, activities, ice cream....

Being encouraged to share their views/make requests e.g. letter/visit to the headteacher requesting resources/ request that we do something

An appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their wellbeing and safety;

Learning about the charter of rights and responsibilities and understanding why we have these

Learning about being fair and sharing

Adults explain why children cannot do certain things and model health and safety e.g. encourage children to pick coats off the floor so others do not trip up

Adults teach skills so children can keep safe; road safety, stranger danger...

An understanding that there is a separation of power between the executive and the judiciary, and that while some public bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account through Parliament, others such as the courts maintain independence A bit trickier in early years but we help children to:

- know who the police are, what they do
- Know about different jobs: judges...
- Respect authority (teachers) but also understand that they can challenge appropriately
- Understand what parliament is (Talk about elections, visit parliament...)

An understanding that the freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law; Learning about the different faiths in our community

Adults helping them to share their beliefs and understand that they can make choices

An acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour;

Follow borough guidance in reporting racist or discriminatory incidents

An understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination.

Promote equal opportunities through the resources we present; stories with different kinds of families and so on

Sharing issues through stories

Respond by explaining if issues occur

See also equalities action plan

Support staff with equalities training

Through equalities training we share expectations with staff.

In addition to what we do with our young children the school invests greatly in its support for parents. We use our community events to develop understanding. Through our parent workshops or individual discussions we want to have parents empowered to be able to have conversations with their children, to feel that they can discuss concerns with us.

## 26. CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION

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

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines, see page 85 for more information), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

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

Staff are aware of County Lines using KCSIE 2020 Part 1 Annex A County lines County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of

victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network. One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism<sup>103</sup> should be considered. If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation. Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office.

## 27. SERIOUS YOUTH VIOLENCE

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

## 28. ONLINE HARMS

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate the whole school or college community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate.

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

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults; and
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.

#### Technical and Infrastructure

##### ***The borough:***

- Maintains the filtered broadband connectivity through the London Grid for Learning (LGfL) and so connects to the ‘private’ National Education Network;
- ensures the network manager is up-to-date with LGfL services and policies;
- never send personal data over the Internet unless it is, sent via secure email addresses or otherwise secured.

We have an e-safety policy and an Acceptable user Agreement which is signed by all staff. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children’s services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (“the Prevent duty”). Young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views, in particular those via the internet and other social media. Schools can help to protect children from extremist and violent views in the same ways that they help to safeguard children from drugs, gang violence or alcohol.

## 29. DOMESTIC ABUSE

Domestic abuse as defined by KCSIE 20The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and 103 National Crime Agency - Modern slavery and human-trafficking 86 psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child

may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

The school has signed up to the Metropolitan Police's Operation Encompass and on receipt of a notification will provide appropriate support to the child.

### 30. HONOUR-BASED ABUSE

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

So-called ‘honour-based’ abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation, Breast Ironing and Forced Marriage) So-called ‘honour-based’ abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving “honour” often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils or students, 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. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.<sup>105</sup> Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school’s or college’s designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and involve children’s social care as appropriate.

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. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. The Forced Marriage Unit has published statutory guidance and Multi-agency guidelines, pages 35-36 of which focus on the role of schools and colleges. School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email [fm@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fm@fco.gov.uk).

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

### 31. RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM

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

- Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces. There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability.
- Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools' or colleges' safeguarding approach.
- Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a Prevent referral. The school's or college's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral. The Prevent duty All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty. The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations. [school completes and reviews a Prevent Risk Assessment and Prevent Checklists](#)

Staff training takes place and we use opportunities that occur with relevant parts in the curriculum to enable children to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture.

The school promotes fundamental British Values as part of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. We have a variety of celebrations throughout the year which are used to support this.

## British Values Policy in Action

(What it looks like in practice)

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An understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process; Children given opportunity to make decisions

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Being encouraged to share their views/make requests e.g. letter/visit to the headteacher requesting resources/ request that we do something

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- know who the police are, what they do
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An understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination.

Promote equal opportunities through the resources we present; stories with different kinds of families and so on

Sharing issues through stories

Respond by explaining if issues occur

See also equalities action plan

Support staff with equalities training

Through equalities training we share expectations with staff.

In addition to what we do with our young children the school invests greatly in its support for parents. We use our community events to develop understanding. Through our parent workshops or individual discussions we want to have parents empowered to be able to have conversations with their children, to feel that they can discuss concerns with us.

If any adult suspects that a child may be a victim of radicalisation they must immediately inform the designated safeguarding lead Lynn Cottle or Victoria Crawley who will contact the safeguarding team.

In LBTH the Prevent Education Officer is [Jasmin.Phillips@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:Jasmin.Phillips@towerhamlets.gov.uk) who can provide support with Prevent risk assessments, check lists and awareness training among staff and pupils.

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

## 32. PEER ON PEER ABUSE

Children may be harmed by other children. All staff recognise that children can abuse their peers and should follow the school's policy and procedures regarding peer on peer abuse. At the school all incidents of peer on peer abuse are treated very seriously and all forms are unacceptable. Abuse is abuse and will never be dismissed as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

Peer on peer abuse can take many forms and may be facilitated by technology, including:

- physical abuse such as biting, hitting, kicking or hair pulling
- sexually harmful behaviour and sexual abuse including inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault or rape
- sexting including pressuring another person to send a sexual imagery or video content

- teenage relationship abuse – where there is a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, perpetrated against a current or former partner
- upskirting – taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their knowledge, which is a criminal offence
- initiation/hazing - used to introduce newcomers into an organisation or group by subjecting them to a series of trials and challenges, which are potentially humiliating, embarrassing or abusive.
- prejudice and discrimination - behaviours which cause a person to feel powerless, worthless or excluded originating from prejudices around belonging, identity and equality, for example, prejudices linked to disabilities, special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender and sexual identity.

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

Abuse is never tolerated. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse. At Columbia Market Nursery School we believe that all children have the right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. When a report of peer on peer abuse has been given to the Designated Safeguarding lead they will assess the situation, phone the local MASH team for advice and work with the children and families involved to change behaviours.

#### PEER ON PEER SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as children’s social care and the police as required. It is appropriate to make notes during the report (especially if a second member of staff is present). and students and putting adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure they are engaging with children’s social care and specialist services as required. Where there has been a report of sexual violence, it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers and or sexual violence specialists will be required.

### 33. SEXTING

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. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education (see paragraph 29). KCSI20

The Designated Safeguarding lead will respond by contacting the multi-agency safeguarding hub for advice and refer to *Sexting in Schools and Colleges*

[

#### 34. BULLYING (INCLUDING CYBERBULLYING)

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

### 35. HOMELESSNESS

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

### 36. CHILDREN AND THE COURT SYSTEM

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children 5-11-year olds and 12-17 year olds.

The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

### 37. CHILDREN WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN PRISON

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. 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.

### 38. PRIVATE FOSTERING

DfE statutory guidance

Children Act 1989. We collect contact details from all families and verify proof of address. If the child is not living with their parents we will notify the Local Authority

### 39. YOUNG CARERS

It is estimated by the Children's Society that 1 in 5 children are young carers and many are hidden and unidentified. School recognises that Young carers have the right to an assessment by the local authority to identify needs and support and the person they are caring for can have a reassessment of their needs. The DSL will seek information and support from the LBTH Young Carers Program when identifying young carers and refer accordingly: [Young.Carers@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:Young.Carers@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

#### 40. TAKING SAFEGUARDING ACTION

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

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child (including calling 999)
- report your concern as soon as possible to the DSL, as soon as possible no later than the end of the day
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of concern and given to the Designated Safeguarding Lead seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

#### 41. EARLY HELP

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

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

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

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

- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care; and
- is a privately fostered child.

2 Where appropriate we will support through our internal pastoral system, team around a child/family meetings where there is a multi agency approach

3 Referral to Children's Social Care if the threshold has been met

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

**LBTH Early Help Hub:**  
0207 364 5006 (option 2)

Alternatively, the DSL will complete an Early Help Enquiry form which can be accessed via <https://bit.ly/2AA2WNy>

The DSL will apply the LBTH Thresholds Guidance to decide on 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 for a discussion.

**MASH:**  
020 7364 5006 (Option 3) 020 7364 5601/5606

**Child Protection Advice Line**  
020 7364 3444

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

When there is multi agency support in place for a child in the form of an Early Help Assessment and Team Around the Family meetings, the DSL will consider whether to refer to the borough's Social Inclusion Panel to aid with coordination of support, when requiring support and advice, and to help prevent escalation to Level 3 Needs: [This.Child@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:This.Child@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

#### 42. HANDLING DISCLOSURES

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

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

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

School will notify parents as appropriate.

#### 43. CONFIDENTIALITY AND SHARING INFORMATION

Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. Serious Case Reviews have highlighted failures in safeguarding systems in which people did not share information at the earliest opportunity or did not share at all. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. All staff will understand that safeguarding requires a high level of confidentiality. Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL, Deputy DSL or the headteacher.

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

The DSL will have due regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to ensure that personal information is processed

fairly and lawfully and they will adhere to the seven golden rules for sharing information. Information sharing will take place in a timely and secure manner. The GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 do not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, as safeguarding and protecting children provide a legal basis for sharing information.

We will gain consent when possible. If it is not possible to gain consent and when to do so would put the child at further risk of harm we will share information as required.

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

#### 44. REFERRING TO CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

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

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

**Child Protection Advice Line:**  
020 7364 3444

When the DSL completes a MASH referral form and sends it securely to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, the referral form will be accurate and sufficiently detailed to enable the MASH Assessment and Intervention Team to make a decision on the level of statutory response.

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

#### **What staff will do if there are concerns**

**Designated Safeguarding Lead** : Lynn Cottle (Head Teacher).  
and Kim Waters ( Deputy Head Teacher ).  
The Governor responsible for Safeguarding is: Tonje Pettersen

1. Discuss in team meetings (not disclosures of possible abuse) and inform the Head Teacher.
2. Make a written record immediately on a school Child Protection Concern form and report to the Safeguarding Officer.
3. Note child's name, date, time, place, context, what the child said (include any non verbal communication) and the adult's response. These forms should be given to the head teacher or to the deputy head teacher who are the designated child protection officers.
4. Report the incident to the head teacher or deputy head. If neither are available report to a teacher. After discussion:
  - a) contact the child protection team
  - b) monitor the situation

If in doubt contact the safeguarding team for advice

5. Be aware that, particularly in cases of neglect, concerns might accumulate over a period of time. Staff need to discuss these to begin with; and record concerns in The Safeguarding Officer must be informed. If concerns remain the whole staff team needs to be alerted and the key person may need to do a home visit. Concerns will then be recorded in file labeled: child protection concerns and children subject to a child protection plan. File kept in cupboard in Head's office.
6. Ensure that the ongoing log of concerns are kept in the Safeguarding file in the Head's office locked cupboard.

Any interview with parents in school concerning a child protection issue needs to take place confidentially in the office, and a second member of staff must be present as far as possible. The date, time, people present and discussion need to be noted.

When making a referral to the Child Protection Team, the designated officer needs to follow the following procedures:

- Phone the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub: 0207 364 3444/5601/5606
- Provide details of child: name, date of birth and address as well as name of parent's carers.
- Listen and follow guidelines presented by the safeguarding social worker.
- If the person making the call does not agree to the advice given, a request to speak to the line manager can take place.
- Any contact with the Safeguarding Team must also be logged (date, time, person contacted) summarizing actions agreed and a copy placed in the safe guarding file in the Head Teacher's Office.

Information within the school concerning a child suffering possible/definite abuse will be shared on a "need to know " basis.

If a child is already subject to a Child Protection Plan the head teacher, all teaching staff and the office manager will need to know.

Child Protection Information logged by the school is not part of a child's open record and is not available to parents. When a child moves schools, concerns may be passed verbally to the Designated Person and written records should be passed on confidentially.

### **Dealing with disclosures**

#### **Receive**

1. Listen to the child. If you are shocked by what they tell you, try not to show it. Take what they say seriously. Children rarely lie about abuse and to be disbelieved adds to the traumatic nature of disclosing. Children may retract what they have said if they meet revulsion or disbelief
2. Accept what the child says. Be careful not to burden them with guilt by asking "Why didn't you tell me before."

#### **Reassure**

1. Stay calm and reassure the child that they have done the right thing in talking to you. It's essential to be honest with the child, so don't make promises you may not be able to keep, like "I'll stay with you" or "Everything will be all right now."
2. Don't promise confidentiality: you have a duty to refer a child who is at risk.
3. Try to alleviate any feelings of guilt that the child displays. For example, you could say: "You're not alone, you're not the only one this sort of thing has happened to"
4. Acknowledge how hard it must have been for the child to tell you what happened.
5. Empathise with the child – don't tell them what they should be feeling.

#### **React**

1. React to the child only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter; but do not "interrogate" them for full details
2. Do not ask "leading" questions such as "What did he do next?" (This assumed that he did!) Such a question may invalidate your evidence (and the child's) in any other prosecution in court. Instead ask open questions like "Anything else to tell me?", "Yes?" "And...?"
3. Do not criticise the perpetrator: the child may love him/her and reconciliations may be possible.
4. Do not ask the child to repeat everything to another member of staff.
5. Inform the designated child protection officer in the school immediately.
6. Record what has been said on Child protection form 1

#### **Record**

1. Make some very brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand and write them up as soon as possible.
2. Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by a court.
3. Record the date, time, place, any noticeable non verbal behaviour and the words used by the child. If the child uses their family's own private sexual words, record the actual words used, rather than translating them into "proper" words

Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising, marks or cuts.  
Be objective in your recording: include statements and observable things, rather than your interpretations or assumptions

### **Support**

1. Make sure that you continue to support the child, providing time and a safe space throughout the process of investigation and afterwards

Get some support for yourself, without disclosing confidential information about the child to colleagues

## 45. ESCALATION PROCEDURES

If, after a referral to Children's Social Care, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL will consider following local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves. In accordance with the Tower Hamlets Threshold Guidance Appendix D the DSL will first make contact with the team manager followed by the service manager followed by the divisional director. At every level of escalation there should be discussion and concerted effort to resolve any professional difference.

Appendix 1: MASH Poster

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

Appendix 3: MASH Interagency Referral Form

Appendix 4: THSCP Managing Allegations Flowchart