



# Bishop Challoner Catholic School

## **SAFEGUARDING (CHILD PROTECTION) POLICY 2024**

**September 2024-September 2025**

**Executive Headteacher:** Adam Hall

**Chair of Governing Body:** Fr David Evans

**Policy Lead:** J Finamore

**Date approved:** September 2024

**Review date:** September 2025

**Policy Review:**

This policy will be reviewed annually and agreed by the Full Governing Body

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## 1. Introduction

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children involves:

- protecting children from maltreatment (including abuse and neglect);
- preventing impairment of children's physical and/ or mental health or development;
- ensuring children grow up in safety with effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Bishop Challoner Catholic School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care. In particular:

- The School promotes a climate where pupils and adults will feel confident about sharing any concerns which they may have about their or another's safety or well-being.
- The School works in partnership with parents, guardians or carers to secure the best outcomes for its pupils.
- We provide guidance and training to staff regarding safeguarding matters and require them to comply with the Staff Code of Conduct.
- We communicate about the safeguarding aims of the School as clearly as possible. We use clear statements in our brochures and correspondence.
- We involve staff and pupils in the review of this policy and in the development of codes of conduct and behaviour policies and communicate these to parents.

- We liaise with agencies in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors that are active in supporting families.
- Where a pupil needs additional support from one or more agencies, we operate in line with locally agreed inter-agency procedures and assist the agencies involved to conduct an assessment.

Safeguarding pupils and providing a safe environment in which they can learn is the responsibility of the whole School community.

## **2. Core Safeguarding Principles**

This policy applies to:

- Bishop Challoner Catholic School.
- All on and off-site activities undertaken by pupils whilst they are the responsibility of the School.

The Bishop Challoner core Safeguarding principles are:

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

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

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

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and Health & Safety Policy, which are publicly available on the policies page of the School's website.

All School staff are required to confirm that they have read Part 1 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023'

This includes all those who work directly with children.

### **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
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Teacher Standards 2012
- Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018 (Updated December 2020)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015

- UKCIS Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes: Advice for Education Settings Working with Children and Young People (December 2020)
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges: Advice for Schools and Colleges on how to prevent and respond to reports of sexual violence and harassment between children (Updated July 2021)

#### **4. Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership**

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

More information about the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership can be found on the website:

<http://www.childrenandfamiliestrust.co.uk/the-lscb>

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

The school will engage with the borough's Designated Safeguarding Lead Forums, co-operate with the Rapid Review process and any Local Learning Reviews, participate in the THSCP multi-agency safeguarding training offer and co-operate with the borough's Section 175/157 School Safeguarding Audit cycle.

#### **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

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

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

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the school's Safeguarding Policy is communicated to all staff, understood by all members of staff and followed by all members of staff.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) takes the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding arrangements within the school on a day-to-day basis.

**Jen Finamore** is the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the School

Telephone: 020 7791 9542

Email: [jfinamore@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk](mailto:jfinamore@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk) or [dsl@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk](mailto:dsl@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk)

The contact details for the Safeguarding Link Governor, Tower Hamlets Children's Services and the Governors are set out on Pages 11 and 12 of this Policy.

### **A Culture of Safeguarding: The Bishop Challoner Safeguarding Team**

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility at Bishop Challoner Catholic School of Schools. This is in accordance with the latest DFE guidance outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.

The school takes an effective strategic approach to keeping all students and staff safe within the learning community and are committed to embedding a culture of safeguarding within the School as a whole.



The Safeguarding Team within Bishop Challoner Catholic School exists to ensure information on the safety and wellbeing of pupils is shared regularly between individual professionals within the community. The team also exist to ensure suitable support and adequate measures are put in place to address areas of concern within specific pupil groups, individual year groups and gender groups.

Various members of the team will receive training at different points of the academic year.

The Safeguarding Team are underpinned by the belief that 'it could happen here' and as such remain vigilant to threats of harm to pupils within their care, whether online, at school or further afield.

The Bishop Challoner Safeguarding Team consists of:

- **The Designated Safeguarding Lead:** Jen Finamore
- **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads:** Chantelle Easmon-Johnson (Head of Lower School), Anton Innocent (Head of Upper School), Ranjit Pabila (Head of 6<sup>th</sup> Form), Kay Meehan (Assistant Headteacher), Mila Couthino (Parental Engagement Advisor) and Rachel Hodges (Safeguarding Admin Support)
- Student Services Managers: Avril Munday, Tara Willie
- Safer Schools Officer: Leyla Haselden
- Attendance and Welfare Advisor: Karla Hegarty
- School Attendance Officer: Liz Peel
- Safeguarding Administrator: Lea Palray

**Bishop Challoner Catholic School**

**Safeguarding Team 2024-2025**

**Designated Safeguarding Lead**

Jen Finamore

**Deputy Designated**

**Safeguarding Lead**

Chantelle Easmon-Johnson

**Head of Lower School**

**Deputy Designated**

**Safeguarding Lead**

Anton Innocent

**Head of Upper School**

**Deputy Designated**

**Safeguarding Lead**

Ranjit Pabila

**Head of 6<sup>th</sup> Form**

**Deputy Designated**

**Safeguarding Lead**

Kay Meehan

**Assistant Headteacher**

**Deputy Designated**

**Safeguarding Lead**

Mila Couthino

**Parental Engagement  
Coordinator**

**Deputy Designated**

**Safeguarding Lead**

Rachel Hodges

**Safeguarding Admin  
Support**

**Attendance and Welfare**

**Advisors**

Karla Hegarty

**School Attendance**

**Officer**

Elizabeth Peel

**Safer Schools**

**Officer**

Leyla Haselden

**Safeguarding**

**Administrator**

Lea Palray

**Student Services**

**Managers**

Avril Munday/ Tara Willie

- Safeguarding Team meetings will be chaired by the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

- The Designated Safeguarding Leads are responsible for providing agenda items for meetings, disseminated by the Safeguarding Support Administrator.
- Minutes and actions will be shared within 24 hours of the meeting and all professionals responsible for any areas are expected to action any items ahead of the next meeting.

### Safeguarding Contacts

Details of **Designated Safeguarding Lead** and **Deputy Safeguarding Leads** are as follows:

Name	Role	Email	Contact Numbers
Jen Finamore	Designated Safeguarding Lead	<a href="mailto:jfinamore@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk">jfinamore@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk</a>	07827 870 196
Chantelle Easmon-Johnson	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	<a href="mailto:Ceasmon-johnson@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk">Ceasmon-johnson@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk</a>	020 7791 9542
Anton Innocent	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	<a href="mailto:ainnocent@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk">ainnocent@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk</a>	020 7791 9573
Kay Meehan	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	<a href="mailto:kmeehan@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk">kmeehan@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk</a>	020 7791 9506
Mila Couthino	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	<a href="mailto:mcouthino@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk">mcouthino@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk</a>	020 7791 9521
Ranjit Pabila	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	<a href="mailto:rpabila@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk">rpabila@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk</a>	020 7791 9500
Rachel Hodges	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	<a href="mailto:rhodges@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk">rhodges@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk</a>	020 7791 9500

Details of the **Safeguarding Governor and Chair of Governors** are as follows:

Name	Role	Email	Contact Numbers
<b>Sheila Mouna</b>	Safeguarding Link Governor	<a href="mailto:Sheilamouna@aol.com">Sheilamouna@aol.com</a>	-
<b>Father David Evans</b>	Chair of Governors	<a href="mailto:davidevans@rcdow.org.uk">davidevans@rcdow.org.uk</a>	07973 334 478

Details of the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** are as follows:

Name	Role	Email	Contact Numbers
<b>Melanie Benzie</b>	LADO	<a href="mailto:melanie.benzie@towerhamlets.gov.uk">melanie.benzie@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a>	020 7364 0677 07903 238 827

Details of **Borough Safeguarding** contacts are as follows:

Name	Role	Email	Contact Numbers
<b>Child Protection Advice Line</b>	Advice on Child Protection issues	Refer to contact number	<b>020 7364 3444</b>
<b>Multi Agency</b>	Safeguarding Referrals	<a href="mailto:mash@towerhamlets.gov.uk">mash@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a>	020 7364 5006 (Option 3)

<b>Safeguarding Hub</b>			020 7364 5601/5606
<b>Early Help Hub</b>	Support to children, young people and their families	<a href="mailto:earlyhelp@towerhamlets.gov.uk">earlyhelp@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a>	0207 364 5006 (Option 2)
<b>Sharifa Chowdhury</b>	Team Manager for Education Safeguarding	<a href="mailto:sharifa.chowdhury@towerhamlets.gov.uk">sharifa.chowdhury@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a>	020 7364 3431
<b>Chris Jordan</b>	Education Safeguarding Quality Assurance and Training Officer	<a href="mailto:chris.jordan@towerhamlets.gov.uk">chris.jordan@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a>	020 7364 3431
<b>Saadia Anwer</b>	CME Officer, Tower Hamlets Education Safeguarding Service	<a href="mailto:Saadia.anwer@towerhamlets.gov.uk">Saadia.anwer@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a>	020 7364 3426 / 07562 431 817
<b>Iona Karrman-Bailey</b>	Prevent Education Officer	<a href="mailto:iona.karrman-bailey@towerhamlets.gov.uk">iona.karrman-bailey@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a>	020 7364 3444

Details of **other Safeguarding contacts** are as follows:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Contact Numbers</b>
<b>Childline</b>	24-hour freephone for children and young people who need advice.	<a href="http://childline.org.uk/get-support">childline.org.uk/get-support</a>	0800 1111
<b>NSPCC Child Protection Helpline</b>	24-hour freephone service for adults, children or young people for advice or to	<a href="mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk">help@nspcc.org.uk</a>	<a href="tel:08088005000">0808 800 5000</a>

	give details about a child who may be at risk.		
<b>OfSTED</b>	Whistleblowing Helpline	<a href="mailto:whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk">whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk</a>	0300 123 3155

### **The Designated Safeguarding Lead for the whole School:**

- ensures this policy is known and used appropriately;
- ensures that all staff are aware of this policy, have read all necessary documentation and have received all necessary training;
- ensures this policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made;
- acts as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safeguarding;
- provides a lead on regular review of current safeguarding cases;
- leads on liaising with other agencies and sets up an inter-agency assessment if early help is appropriate;
- refers cases where a person is dismissed or has left owing to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure Barring Service, where required;
- refers cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police (drawing on guidance published by the National Police Chiefs' Council);
- liaises with the Executive Headteacher to inform him of issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;

- liaises with the 'case manager' and the designated officer(s) at the local authority for child protection concerns (in cases which concern a staff member);
- liaises with staff (especially the pastoral team, Student Services, and the Safer Schools Officer) on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with the relevant agencies;
- is the first point of contact for external agencies pursuing Child Protection investigations and co-ordinates the School's representation at Child Protection conferences and Core Group meetings (including the submission of written reports for conferences);
- links with the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Education Service to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding;
- ensures the School discharges its obligations in relation to the Prevent Duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, is the main point of contact for parents, pupils, staff and external agencies in all matters relating to Prevent, arranges suitable training for staff and refers cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern;
- ensures this policy and its implementation is reviewed annually by Governors;
- provides a termly report to the Board of Governors and/or the Governors' Safeguarding Committee, outlining details of any safeguarding issues that have arisen during the term and the outcome of any cases identified. These reports will respect all issues of confidentiality and will not therefore identify any individual pupil names.



## 6. Types and indicators of Abuse and Neglect

All School staff need to be aware:

- of the indicators of abuse and neglect so that they can identify children who may be in need of help or protection. If staff are unsure, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.
- that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the School and/or can occur between children.
- that pupils who are affected by abuse or neglect may demonstrate their needs and distress in a variety of ways.

### Types of abuse and neglect include:

- **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by 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 others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.
- **Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child and includes domestic violence. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

- **Emotional abuse:** 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.
- **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 off-line 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 (also known as child-on-child abuse) in education and all staff should be aware of it and of School procedures for dealing with this.
- **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. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

**When a concern involving any form of abuse comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately and (where appropriate) referred to relevant agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

## **7. Domestic Abuse**

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

Staff should be aware that all children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'.

The School has signed up to the Metropolitan Police's Operation Encompass system and on receipt of a notification from the Police, will provide appropriate support to the child or children concerned, who

attend the school. Operation Encompass ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, and where there are children in the household, the police will inform the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead before the child or children arrive at school the following day. The purpose of Operation Encompass is to enable the school to provide 'silent support' and is not intended to replace statutory procedures.

**When a concern involving Domestic Abuse comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to appropriate agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

## **8. Children missing from education (CME)**

Children going missing from education (particularly repeatedly) can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding problems. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage.

Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing from education in future.

The School monitors pupil attendance, contacts home in cases of unauthorised absence and takes further action where necessary.

The School has put in place appropriate safeguarding responses to pupils who go missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify any risk of abuse and neglect and to help prevent the

risks of their going missing in future. This can be viewed in the School's Attendance and Punctuality Policy and outlines interventions taken by the school Attendance and Welfare Advisors.

The School has due regard to the guidance "Children missing education" published by the Department for Education in September 2016.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/550416/Children\\_Missing\\_Education\\_-\\_statutory\\_guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf)

The School is aware of the impact on children of an adult close to them going missing and work in line with government guidance in offering support.

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

Contact: LBTH CME Officer, Tower Hamlets Education Safeguarding Service:

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

## **9. Elective Home Education**

The school recognises that parents have a legal right to electively home educate their child at home; however, it is expected that the parents' decision to do this is made with their child's best education and best interests at its heart.

Staff should be aware that even though most home educated children have a positive experience, this is not the case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

When a parent informs the Headteacher of their intention to electively home educate their child, the school will convene and coordinate a meeting between the LA, relevant school staff, parents and all key professionals currently working with the child and family.

In accordance with LBTH Policy this meeting must occur before any final decision is made by the parents, to ensure that the best interests of the child have been taken fully into account and carefully considered.

The occurrence of this meeting is especially important when the children have known vulnerabilities including Children known to a Social Worker and SEND children

## **10. Child-on-Child Abuse**

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

Child-on-Child abuse can happen both inside and outside of school including online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs relating to this form of abuse.

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

The school has a zero tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse.

**When a concern involving Child-on-Child abuse comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to appropriate agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

Child-on-Child abuse can take many forms and can include:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
- physical abuse such as biting, hitting, kicking or hair pulling.
- sexually harmful behaviour and sexual abuse including inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault or rape.
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos.
- teenage relationship abuse – where there is a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, perpetrated against a current or former partner.
- upskirting – taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their knowledge and/or permission with the intention of viewing their buttocks or genitals (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification. It is a criminal offence.
- initiation/hazing - used to introduce newcomers into an organisation or group by subjecting them to a series of trials and challenges, which are potentially humiliating, embarrassing or abusive.
- prejudice and discrimination - behaviours which cause a person to feel powerless, worthless or excluded originating from prejudices around belonging, identity and equality, for example, prejudices linked to disabilities, special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender and sexual identity.

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

**All** staff should be clear as to the School's policy and procedures with regards to Child-on-Child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child maybe at risk from it.

The School recognises that some groups (e.g. children with SEND\* and LGBT+ children) are potentially more at risk of Child-on-Child abuse.

Allegations of Child-on-Child abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with immediately by the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the School's Anti-Bullying Policy, which is available on the policies page of the School's website. The initial response to a report of Child-on-Child abuse from a child is important, both for the victim and alleged perpetrator. The investigation could warrant a referral to the Tower Hamlets MASH Team for advice and guidance, in particular where a risk assessment is required to determine the safety of other pupils on site in light of the disclosure on abuse.

Where appropriate, the School also liaises with other agencies (including the police) after an allegation has been made (including by way of support to the relevant parties). In addition to this, internal or external specialist counselling services will also be made available to victims, perpetrators or other children affected by Child-on-Child abuse. Important messages on values, Christian identity, types of abuse, consent and other topical issues will be covered across the curriculum including during pastoral assemblies and form time, in Religious Education lessons, through the delivery of SRE and in PSHE content.

**When a concern involving Child-on-Child abuse comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to appropriate agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

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\* SEND – Special Educational Needs and Disability

† LGBT – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender



## 11. Child-on-Child sexual violence and sexual harassment

All staff must be aware that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex from primary to secondary phases and in colleges. It can also occur online. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

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

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

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

- challenging inappropriate behaviours;
- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"; and

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

Sexual violence offences are defined under the Sexual Offences Act 2003

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

**Assault by Penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

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

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

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

All Staff need to be aware of the following:

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

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

Sexual Harassment may include the following:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (the school considers when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence such as:
  - consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos.
  - sharing of unwanted explicit content;
  - upskirting
  - sexualised online bullying

- unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media
- sexual exploitation, coercion and threats

If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them which relates to Child-on-Child sexual violence and/or sexual harassment, they must immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or if unavailable, any of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads.

**When a concern involving sexual violence or sexual harassment comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to the relevant agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

Allegations of Child-on-Child abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with immediately by the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the School's Anti-Bullying Policy, which is available on the policies page of the School's website. The initial response to a report of Child-on-Child abuse from a child is important, both for the victim and alleged perpetrator. The investigation could warrant a referral to the Tower Hamlets MASH Team for advice and guidance, in particular where a risk assessment is required to determine the safety of other pupils on site in light of the disclosure of abuse.

Where appropriate, the School also liaises with other agencies (including the police) after an allegation has been made (including by way of support to the relevant parties). In addition to this, internal or external specialist counselling services will also be made available to victims, perpetrators or other children affected by Child-on-Child abuse.

Important messages on values, Christian identity, types of abuse, consent and other topical issues will be covered across the curriculum including during pastoral assemblies and form time, in Religious Education lessons, through the delivery of Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) and in PSHE content.

## **12. Youth produced sexual imagery**

Sexting (sharing youth-produced sexual imagery, including nudes and semi-nudes) happens where:

- A person under the age of 18 creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under the age of 18.
- A person under the age of 18 shares sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with a peer under the age of 18 or an adult.
- A person under the age of 18 is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18.

**When a concern involving sexting comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to the relevant agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under 18's is illegal.

The School is very aware of sexting (including the sharing of sexually explicit photographs and the sending of sexually explicit messages) and the serious harm it can cause.

The School has produced guidance for pupils regarding the dangers of sexting and has regard to the guidance published by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis>

### 13. Online Safety and Mobile Phones

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

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

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

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

- **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalization and extremism.
- **contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes’.
- **conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and

- **commerce** - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group <https://apwg.org/>

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

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

The school uses advanced filtering systems to ensure pupils are unable to access harmful websites or inappropriate online material. Where pupils attempt to access such sites, the IT department are notified and pupil details are passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for further investigation.

When online or remote learning takes place, staff are required to report safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead via the CPOMS referral process.

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

The school regularly reviews the online safety of pupils whilst at school and ensure ongoing assessments take place to ensure pupils are safe whilst on site.

Staff should report online safety concerns about pupils to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as with all other safeguarding concerns.

When it comes to the safety and well-being of the child, the response to the risks and harms that children may experience in the online or digital environment should be no different than the offline,

face to face world. For most children there is little distinction between the online and face to face, physical environments, as the two intersect with one another in their daily lives. Staff should recognize that children's experience of abuse in the digital environment may be even more pronounced, where the identity of the abuser is unknown and the abuse can continue 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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

Mobile phones can cause significant disruption within the classroom for both pupils and their teachers. We want to support student progress in ensuring mobile phones are never a barrier to learning or a cause of disruption.

Electronic devices, including mobile phones, can contain files or data which relate to an offence, or serious breach of the code of conduct which may cause harm to another pupil.

This includes, but is not limited to, indecent images of children, pornography, abusive messages, images or videos, or evidence relating to suspected criminal behaviour.

As with all prohibited items, staff should first consider the appropriate safeguarding response if they find images, data or files on an electronic device that they reasonably suspect are likely to put a person at risk.

Staff may examine any data or files on an electronic device they have confiscated as a result of a search if there is good reason to do so.

If the member of staff conducting the search suspects they may find an indecent image of a child (sometimes known as nude or semi-nude images), the member of staff should never intentionally view the image, and must never copy, print, share, store or save such images.

When an incident might involve an indecent image of a child and/or video, the member of staff should confiscate the device, avoid looking at the device and refer the incident to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) as the most appropriate person to advise on the school's response.

Handling such reports or concerns can be especially complicated and the school should follow the principles as set out in KCSIE 2024. The UK Council for Internet Safety also provides the following guidance to support school staff and designated safeguarding leads: If a member of staff finds any image, data or file that they suspect might constitute a specified offence, then they must be delivered to the police as soon as is reasonably practicable. In exceptional circumstances members of staff may dispose of the image or data if there is a good reason to do so.

In determining whether there is a 'good reason' to examine the data or files, the member of staff should reasonably suspect that the data or file on the device has been, or could be used, to cause



harm, undermine the safe environment of the school and disrupt teaching, or be used to commit an offence.

In determining whether there is a 'good reason' to erase any data or files from the device, the member of staff should consider whether the material found may constitute evidence relating to a suspected offence. In those instances, the data or files should not be deleted, and the device must be handed to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. If the data or files are not suspected to be evidence in relation to an offence, a member of staff may delete the data or files if the continued existence of the data or file is likely to continue to cause harm to any person and the pupil and/or the parent refuses to delete the data or files themselves.

**Where a concern involving online safety or an electronic device comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to the relevant agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

#### **14. Upskirting**

Upskirting happens where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.

Upskirting is a criminal offence.

**Where an incident involving upskirting comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to the relevant agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

## 15. Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation (including County Lines)

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 nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) are forms of abuse which tend to occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. This power imbalance can be due to a range of factors including age, gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator.

- The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults.
- The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.
- It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.
- Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

## **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

A victim of CSE 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.

Like all forms of child sex abuse, child sexual exploitation:

- can affect any person under the age of 18 years (including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex);
- can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;
- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity;
- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both; and
- can occur over time or a one-off occurrence
- can 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).

The indicators of CCE can also be indicators of CSE, as can:

- children who are in possession of multiple phones and overly anxious to check their phones
- child who experience sudden changes in behaviour e.g. looking agitated, children who want to leave the school premises at lunchtime
- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant
- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late;
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education

### **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), 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.

### **County Lines**

County Lines is a specific form of Child Criminal Exploitation. It is a term used to describe gangs and organized 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". Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. It can also occur through the use of technology.

Children 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 recognized by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to

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

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

- Children who are in possession of multiple phones and overly anxious to check their phones
- Children who experience sudden changes in behaviour e.g. looking agitated, children who want to leave the school premises at lunchtime
- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

County Lines involves gangs and organised criminal networks exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools (mainstream and special), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children's homes and care homes.

Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

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

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

Risks of exploitation by CCE are taught through the PSHE curriculum.

Further advice is available in the Home Office document "Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines".

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>

Where a concern of this nature comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to the relevant agencies.

Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## 16. Serious Youth Violence

### *Serious crime*

Potential indicators that a child may be at risk from or involved with serious crime 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 significant change in wellbeing,
- signs of assault or unexplained injuries, or
- unexplained gifts or new possessions.

### *Weapons*

The School is aware that fear and a need for self-protection is a key motivation for children to carry a weapon and that neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation and social exclusion generally have the highest rates of gun and knife crime. Children are more likely to carry knives and other weapons than guns. School staff will share any concerns about or knowledge of such children immediately with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Further advice is available in the Home Office document "Preventing youth violence and gang involvement."

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/418131/Preventing\\_youth\\_violence\\_and\\_gang\\_involvement\\_v3\\_March2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418131/Preventing_youth_violence_and_gang_involvement_v3_March2015.pdf)



**Where a concern involving serious youth violence comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to the relevant agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

## **17. Preventing Radicalisation**

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Protecting children from this risk is an important part of the School's safeguarding of its pupils.

- *Extremism* is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.
- *Radicalisation* refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- *Terrorism* is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media) and settings (such as within the home). As with other safeguarding risks, School staff should be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on schools to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (the 'Prevent Duty') and hate crimes. Young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views (in particular via the internet and other social media) and schools can help to protect children from them.

#### The School:

- Communicates and promotes the importance of the Prevent duty to staff.
- Provides training to enable staff: (a) to recognise the engagement, intent and capability factors which indicate that a person may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism or at risk of radicalisation (including changes in a pupil's behaviour); (b) to challenge extremist ideas which can be used to legitimise terrorism; and (c) to know when and how to make a referral to the relevant agencies.
- Builds pupils' resilience to radicalisation by: (a) promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; (b) by promoting democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths; and (c) helping pupils to acquire the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need to play a full and active part in society.
- Teaches pupils about online-safety and the safe use of social media, manages internet access and ensures that there are suitable filtering arrangements in place.
- Provides a broad curriculum and ensures that pupils are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views in relation to political issues.

- Ensures that visiting speakers are suitable and that they are appropriately supervised when at the School.
- Assesses the risk of its pupils being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology.
- Works in partnership with the police, local authorities and other agencies involved with the implementation of the Prevent Strategy.
- Engages effectively with parents (including assisting and advising parents who raise concerns).
- Acknowledges its responsibility to act proportionately.
- Where appropriate, makes a referral to MASH who will then liaise with the prevent team and police where appropriate.

Prevent referrals may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from the School may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.

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

The School regularly reviews its Prevent Risk Assessment as part of statutory guidance on the Prevent Duty.

Opportunities exist throughout the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and Culture. These promote fundamental British Values as part of SMCS (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education).

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

In LBTH all Prevent referrals related to children should be made through the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub on 020 7364 3444.

**Where a concern relating to radicalisation comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to relevant agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

#### **18. 'Honour-based abuse' (including Female Genital Mutilation 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. The School recognises that it is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and are handled and escalated as such. School staff are alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. As appropriate, the Deputy Safeguarding Lead

will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

**Where a concern involving honour-based abuse comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to the relevant agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

### **Female genital mutilation (FGM)**

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. The School recognises that teachers have a statutory duty 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 the age of 18. All staff receive training on FGM as part of their safeguarding training.

Whilst it will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, 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. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures.

### **Forced marriage**

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some

perpetrators use perceived cultural practices as a way to coerce a person into marriage. The School recognises that it can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

**Where Honour-based abuse comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to the relevant agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

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

##### *Children being supported by a social worker*

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.

A pupil may need support from a social worker due to his/her safeguarding or welfare needs. Local authorities should share the fact that a pupil has a social worker with the School. The Designated Safeguarding Lead holds this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. Where a child has a social worker, this informs decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or 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).

Particular vigilance is exercised in respect of pupils who are subject to a Child Protection Plan and any incidents or concerns involving these pupils will be reported immediately to the allocated Social Worker.

#### **Looked-After Children**

In the case of a looked-after child, the School will work with the virtual school head at the local authority to discuss how the needs identified in the child's personal education plan can be met, and

their progress supported. The School will also work with the virtual school head to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children.

The School ensures that appropriate staff have 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 or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. Appropriate staff 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 School recognises that a previously looked-after child potentially remains vulnerable, that all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked-after children safe and that it is essential to work with other agencies to ensure that prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children.

#### **SEND, mental health, homelessness, refugee status etc**

The School acknowledges the additional needs for support and protection of pupils who are vulnerable by virtue of:

- Disability, physical health conditions and/or special educational needs ("SEND"),
- mental health,
- homelessness,
- refugee/asylum seeker status,
- the effects of substance abuse within the family,
- a family member being in prison
- those who are young carers,
- mid-year admissions; and
- pupils who are suspended from the School.

The School acknowledges children with special educational needs and/or disabilities can be disproportionately affected by problems such as bullying (without showing any outward signs) and they may have communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming them.

**Where a safeguarding concern involving the vulnerable children mentioned comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to the relevant agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

## **20. Staff Duty to Report Concerns**

### **Handling Disclosures**

All staff are instructed that if they have any concerns about a child (including concerns regarding possible Child-on-Child abuse) or identify a child in need they must report the matter immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the School's Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads- see contacts on Page 13.

Children may not feel ready, or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or they might not recognise their experiences as harmful. Children may feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers. None of this should stop staff from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

**Where a safeguarding concern comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to the relevant agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

If, in exceptional circumstances, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is not available, staff are expected to speak to a member of the Senior Leadership



Team and/or take advice from Tower Hamlets Children Services (see Contacts on Page 13) sharing any action taken with the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as is practically possible and logging the concern and action on CPOMS.

Once a concern has been raised, the Designated Safeguarding Lead decides on the appropriate course of action to take, such as:

- managing support for the pupil internally, via the School's own pastoral support processes;
- an early help assessment;
- a referral for children's social care/statutory services, for example, as the pupil might be in need or suffering harm.

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

All staff should reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

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

- allow the child to speak freely
- remain calm
- allow silences

- do not ask leading questions
- tell the pupil what will happen next
- inform the DSL as soon as possible and log the concern on CPOMS
- seek support if they feel distressed.

**Where a Safeguarding concern comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to the relevant agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

### **Confidentiality and Sharing Information**

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

All staff should understand that safeguarding requires a high level of confidentiality. Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL, Deputy DSL or the Executive 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 via the online CPOMS system.

The DSL will have due regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to ensure that personal information is processed fairly and lawfully and they will adhere to the seven golden rules for sharing information. Information sharing will take place in a timely and secure manner. The GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 do not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, as safeguarding and protecting children provide a legal basis for sharing information.

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

### **Early Help**

The School recognises that staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help, which means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life and that early information-sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision.

Staff are reminded to be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who is, for instance:

**Any** child may benefit from early help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- has a mental health need;
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;

- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child;
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

### **Referring to children's social care**

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

### **LBTH Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub:**

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

### **Child Protection Advice Line:**

020 7364 3444

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

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

## **21. Curriculum**

The School acknowledges the important role that the curriculum can play in teaching children to keep themselves safe in, for example, the prevention of abuse and in the preparation of our pupils for the responsibilities of adult life and citizenship. We ensure that pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, and will consider this as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum

It is expected that all curriculum co-ordinators will consider the opportunities that exist in their area of responsibility for promoting the welfare and safety of pupils. The curriculum includes teaching regarding Wellbeing (including Relationships and Sex Education) and online-safety.

As appropriate, the curriculum will be used to build resilience, help pupils to keep safe and to know how to ask for help if their safety is threatened.

The School will map the lessons, assemblies and other activities delivered with the explicit aim of teaching children to keep themselves safe. These will take place through the Schools PSHE curriculum,

Whole Person Curriculum and through pastoral time and assemblies. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will coordinate resources and the delivery of sessions in response to issues that may arise locally, nationally and in the media that may affect our young people.

The School will work with partners (including the Tower Hamlets Anti-VAWG Team) to ensure all pupils are aware of the support available to them.

**Where a safeguarding concern comes to a member of staff's attention during the course of curriculum delivery, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to relevant agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

## **22. Mental Health**

The School recognises that it has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils and that in some cases mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Whilst only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem, School staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is essential that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can affect their mental health, behaviour and education.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead).

**When a mental health concern comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to relevant agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

### **23. Drugs**

The School recognises that children and young people who are exposed to or involved in substance abuse are a safeguarding concern and may need help and support.

**Where a safeguarding concern relating to drugs comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to relevant agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

### **24. Off Site Visits**

All pupils are spoken to regarding safeguarding during trips and expeditions. The School's Health and Safety Policy and Educational Visits and School Trips Policy can be found on our website and outlines specific responsibilities in regards to Off Site Visits.

## 25. Children's Services Referrals

Any person who has concerns regarding a child may make a referral direct to Children's Services (including any parent, pupil or member of staff). The contact details of the team at Tower Hamlet's Children's Services are set out in Page 13 of this Policy.

When an individual concern/incident is brought to the notice of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, they will decide whether or not this should be reported to Children's Services as a safeguarding and child protection issue. It is important to note however that anybody can make a referral to Children's Services. Where a referral is made to Children's Services by a member of staff the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed, as soon as possible and logged on CPOMS.

There must be an immediate referral to Children's Services and (if appropriate) the police whenever a child is at risk i.e. that they have suffered or are likely to suffer significant harm and/or there are concerns about maltreatment (including all forms of abuse and neglect, FGM, honour-based abuse, radicalisation and sexual exploitation). The referral should be followed up if the local authority does not offer a response within one working day.

In circumstances where a child has an unexplained or suspicious injury that requires urgent medical attention, the referral process should not delay the administration of first aid or emergency medical assistance. A referral must be made to Children's Services and/the police immediately. Referrals to Tower Hamlets should be made to Tower Hamlets Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) via a MASH Referral Form and copied to Tower Hamlet's Schools Safeguarding Team.

Prior to any referral to Tower Hamlets Children's Services, there should be a verbal consultation with the MASH social worker or manager, by calling the MASH duty desk on 020 7364 3444, to ensure that making a referral is an appropriate action.

The parent/carer will normally be contacted to obtain their consent before a referral is made. **However, if the concern involves for example alleged or suspected sexual abuse, honour-based abuse, fabricated or induced illness or the Designated Safeguarding Lead has reason to believe that**



**informing the parent at this stage might compromise the safety of the child or a staff member, nothing should be said to the parent/carer ahead of the referral,** but a rationale for the decision to progress without consent should be provided with the referral.

In the case of abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil, there should be a referral to Children's Services where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a pupil is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. In such cases, all the children involved (whether perpetrator or victim) should be treated as at risk. Please also refer to the School's Anti-Bullying Policy.

Where it comes to the School's notice that a child under the age of 13 is, or may be, sexually active, this will result in an immediate referral to Children's Services.

In the case of a young person between the ages of 13 and 16, an individual risk assessment will be conducted in accordance with the Borough Child Protection Procedures. This will determine how and when information will be shared with parents and the investigating agencies.

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.

**Where a concern of this nature comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to the relevant agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

**LBTH Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub:**

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

**Child Protection Advice Line:**

020 7364 3444

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

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

## **26. Private Fostering Arrangements**

The law requires that Tower Hamlets Children's Services are notified of private fostering arrangements. Any privately fostered children, i.e. children under the age of 16 (or under 18 if disabled) who are cared for 28 days or more by someone who is not their parent or a close relative, that come to our attention will be referred to Children's Services. Close relatives are defined as step parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts (whether of full blood, half blood or by marriage).

**Where information of this nature comes to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to relevant agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

## **27. Notifying parents of injury**

In situations where a pupil sustain an injury, or are otherwise affected by an accident or incident whilst they are the responsibility of the School, parents will be notified of this as soon as possible. A log of any injury will also be kept.

One of the Student Services managers must be alerted when an injury has been sustained by a pupil. All records are made and recorded by Student Services Managers in confidential First Aid Files.

Student Services Managers:

**Avril Munday** 020 7791 9541

**Tara Willie** 020 7791 9530

## **28. Reasonable Force and Physical Restraint**

The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils. Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.

'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed. This will generally be used to control pupils and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.

Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.

School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

### **Who can use reasonable force?**

- All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force.
- This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the Headteacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers accompanying students on a school organised visit.

### **When can reasonable force be used?**

- Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.
- In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them.
- The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

The following list is not exhaustive, but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force can and cannot be used.

### **Schools can use reasonable force to:**

- remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit
- prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground; and
- restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

### **Schools cannot:**

- use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

### **Power to search pupils without consent**

In addition to the general power to use reasonable force described above, Headteachers and **authorised staff** can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for the following prohibited items:

- knives and weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.

Force **cannot** be used to search for items banned under the school rules.

### **Communicating the school's approach to the use of force**

- School staff do not require parental consent to use force on a student.
- Bishop Challoner Catholic School **does not** have a 'no contact' policy. Such a policy might place a member of staff in breach of their duty of care towards a pupil, or prevent them taking action needed to prevent a pupil causing harm.
- By taking steps to ensure that staff, pupils and parents are clear about when force might be used, the school will reduce the likelihood of complaints being made when force has been used properly.

### **Appropriate physical contact between staff and pupils is acceptable:**

- When comforting a distressed pupil
- When a pupil is being congratulated or praised
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument.

- To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching
- To 'shepherd' a pupil in the right direction.
- By putting out a hand/arm if a pupil fails to stop when requested/instructed.

***The above list is not exhaustive.***

### **Using force**

As outlined in DfE guidance, a panel of experts identified that certain restraint techniques presented an unacceptable risk when used on children and young people. The techniques in question are:

- the 'seated double embrace' which involves two members of staff forcing a person into a sitting position and leaning them forward, while a third monitors breathing;
- the 'double basket-hold' which involves holding a person's arms across their chest; and
- the 'nose distraction technique' which involves a sharp upward jab under the nose.

### **Staff training**

- School staff will receive annual training on the appropriate use of reasonable force as part of annual safeguarding training. Guidance on the use of force is also included in the School Behaviour Policy. Refresher training will also be made available in Safeguarding INSET throughout the academic year.

### **Telling parents when force has been used on their child**

- Staff must inform parents about serious incidents involving the use of force and should also document this on the CPOMS system.

- In deciding what is a serious incident, teachers should use their professional judgement and consider the:
- pupil's behaviour and level of risk presented at the time of the incident;
- degree of force used;
- effect on the pupil or member of staff; and
- the child's age.

### **What happens if a pupil complains when force is used on them?**

- All complaints about the use of force will be thoroughly, speedily and appropriately investigated by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Where a member of staff has acted within the law – that is, they have used reasonable force in order to prevent injury, damage to property or disorder – this will provide a defence to any criminal prosecution or other civil or public law action.
- When a complaint is made the onus is on the person making the complaint to prove that his/her allegations are true – it is not for the member of staff to show that he/she has acted reasonably.
- Suspension must not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force. Schools should refer to the “Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and Other Staff” guidance where an allegation of using excessive force has been made.
- Schools must consider carefully whether the circumstances of the case warrant a person being suspended until the allegation is resolved or whether alternative arrangements are more appropriate.
- If a decision is taken to suspend a teacher, the school should ensure that the teacher has access to a named contact who can provide support.
- Governing bodies should always consider whether a teacher has acted within the law when reaching a decision on whether or not to take disciplinary action against the teacher.

- As employers, schools and local authorities have a duty of care towards their employees. It is important that schools provide appropriate pastoral care to any member of staff who is subject to a formal allegation following a use of force incident.

### **What about other physical contact with pupils?**

- It is not illegal to touch a pupil. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary.

Examples of where touching a pupil might be proper or necessary:

- When comforting a distressed pupil;
- When a pupil is being congratulated or praised;
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument;
- To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching; and
- To give first aid.

### **Frequently Asked Questions- Reasonable Force**

**Q: I'm worried that if I use force a pupil or parent could make a complaint against me. Am I protected?**

**A:** Yes, if you have acted lawfully. If the force used is reasonable all staff will have a robust defence against any accusations.

**Q: How do I know whether using a physical intervention is 'reasonable'?**

**A:** The decision on whether to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the teacher concerned. Whether the force used is reasonable will always depend on the particular circumstances of the case. The use of force is reasonable if it is proportionate to the consequences it is intended to prevent. This means the degree of force used should be no more than is needed to



achieve the desired result. School staff should expect the full backing of their senior leadership team when they have used force.

**Q: What about school trips?**

**A:** The power may be used where the member of staff is lawfully in charge of the pupils and this includes while on school trips.

**Q: Can force be used on pupils with SEN or disabilities?**

**A:** Yes, but the judgement on whether to use force should not only depend on the circumstances of the case but also on information and understanding of the needs of the pupil concerned.

**Q: I'm a female teacher with a Year 10 class - there's no way I'd want to restrain or try to control my pupils. Am I expected to do so?**

**A:** There is a power, not a duty, to use force so members of staff have discretion whether or not to use it. However, teachers and other school staff have a duty of care towards their pupils and it might be argued that failing to take action (including a failure to use reasonable force) may in some circumstances breach that duty.

**Q: Are there any circumstances in which a teacher can use physical force to punish a pupil?**

**A:** No. It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment. This is because it would fall within the definition of corporal punishment, which is illegal.

## **Conducting Pupil Searches**

**There is a difference between the use of reasonable force and conducting pupil searches.**

If a staff member reports a concern regarding a pupil whom they believe to be in possession of a banned or dangerous item, the pupil must be searched as soon as possible.

Only Headteachers and specifically authorised staff can carry out searches. These include:

- DSL and DDSL
- Members of SLT
- Year Leaders and Deputy Year Leaders

- The member of staff conducting a search must be the same sex as the pupil, and there must be another member of staff present to witness, unless:
  - The person doing the search believes there's a risk that serious harm will be caused if the search isn't urgently carried out, and
  - In the time available, it's not reasonably practicable to use a staff member who is the same sex as the pupil or for a witness to be present
  - If the above is the case, the person doing the search should report it immediately
- You should record any searches for prohibited items in your school's safeguarding reporting system

Headteachers and authorised staff members can search a pupil for:

- Any items with the pupil's informed consent
- Prohibited or banned items, with or without the pupil's consent

#### **Prohibited items are:**

- Knives or weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Tobacco and cigarette papers
- Fireworks
- Pornographic images
- Any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to:
  - Commit an offence
  - Cause personal injury (including the pupil) or damage to property.

This list is set out in The Education Act 1996 and paragraph 3 of the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.

- Other items banned by the school

#### **Frequently Asked Questions- Pupil searches**

##### **1. What should I do before I commence a search?**

- Assess how urgent the search is and consider the risk to other pupils and staff.
- Explain to the pupil why they are being searched, how and where the search will happen, and give them the opportunity to ask questions about it.
- Always seek the pupil's cooperation.

## 2. What if a pupil refuses to cooperate?

In this case, the authorised member of staff should first consider why this is, and act proportionally.

It may be that the pupil:

- Is in possession of a prohibited or banned item
- Doesn't understand your instructions or what a search will involve
- Has had a previous distressing experience of being searched

## 3. What if the pupil still refuses to cooperate?

- You may sanction them in line with your behaviour policy
- If you don't think that a search is needed urgently, seek advice from the headteacher, DSL or pastoral member of staff. During this time, the pupil should be supervised somewhere away from other pupils
- Assess whether it's necessary to use reasonable force to conduct the search. Consider whether this would prevent the pupil from harming themselves or others, damaging property or causing disorder. Note: you can only use reasonable force to search for prohibited items but not other items.

## 4. Where do I conduct a search?

Search the pupil in an appropriate location that offers privacy from other pupils.

## 5. What can I search?

Authorised staff can search a pupil's pockets and require pupils to remove outer clothing, meaning clothes that are not worn directly next to the skin or over underwear. Outer clothing also includes:

- Gloves
- Scarves
- Shoes

You **cannot** ask pupils to take off any further items of clothing.

Be sensitive to whether a pupil is wearing outer clothing for religious reasons when you conduct a search. For example, you shouldn't require a female pupil to remove a headscarf she's wearing for religious reasons if your witness is male.

#### **6. Can I search a pupil's possessions?**

Yes. Authorised staff can search bags in the presence of the pupil and another member of staff (except in cases where there's a risk of harm and where it's not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff - see section above on who can conduct a search for more detail).

**You may use a metal detector to help with your search.**

#### **7. What is the guidance on strip searches?**

**Only police can conduct a strip search.**

School staff are not allowed to carry out strip searches, including the headteacher and authorised staff. Only police who have been asked to come to the school may decide whether a search is necessary and carry it out. The police can only carry out a search if they:

- Think this is necessary to remove an item related to a criminal offence, and
- Reasonably consider the pupil might have concealed such an item

#### **8. When do I call the police in to school for support?**

**Call the police into school as a last resort.**

Always put the best interest of the child first. This means that before you decide to call the police into school you should first:

- Make sure that you've exhausted other approaches
- Carefully weigh up the risks to the pupil's mental and physical wellbeing with the need to conduct a search

#### **9. What is my duty of care towards the pupil?**

Your role is to advocate for pupils' wellbeing at all times. A strip search can be highly distressing for the pupil, and for staff and other pupils affected.

The police cannot overrule your safeguarding duty, for example by requesting that the appropriate adult leave the room when they talk to the pupil. Make sure you are aware of this.

### **10. How do I support a pupil after a search?**

Always put safeguarding at the centre when supporting the pupil, regardless of whether a prohibited item is found. The pupil should have an opportunity to express their views regarding the search.

If a prohibited item is found:

- Consider it a safeguarding matter as well as a police matter
- Involve relevant staff such as the DSL and treat the pupil as potentially vulnerable

If a prohibited item is not found:

- Take a safeguarding approach to supporting the pupil to cope with the experience of being searched
- Consider the wider safeguarding issues that may have informed the decision to request a search in the first place

### **11. Do I need to make a record of the search?**

Yes. Please log on CPOMS immediately.

### **12. Do I need to inform parents of the search?**

Yes. DfE guidance says that where practicable, parents should be informed before the search is conducted and reasons for the search explained clearly.

**Where a member of staff has used reasonable force to restrain a pupil, or has searched a pupil, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to the relevant agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

## **29. First Aid and Medical Plans**

Except in cases of emergency, first aid will only be administered by qualified First Aiders.

All first aid treatment will be recorded and where significant will be shared with parents/carers at the earliest opportunity.

If it is necessary for the child to remove clothing for first aid treatment, there will, wherever possible, be another adult present.

If a child needs help with toileting, nappy changing or washing after soiling themselves, another adult should be present or within earshot.

All first aid treatment and non-routine changing or personal care will be recorded and shared with parents/carers at the earliest opportunity.

In situations where a pupil sustains an injury, or are otherwise affected by an accident or incident whilst they are the responsibility of the School, parents will be notified of this as soon as possible. A log of any injury will also be kept.

One of the Student Services managers must be alerted when an injury has been sustained by a pupil. All records are made and recorded by Student Services Managers in confidential First Aid Files.

### **30. ICT and Online Safety**

The School recognises that the use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues and that an effective approach to online safety empowers a school to protect and educate the whole school community in their use of technology and has mechanisms to identify, intervene in and handle incidents that occur.

Pupils have no access to the school wifi connection, as a deterrent to their use of Mobile Phones on site, which are banned.

Pupils are taught about online safety, including the risk of being exposed to harmful material, the risk of harmful interaction with others and the risk of online behaviour that causes or increases the likelihood of harm. They are taught about the dangers of sexting and the risks associated with location sharing.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has responsibility for **“understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place”** as part of their remit.

All members of staff are also required to have read and to follow the School’s ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

**Where a concern regarding online safety comes to a member of staff’s attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to the relevant agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

### **31. Security**

- Entry to School premises is controlled by doors and gates that are secured physically or by staff supervision or video surveillance.
- All visitors will be asked to read the 'Safeguarding at Bishop Challoner' Leaflet, available at all reception areas and the premises office.
- All visitors to the School must sign in at main reception. Under no circumstances are visitors to gain access to the school site via side entrances, unless as a Contractor via the Premises entrance.
- Visitors/ Contractors who have their DBS details available will present this information to Reception or Premises Staff. They will then be issued with a green lanyard, making clear that they are able to be on the school premises without staff supervision.
- Where the Visitor/ Contractor regularly attends the school site for pre-arranged visits, Reception/ Premises Staff will hold DBS clearance details on the internal school InVentry system. On these occasions, it will not be necessary for Visitors/ Contractors to physically provide staff with DBS details, as the School will already hold a record of this.
- Visitors/ Contractors who do not have their DBS details available will be issued with a red lanyard. They are not permitted to walk the school site unsupervised without a member of staff.
- All records on Contractors and other regular visitors who hold DBS are kept on file with Lea Palray, the School Safeguarding Administrator. The Premises Manager will liaise directly with the Safeguarding Manager on specific Contractor details where necessary.



- During non-term time or at weekends, when there are no pupils on site, Contractors who do not hold cleared DBS status are permitted to access the school site unsupervised. It is the responsibility of the Premises Manager to ensure there are no pupils on site.
- All authorised visitors to the School will be logged into and out of the premises via the InVentry System and will be asked to wear their lanyard for the duration of their time on the school premises. Unidentified visitors will be challenged by staff or reported to Security.
- All visitor lanyards are to be handed back to Reception/ Premises staff when visitors are signing out and leaving the school site

### **32. Doors**

All rooms that are used for the teaching or counselling of pupils will have clear and unobstructed glass panels in the doors.

### **33. Recruitment (Staff, Volunteers and Contractors)**

The School is committed to safer recruitment and has adopted procedures and processes (including its recruitment policy and safeguarding checks protocols) that are intended to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children.

The recruitment policy and safeguarding checks protocols are available to staff on the school website.

### **34. Safeguarding allegations against Staff (including the Designated Safeguarding Lead, supply staff, volunteers and the Executive Headteacher)**

The School takes seriously all cases that involve allegations against staff.

When handling any such cases, the School follows the guidance given by the Department for Education in Part Four of “Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024”.

Subject to the next paragraph, where there is a concern that a member of staff (including a member of supply staff or a volunteer) has or may have:

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

- Committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that he/she would pose a risk of harm if they worked regularly or closely with children; or
- Behaved in a way that indicates that he/she may not be suitable to work with children,

This must be reported wherever possible in the first instance to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will then inform the Executive Headteacher.

Any allegations relating to the Designated Safeguarding Lead must be reported to the Executive Headteacher.

Any allegations relating to the Executive Headteacher must be reported to the Safeguarding Governor Sheila Mouna or the Chair of Governors Father David Evans.

Governors can be contacted via the Clerk to the Governors [clerk@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk](mailto:clerk@bishop.towerhamlets.sch.uk)

Once a matter has been reported internally, advice will then immediately be sought from the Local Authority Designated Officer ("LADO").

The Tower Hamlets LADO is Melanie Benzie who can be contacted on 07903 238 827.

Where a crime may have been committed or serious harm has been suffered, the matter will be reported to the police. The School will not undertake its own investigations without prior consultation with the LADO.

Temporary and visiting staff will be subject to the same procedures in relation to safeguarding complaints and allegations, as permanent staff. Where an allegation relates to a member of supply staff provided by an agency, the agency would also be fully involved.

It is a legal duty to make a report to the DBS, within one month of their leaving the School, concerning any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or pupil) who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm to a child and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) with children, or would have been removed had he or she not left earlier.

Consideration will be given to making a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency where a teacher has been dismissed for misconduct (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned first).

Staff who are formally disciplined for the mistreatment of pupils (or who resign before disciplinary action can be completed) will be notified to Children's Services and the Department for Education.

If an allegation against a member of staff is substantiated, the School would work with the LADO to determine whether any improvement should be made to the School's safeguarding procedures or practices.

### **35. Low Level Concerns**

The School gives guidance to staff about their duty to report low level concerns, including concerns regarding the behaviour of a member of staff towards children (i.e. concerns that fall below the threshold for mandatory reporting to the local authority). Low level concerns must be reported to the Executive Headteacher and logged on CPOMS. Low level concerns are taken seriously and guidance on responses vary, as outlined below.

It is recognised by the School that:

- The method of commencing abuse often includes the erosion of boundaries, slow progression to abuse, use of trust and authority, meeting the child's needs (including physical and emotional), and developing relationships with the child's family.

- There seems to be a ‘slippery slope’ of boundary violations towards abuse and that there are many stages on the slippery slope towards the breach of a boundary within a relationship. Sometimes initial infringements are part of a grooming process but at other times they are made innocently and with good intention. However, once boundaries are breached (e.g. inappropriate conversations or other communications, inappropriate physical contact, social contact outside school and favouritism) it then becomes more difficult to restore the relationship to one in which proper boundaries are respected.
- Serious case reviews in the sector repeatedly indicate that staff, parents and students were often aware of individual incidents of inappropriate behaviour but that there was a failure to ‘join the dots’ and take appropriate action. Concerns were not voiced; incidents were viewed in isolation and as too low level to require reporting.
- A series of low level concerns may cumulatively meet the mandatory reporting threshold and need to be reported to the local authority as such.

The “low level concerns” guidance given by the School informs staff that:

- Whilst the concern may seem very minor and one-off, the behaviour may form part of a pattern that is putting children at risk or (without intervention) may develop into such a pattern.
- The behaviour may have been innocent but the member of staff may need to be given guidance to understand why it was inappropriate and should not happen again.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead conducts a regular review of reported low level concerns to ensure that:

- the concerns are being handled appropriately and proportionately;
- no concerns meet the threshold of mandatory reporting to the local authority; and
- patterns of behaviour are spotted.

KCSE 2024 makes clear that Low-level concerns can arise in several ways from various sources, e.g. suspicion, complaint or a disclosure

**Where a concern of this nature come to a member of staff's attention, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and (where appropriate) referred to appropriate agencies.**

**Members of staff are required to log this on the CPOMS Safeguarding system for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

### **36. The Role of the Governing Body**

The Governors' role is to:

- comply with their safeguarding duties under legislation and ensure that the policies, procedures and training in the School are effective and comply with the law at all times;
- ensure that the School contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance (including "*Working Together to Safeguard Children*" and "*Keeping Children Safe in Education*") and as a relevant agency of the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership;
- ensure that the School's safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of Tower Hamlets as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures;

- ensure that pupils are taught about safeguarding (including online safety);
- nominate a Safeguarding Governor to act as the lead Governor for child protection and safeguarding issues in the School; and
- review this Policy and the effectiveness of its implementation annually.

The Safeguarding Governor:

- is the lead Governor for child protection and safeguarding issues in the School;
- chairs the Governors' Safeguarding Committee;
- meets with the Designated Safeguarding Lead on a regular basis to monitor both the volume and progress of cases where a concern has been raised to ensure that the School is meeting its duties in respect of safeguarding;
- keeps fully abreast of the guidance available for safeguarding;
- visits the School to monitor its procedures;

The Governors review how children are taught about safeguarding in Wellbeing lessons (including safe use of electronic equipment and access to the internet).

### **37. Training**

All staff (including volunteers and temporary staff) undergo safeguarding training at induction. All staff receive safeguarding updates at least annually by email or face-to-face and informally. Updates are in line with advice from the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership, and include Prevent and online safety (as appropriate).

The safeguarding training covers:

- this Safeguarding Policy (including the identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads);
- the School's Code of Conduct;
- the Staff Code of Conduct;
- the Whistleblowing Policy;
- the Behaviour Policy;
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy;
- Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads attend Tower Hamlets dedicated induction course and then refresher training (including inter-agency working) at least every two years.

Designated Safeguarding Leads will be encouraged to attend appropriate network meetings and to participate in the multi-agency training programme organised by the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership.

The HR Department maintains a record of staff safeguarding training.



### **38. Records**

Brief written notes will be kept of all incidents and child protection or child in need concerns relating to individual pupils. These notes are significant especially if the incident or the concern does not lead to a referral to other agencies. This information may be shared with other agencies as appropriate. The School will take into account the views and wishes of the child who is the subject of the concern but staff will be alert to the dangers of colluding with dangerous “secrets”.

All Child Protection records are kept securely via the CPOMS System by the Designated Safeguarding Leads and separately from educational records. They may only be accessed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads and the senior managers of the School.

Child Protection records are reviewed regularly so that concerning patterns of behaviour can be spotted and appropriate interventions made.

Once places at the School for the following academic year have been accepted, the Designated Safeguarding Lead writes to the DSL at the respective feeder schools to request that they complete a confidential safeguarding/pastoral enquiry form and return this with the pupil’s safeguarding file.

When pupils leave to go to another school, child protection/safeguarding records are sent to the receiving school separately and under a confidential cover (separately from the main pupil file). A receipt is obtained.

Once leavers have finalised their plans for the next academic year and following publication of A level results in August the Heads of Sixth Form will judge whether it is appropriate for information about a pupil (beyond that included on the UCAS form) is to be transferred to the relevant university/School in the interests of the pupils’ physical safety or personal wellbeing, The following list is not exhaustive, and each case must be judged on an individual basis, but information will usually be transferred where a pupil:

- has a long-term medical condition which is likely to affect their ability to study;
- has a diagnosed mental health condition, including depression, anxiety and eating disorders;
- has been known to self-harm or to attempt to commit suicide;
- has had prolonged periods of absence from school (for whatever reason); or
- has an unstable home life or no fixed abode.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or Head of Sixth Form will write to the pupil's parents and with their consent then write to the relevant Admissions Tutor, requesting an acknowledgement from the university/School and placing this on the pupil's file.

The content of Child Protection Conference or Review reports prepared by the School will follow the headings recommended by Children's Services and will, wherever possible, be shared with the parents/carer in advance of the meeting.

The School will require documentary proof as to the identity of pupils presented for admission. We will maintain accurate and up to date records of those with parental responsibility and emergency contacts.

### **39. Complaints**

All parent complaints arising from the operation of this policy will be considered under the School's complaints procedure.

#### **40. Prospective parents aware of safeguarding**

This policy is placed on the School website so that is available to prospective parents.

#### **41. Review of this Policy**

The Safeguarding Policy is reviewed each year and updated as necessary. The review process includes consultation with the School's team of Designated Safeguarding Leads and other staff regarding proposed amendments.

Safeguarding is on the agenda for Governor meetings each term. It is the duty of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to provide all necessary information and to make a report at such meetings.

The Governors have formally adopted this policy and review its contents annually or sooner if any legislative or regulatory changes.