

Child Protection and Safeguarding policy for Little Ilford School

**Date approved by Full Governing Board July 2026
Updates approved by chair of Governors June 2026**

Review Date of policy: July 2027



School Designated Safeguarding Lead Andrew Finn

School Designated Safeguarding Lead & Mental Health Lead Naveen Ahmed, Deputy Head

School Deputy Safeguarding Lead Jude Denis

School Designated Safeguarding Governor Rashmi Makwana and Sukhminder Chawla

Chair of Governors /Trustees Simon Mares

ADDITIONAL SAFEGUARDING TRAINED STAFF:

- **Judith Purkiss, SENCO**
- **Jude Denis, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead**
- **Sunniya Mehmood, Pastoral Support Worker**
- **Tasmi Haque, Pastoral Attendance Support Officer**
- **Sumayyah Yasmin, Safeguarding Officer**

This policy is available on our school website and also on request from the school office. We inform parents and carers about this policy when their children join our school and through the school parentmail.

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Statutory Framework
3. School Roles and responsibilities
4. Types of abuse and specific safeguarding Issues
5. School Procedures
6. Continuous Professional Development
7. Professional Confidentiality
8. Record keeping and Information Sharing
9. Interagency Working
10. Allegations about members of the children's workforce, including low level concerns.
11. Whistleblowing

Appendix 1 – Newham Joint Position Statement on Everyone's Invited Sept 2021.

Appendix 2 – Early Help Offer

Child Protection and Safeguarding policy for Little Ilford School

1. Introduction

Our school is committed to developing and sustaining a strong safeguarding culture which supports us all to safeguard children and creates a positive and respectful learning environment in which everyone can flourish.

“Schools and colleges and their staff are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means they should consider at all times, what is in the best interests of the child”.

(Keeping Children Safe in Education – DfE, September 2026)

Safeguarding and child protection is everyone’s responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, including governors, volunteers, agency staff, contracted staff and is consistent with the procedures of Newham Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP). ([Newham Safeguarding Children Partnership Homepage - Newham Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)) Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

This policy aims to ensure:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children’s welfare
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues

Traditional safeguarding approaches focus on the risk of violence and abuse from inside the home, usually from a parent/carer or other trusted adult on young people’s development and safety. At Little Ilford School, staff are trained in Contextual Safeguarding. This recognises the impact of the public/social context on young people’s lives as well as any risk which may arise from the home. Contextual safeguarding seeks to identify and respond to harm and abuse posed to young people outside their home, either from adults or other young people. Using this approach, interventions which can change the processes and environments are identified, to make the environment safer for all young people, as opposed to focussing on an individual.

CHECKING THE IDENTITY AND SUITABILITY OF VISITORS

All visitors (including visiting speakers) will be required to sign in via the electronic sign-in machine which prints off a temporary identity badge for them to wear for the duration of their time on school site. All staff and visitors are given specific coloured lanyards. This allows students know which staff to speak with if they have any concerns, and ensures that all staff who do not have full DBS checks are always chaperoned;

Maroon lanyard - permanent member of staff (with a full DBS check)
Green lanyard - temporary member of staff/visitor (with a full DBS check)
Red lanyard - visitor without a DBS check, therefore will always be chaperoned.

MANOR PARK SCHOOLS COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP SAFEGUARDING JOINT STATEMENT

Child Protection is about keeping children and young people safe from physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. The schools, early years settings and childminders in Manor Park all work closely together to make sure that all the children and young people in our neighbourhood are kept safe, well and thrive.

We understand that all families go through ups and downs. We are here to offer help, support and guidance if things get difficult. Timely support can often stop a small problem from becoming a big issue that might negatively impact on your child.

We all work together to protect children and young people from:

- physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.
- extremism of any kind
- the harm caused by domestic violence

We are committed to stopping the illegal practices of Female Genital Mutilation (“female circumcision” or “cutting”) and of forced marriage. You need to be aware that it is a statutory requirement for all schools, early years’ settings and childminders to pass on information to Children’s Social Care if they are concerned about a child’s welfare or safety. We will usually discuss these concerns with parents’ first and request consent before contacting Children’s Social Care, unless a child is at risk of immediate harm.

If you are ever worried about a child, then please talk to the child’s Pastoral Achievement Leader, Deputy Pastoral Achievement Leader, the Safeguarding team, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or phone Newham’s safeguarding team on 020 3373 4600. If a child is in immediate danger you should phone the police on 999.

This Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is for all school and agency staff, parents, governors, volunteers and the wider school community. It forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for our school and should be read along with our policies for:

- Anti-Bullying
- Attendance (For Children missing in education)
- Behaviour (For allegations of child on child abuse)
- Complaints (For allegations against a member of staff)
- Curriculum
- Educational Visits
- Public sector Equalities
- First aid
- General Data Protection Regulation (For confidentiality)
- Health and safety
- E-Safety (For use of mobile technology)
- Photography Policy
- Positive Handling/Physical Intervention
- Professional Expectations of all staff (For staff conduct)
- Recruitment, induction and training (For safer recruiting and safeguarding training)
- Sex and relationship education
- Whistle-blowing
- Allegations made against staff

This policy should be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2026 (KCSiE26) and with reference to the Education Inspection Framework, Ofsted 2021.

Also see the Newham Joint Position Statement on Everyone’s Invited – Safeguarding all our children and young people in Newham, LBN 2021. (Appendix 1).

All staff should read

- Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 in full, as separate short summaries (Annex A) are no longer permitted, and
- DfE statutory guidance ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’, and
- ‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners’ (DfE March 2015).

Sensitivity to language: Our school staff say, ‘targeted child’ instead of ‘victim’, because a child may not see themselves as a victim. We say, ‘actor’ or ‘student or child’ when investigating incidents, rather than use labels like ‘bully’ or ‘perpetrator’. All these words and other terms are used and examined thoroughly for their meaning and impact as part of the safeguarding curriculum in our school.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online;
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

2. Statutory framework and content/location of embedded safeguarding

The Education Act 2002 Section 175, (Section 157 for Independent schools) places a statutory responsibility on the governing body to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are students of the school.

The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice in the London Borough of Newham are the responsibilities of the Newham Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP). In Newham, all professionals must work in accordance with the London Child Protection Procedures.

Our school also works in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

London child protection procedures <http://www.londoncp.co.uk/>

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (HMG, 2015)

Education Act 2002

Department for Education's statutory guidance

Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Modern Slavery Act 2015

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015)

The Prevent duty Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (DfE 2015)

Prevent Duty Guidance for Further Education Establishments in England and Wales (HMG 2015)

Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015)

Sexual Offences Act (2003)

Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006

General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR)

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (HMG, 2015)

Searching, screening and confiscation (DfE, 2022)

<https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/>

Use Of Force DfE current guidance.

Children Act 1989

Children Act 2004

Children and Social Work Act 2017

Modern Slavery Act 2015

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE, 2017),

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (S. 74 - Serious Crime Act 2015)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE, 2017) has now been incorporated throughout the DfE guidance document (Sept 22).

Information Sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers. (DfE July 2024)

Advice on Whistleblowing in Maintained Schools (DfE 2014)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/whistleblowing-procedure-for-maintained-schools>

Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019

Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2026)

Our Governing body will ensure that children are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe,

including online. Relevant topics will be included within Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education.

Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-school approach that prepares students and students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment. Preventative education must explicitly address online harms, including **the prevalence of deepfakes, AI-generated explicit content, and misogynistic online influencers**. Our school/college has a clear set of values and standards, upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school/college life. These are underpinned by the school/college's behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence-based RSHE delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum.

Our programme is inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate (especially when considering the needs of children with SEND and other vulnerabilities).

3. School roles and responsibilities

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them and to provide a safe environment that enables them to learn and achieve their full potential. However, there are identified key adults in schools and in the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures. The names of those in our school with these specific responsibilities are shown on the front cover sheet of this policy. All staff in our school are familiar with the Early Help Offer. See Appendix 2. Early Help is defined as support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcome or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse.

3.1 The Governing body

The Governing body ensures that a strong Safeguarding culture is embedded within the school, that our commitment to keep our children safe is explicit and understood by all in the school community and that our practice reflects the Governors' vision and values.

The Governing body ensures that all required policies relating to child protection and safeguarding (including Covid-19 requirements and guidance) are in place and that the child protection policy reflects statutory and local guidance. Safeguarding is a standing item on the agenda of all Governors' meetings. The policy is reviewed at least annually.

The Governing body ensures that the policies, procedures, practice and professional development and training in our school are effective and comply with the statutory requirements at all times. The Governing body will ensure relevant staff have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share (and withhold) personal information as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR.

The Governing body ensures that there is a named Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Lead(s) in place, that they have their safeguarding role explicitly within their job descriptions and are appropriately trained for their role, as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. The link governor for safeguarding visits the school regularly for meetings with the DSL and to observe safeguarding in school at first hand. The DSL reports directly to Governors on issues arising from their role which impact on the school.

The Governing body checks that safeguarding is included in Behaviour, Online and all related policies including the staff Code of Conduct and is highlighted in all policies as the overarching responsibility of all staff at all times, particularly in procedures involving sanctions or searches, in school and out. (If a search in school is deemed necessary, staff (always in pairs) will ensure students are not subjected to a pat down/strip search.)

The Governing body ensures that the school contributes fully to inter-agency working in line with statutory and local guidance and uses the appropriate referral pathways. It ensures that information is stored and shared appropriately and in accordance with the statutory requirements as set out in the Data Protection

Act 2018 and in line with GDPR requirements.

The Governing body ensures that all Governors, staff members and volunteers undergo appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction and that it is then regularly updated. All staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and up to date knowledge to keep our children safe. The Governing body also ensures that all staff have the knowledge, skills and understanding of children who have an allocated social worker. It recognises their additional vulnerabilities along with those of looked after and previously looked after children and monitors school action with all these children to keep them safe.

The Governing body ensures that children are taught to keep themselves safe, including on-line, making sure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems for working online in school are in place. This includes children that are accessing on-line learning at home. Our children will also be taught how to keep themselves safe through teaching and learning opportunities in RSHE and through whole-school practice led by staff as part of the provision of a rich and balanced curriculum. The Governing body will systematically document and review the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring systems at least once every academic year on all school-issued devices to ensure strict compliance with DfE digital standards.

The Governing body and school leadership team are responsible for robust safer recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who may abuse children. It adheres to statutory responsibilities to check adults working with children and has recruitment and selection procedures in place (see the school's 'Safer Recruitment' policy for further information). It also ensures that volunteers are appropriately supervised in school. We will conduct background checks through an online search as part of due diligence when shortlisting candidates; undertake a risk assessment and use our professional judgement when deciding whether to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate for any volunteer undertaking unregulated activity. (Shortlisted candidates will be notified in writing that these due diligence online searches will be performed.)

3.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in school takes the lead responsibility for managing child protection referrals, safeguarding training and raising awareness of all child protection policies and procedures in school. This includes a whole-school staff responsibility to support children affected by child on child abuse in all its forms, by following our protocol for listening, reassuring and reporting to allow the child to move on. The Designated Safeguarding lead (DSL) will ensure that everyone in school, including temporary staff, volunteers, trainee teachers and contractors are aware of these procedures and that they are followed at all times.

New Para 19, DfE Guidance: All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or are being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is a source of advice and support to other staff on child protection matters and makes sure that timely referrals to Newham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) are made in accordance with current London Child Protection Procedures. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) works with the local authority, the Channel programme and other agencies as required. If for any reason the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is unavailable, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will act in their absence.

The Designated Safeguarding lead (DSL) will also be alert to the additional vulnerabilities of children with a social worker, ensuring that staff know who those children are, understanding their academic progress and attainment and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for these children. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will also support staff to identify the challenges that children in this group may face and any additional support and/or adjustments that can be made to best support them.

In addition, in most cases homelessness would be considered in the context of children living with their families, however the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be alert that some children may be homeless independently and this will require a different level of intervention and support.

During term time, the designated safeguarding lead will be available during school hours to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Outside of school hours, if necessary, the designated safeguarding lead can be contacted via phone and email;

Telephone; 07760 161 546

Email; safeguardingteam@littileilford.org

3.3 The Headteacher

The Headteacher works in accordance with the requirements placed upon all school staff. In addition, the Headteacher ensures that all safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the Governing body are followed by all staff.

The Headteacher will ensure that children are taught about safeguarding themselves and safeguarding their peers, including e.g. the emotional impact of on-line nude image sharing, sexist abuse, body shaming or the sexual targeting of children with SEN or protected characteristics, as part of the broad and balanced curriculum. This includes covering relevant issues through Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) and through other curricular opportunities.

The Headteacher ensures that all students, individually or collectively through our school council are encouraged to promote the responsible use of social media, practical safety around the school and responsibility for their own and others' wellbeing, as an explicit, valued and integral element of a strong school safeguarding culture.

The Headteacher ensures that when a child requires, there is immediate access to an individual member of staff, appropriately trained, to listen, reassure and provide practical support and advice.

Where a school places a child in an alternative provision provider, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that child; the DSL retains absolute continuity of safeguarding oversight and will routinely review tracking against the National Standards for non-school alternative provision.

The Headteacher will make sure that s/he is satisfied that any alternative education provider can meet the needs of any child on the school roll that requires a placement. The Headteacher will obtain written confirmation that the appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out.

In the absence of the designated safeguarding lead, the Headteacher, who is also trained, will act as cover.

3.4 All school staff – safeguarding children's futures

Everyone at our school has a responsibility to provide a learning environment in which our children can feel safe to learn and to ensure that every child has access to learning, even if circumstances preclude their physical presence in the school. All staff members are prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help and understand their role and responsibilities within this process. This includes identifying any emerging problems so appropriate support may be provided and in liaison with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) report any concerns. All staff members are aware of and follow school processes as set out in this policy and are aware of how to use the portal to make a referral to the Newham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) when there is a need to do so.

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

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult, help to protect children. Our Safeguarding culture in school depends upon every member of staff being proactive in recognising opportunities to promote and support the development of these protective factors.

This includes the use of appropriate forms of online communication directly from staff to children. We use the functions through the platform for online learning – Google classroom. The use of social media (WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook, etc) for this purpose is inappropriate and would be regarded as a serious breach of professional boundaries.

All staff engage with and support children and the school council in promoting responsible use of social media, safety around the school and responsibility for their own and others' wellbeing, as an integral element of a strong school safeguarding culture.

DISCLOSURE

What to do if a child makes a disclosure:

- Listen carefully
- Take it seriously
- Reassure the child that it was right to tell
- Explain what will happen next, i.e., you will inform the relevant Safeguarding team member and/or the designated safeguarding lead (both on safeguard and verbally)
- Record the conversation in the child's words and note the date and time. This is your statement. Do not ask the child to write a statement - the relevant Safeguarding team member will do this.
- Sign and date your record.

What not to do if a child makes a disclosure:

- Ask leading questions
- Make promises you cannot keep, i.e. secrecy
- Jump to conclusions
- Speculate or accuse anybody
- Investigate

Don't forget the child.

4. Types of abuse / specific safeguarding issues

All school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation 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" [...] All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside of school or college and /or can occur between children outside of these environments".

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2026)

The four main types of abuse referred to in Keeping Children Safe in Education are:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Neglect

Our school is aware of the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation so we are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection. Within those four main types of abuse there are a number of specific types of abuse to which we are aware and especially alert.

4.1 Child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence)

Our school may be the only stable, secure and safe place in the lives of children at risk of, or who have suffered harm. However, on occasions their behaviour may be challenging and defiant, or they may instead be withdrawn, or display abusive behaviours towards other children.

Child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This may include bullying (including cyber bullying); on-line verbal abuse; gender-based abuse; verbal sexist abuse; unwanted, unthinking or coerced nude or semi-nude image sharing; self-generated intimate images and/or videos, including those generated or manipulated using AI (e.g., deepfakes) and Financially Motivated Sexual Extortion (Sextortion) or sexually harmful behaviour. We do not tolerate any bullying, abuse or harmful behaviour in school and will take swift action to intervene where this occurs.

Weapons & Violent Intent Intent Threshold

Staff must immediately report any child expressing the intent to use or carry a weapon, lowering the threshold of intervention to allow for immediate DSL de-escalation of peer conflict.

We use the curriculum and assemblies to help children understand, in an age-appropriate way, what abuse is and we encourage them to tell a trusted adult, if someone is behaving in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. Staff are proactive and vigilant in recognising when a child may need to tell an adult of their choice about what is happening to them, will acknowledge how they feel and support them through the next steps of reporting to MASH, if that is what it takes to keep them safe. Our school understands the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with child on child abuse. Staff will also refer to other relevant policies – e.g. Behaviour and Anti-bullying policy.

Consensual image-sharing between older children of the same age may require a different response as it may not be abusive but the children still need to know that it is illegal and risky to maintain privacy as well as jeopardising future job searches, for example.

4.2 Sexual Violence and Harassment

Sexual violence and harassment can occur between children of any age individually or in groups. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing, and in all likelihood will adversely affect their educational attainment. Our school takes all victims seriously and they will be offered the appropriate support.

Predatory behaviour or a dismissive attitude towards sexual harassment may be prevalent online or feature in the children's lived experience of home, friendship groups or society at large, but it is not indicative of respect for other students and therefore it is unacceptable at Little Ilford School.

An example of such harassment is 'Upskirting', which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Anyone of any gender can be a victim and it is a criminal offence under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019.

Our school culture of safeguarding ensures that the message that abusive behaviours are unacceptable is explicit through our curriculum, school environment and staff modelling appropriate language and respectful relationships. We do not accept that it is 'just part of growing up' or a joke. Our school manages such incidences in the same way by considering the need to undertake an immediate risk and needs assessment and as with any other child protection concern we will follow the same procedures. Students initiating such abuse or sexualised behaviour will be subject to an AIM risk assessment which will inform a safety plan for everyone involved, including themselves.

Sexual harassment includes:

- Sexual comments.
- Sexual “jokes” and taunting.
- Physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against another person.
- Online sexual harassment, including non-consensual sharing of images and videos and sharing sexual images and videos (often known as sexting), inappropriate comments on social media, exploitation, coercion and threats – online sexual harassment may be isolated or part of a wider pattern.

4.3 Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

Our school understands that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. Our school recognises that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child’s disability, without further exploration;
- Being more prone to peer group isolation than other children;
- Instances of child on child sexual abuse where the perpetrators are children will always require safeguarding support and a significant subgroup of these children will have SEND;
- Children with SEND and /or protected characteristics are statistically more likely to be identified as targets for bullying or sexual abuse by their peers;
- Communication barriers that make telling an adult difficult;
- The requirement of personal or intimate care.

Our school takes into consideration these additional vulnerabilities and challenges and staff are proactive in safeguarding all our vulnerable children.

4.4 Children Missing from Education (CME)

As part of our safeguarding role we ask parents and carers to provide a minimum of two contact details and we will regularly ask parents and carers to ensure that they are kept up to date.

All children, regardless of their age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs they may have are entitled to a full-time education. Our school recognises that a child missing education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and can be warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, including sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or child criminal exploitation.

Staff will follow the school procedures for unauthorised absence and for children missing education. As well as missing from education, Parents should always inform us of the reason for any absence by phoning the school or messaging the school via the “My School” app. Where contact is not successfully made, a referral may be made to another appropriate agency (Newham Attendance Management Service (NAMS), Social Care or Police).

Our school will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without school permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more in line with the requirements for Children Missing Education.

Refer to the absent students safeguarding protocol.

4.5 Contextual safeguarding

All staff are aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside of the school and can occur between children outside of the school environment. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and all staff will consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Contextual abuse takes different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including but not limited to sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and serious youth

violence.

4.5.1 Newham PCEHH – Preventing Child Exploitation and Harm Hub

The PCEHH is a weekly multi-disciplinary meeting chaired by the Director of Early Help and Children's Health. The PCEHH helps to identify and engage with children and young people who may be potentially at risk from any form of exploitation by responding to earlier 'critical moments' indicated via referrals from MASH. The PCEHH forms part of Newham's understanding and response to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Missing, Criminal exploitation / gangs and county lines, serious youth violence (SYV), harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) and modern slavery in the borough.

It is well documented that focusing on prevention, early identification and intervention helps disrupt activity that might increase the probability of children and young people being exploited. Where there are low or emerging risks of child exploitation with no safeguarding concerns but heightened vulnerabilities, the child is referred to the PCEHH for a multiagency discussion to agree a co-ordinated package of support for the whole family. Involving all family members can be a key determinant in supporting children and young people to remain safe and achieve good outcomes.

The PCEHH sits within the Early Help service, which works with the whole family. This means that the PCEHH also considers both inter-familial as well as intra-familial concerns as part of a co-ordinated and contextual safeguarding approach. All cases must have followed existing child protection procedures prior to being discussed at the PCEHH, including strategy meeting/discussion where appropriate.

4.5.2 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) including County Lines

Both Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. This can happen to children and young people from any background or community. This power imbalance can also 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 may involve an 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, groups, males or females and children or adults. 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 enforcement or enticement-based methods of compliance and may or may not be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Children can be exploited even when the activity appears consensual.

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of County Lines criminal activity; drug networks or gangs grooming and exploiting children and young people to carry drugs, weapons and money for them. Key to identifying potential involvement may be 'missing episodes' when the child may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs, weapons or money. Have been the perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime), as well as the victim. Our school will consider a referral using the Newham pathways or a direct referral using the National Referral mechanism for human trafficking.

4.5.3 Serious Violence

There are a number of indicators, which may signal that a child is at risk from, or involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships, or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change of attitude or well-being or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that a child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

4.6 Emotional Abuse

Children under seventeen where there is a persistent coldness, hostility, or rejection by the parent or care-giver to such an extent that the children's behaviour and development are impaired. This can also apply when undue pressure is put on a child to perform academically, regardless of the child's ability or

special educational needs.

4.7 Honour Based Abuse

So-called honour-based abuse (HBA) encompasses abuse committed to protect or preserve “honour”. It often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can involve multiple perpetrators. This includes Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and such practices such as breast ironing.

4.7.1 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and is a form of child abuse. It is also known as ‘female genital cutting’, ‘female circumcision’ or ‘initiation’.

The Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015) places a duty on teachers to notify the police of any known cases of female genital mutilation where it appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. This is a statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it. Cases where a child is at risk of FGM or if FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out, staff should follow the school’s safeguarding procedures. Staff should not examine children. Our school will operate in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to female genital mutilation in line with the London Child Protection Procedures. The DSL will advise/support staff in this position and work with appropriate colleagues and agencies to support the girl and liaise with the family. The Newham Attendance Service has produced guidance on FGM for staff dealing with families who announce that they are going abroad which is available on Connect.

4.7.2 Forced marriage

A forced marriage is one that is entered into without the full consent of one or both parties. It is where violence, threats or other forms of coercion is used and is a crime. If a member of staff suspects that a child is being forced into marriage, they should report this to the designated safeguarding lead.

4.8 Prevention of radicalisation

Radicalisation is defined as the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence. Children can be vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Protecting children from this risk is similar to protecting them from other forms of harm and abuse. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015) Section 26 places a duty on schools in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the PREVENT duty.

It requires schools to:

- teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life and must promote community cohesion;
- be safe spaces in which children and young people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas and;
- be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues.

CHANNEL is a national programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as vulnerable to radicalisation and being drawn into terrorism. All staff understand how to identify those who may benefit from this support and are aware of relevant agencies to contact in circumstances where an individual demonstrates indicators of concern, as well as how to make a referral using the Newham referral pathways.

Where staff witness clear signs of the following behaviours, they should report to the safeguarding lead, recording incidents on the SIMS Behaviour Module using the ‘Expressing Concerning Views’ label, as appropriate. Please note that some of these behaviours do not indicate radicalisation on their own but may be a warning sign.

- Parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendships or actions and requests for assistance;
- Disclosures by students of their exposure to the extremist actions, views or materials of others outside of school, such as in their homes or community groups, especially where students have not actively

sought these out;

- Graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images;
- Students accessing extremist materials online, including through social networking sites, or other published materials;
- Reports from partner schools, local authority services and/or the police of issues affecting students in other schools or settings;
- Students voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives;
- Use of extremist or 'hate' terms to exclude others or incite violence;
- Intolerance of difference, whether secular or religious or, in line with our equalities policy, views based on, but not exclusive to, gender, disability, homophobia, race, colour or culture;
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others;
- Expressing views that deny people democratic rights and encourage the breaking of British law.

4.9 Mental Health and Wellbeing

All staff must recognise that mental health problems can, in some cases, escalate directly into acute safeguarding concerns (such as severe self-harm, eating disorders, or suicidal ideation) rather than just functioning as an indicator of outside abuse. Staff are able to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem. Where there are mental health concerns about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action will be taken following the school child protection policy and the senior Mental Health Lead will be informed.

Our school works to protect the emotional wellbeing and resilience of all students and staff, as well as provide specific support for those with additional needs. We understand that there are risk factors which increase a child's vulnerability and protective factors that can promote or strengthen resilience. The more risk factors present in a child's life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are required to promote further growth and resilience. It is recognised that some children in our school may be suffering from mental ill-health and are at risk of self-harm or suicide but may present in school as making good progress and achieving well. It is therefore vital that we work in partnership with parents and carers to support the mental health and well-being of our children. It is equally important that parents share any concerns about the well-being of their child with school, so that appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented in partnership.

Where there are concerns that a child may be self-harming, it will be taken seriously as this may indicate an increased risk of suicide either intentionally or by accident. If a child discloses self-harm or is found to be self-harming the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)/Mental Health Lead will take the time to establish any underlying concerns. The child will be supported to access services using the appropriate Newham referral pathways.

4.10 Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is defined as "any incident or pattern of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 and over who are, or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological; physical, sexual; financial and emotional, coercive or controlling behaviour"

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.

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.

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships. This form of child on child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under

16). These experiences can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

Our school recognises that where there is Domestic Abuse in a family, the children/young people will always be affected; the longer the violence continues, the greater the risk of significant and enduring harm, which they may carry with them into their adult life and relationships. Domestic Abuse can also affect children in their personal relationships as well as in the context of home life.

Staff will follow the procedures outlined in this policy if concerns of Domestic Abuse arise. The school will vigilantly monitor the welfare of children living in domestic abuse households, offer support to them and contribute to any Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) safety plan as required.

Operation Encompass operates in the London Borough of Newham, the school will process police notifications which capture the explicit voice of the child (including their presenting behaviours and context) while maintaining strict data protection compliance for these highly sensitive notifications. Our school will use the information shared to ensure that our children are supported and kept safe.

4.11 Initiation

Initiation (Hazing) is an activity in which someone is admitted into a society or group, typically with a ritual. The expectation is for the person to join or participate in an activity that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers them regardless of a person's willingness to participate.

4.12 Support for Gender-Questioning Children

Little Ilford School operates a child-centred, highly cautious approach regarding children questioning their gender. The school will not initiate social transition processes. Any decision-making framework regarding requests must involve the child's parents in the vast majority of cases, unless doing so presents a documented, direct risk of significant harm to the child. In compliance with statutory legal obligations, single-sex facilities (including toilets, changing rooms, and sports provisions) remain protected strictly on the basis of biological sex with no exceptions. Alternative private spaces will be explored sensitively, in discussion with the child. The child's biological sex must be recorded accurately within all official school records.

5. Procedures

All staff members have a duty to identify and respond to suspected and actual abuse or disclosures of harm. Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to our school who receives a disclosure or allegation of abuse, or suspects that abuse may have occurred must report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or, in their absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. Concerns about a child at risk of radicalisation or extremism will be raised with the PREVENT and Designated Safeguarding Leads.

All action is taken in accordance with the following guidance;

- Newham Safeguarding Children Partnership guidelines – Pan-London Child Protection Procedures
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2018)
- PREVENT Duty - Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015)

Where a child is suffering or is likely to suffer from harm, a child will be referred to the Newham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub through the Newham MASH Portal, immediately. Time-sensitive referrals may be telephoned first in case the child needs to be kept in school, pending a Section 47 Strategy meeting when a social worker will come to the school. Less urgent concerns or requests for support will also be referred via the Newham MASH Portal for consideration of Early Help support as appropriate. We will call police to the school directly if the risk is assessed as acute and immediate.

Practice when Police are called to the school.

Before calling police to the school, the DSL and senior staff will reflect upon the proportionality of this response, being aware of the child's rights under the Equalities Act and Human Rights Act and if necessary, identifying and addressing concerns such as adultification if it is suspected of being present in staff decision making processes thus far.

Best practice for staff considering police intervention to be necessary:

- To consult the DSL and Head Teacher about the reason to involve the police.
- To consult the Safer Schools Officer (SSO) before contacting police directly, unless the risk is considered to be escalating at a rate that precludes contacting the SSO.
- This school will prioritise contacting the SSO for advice before asking for other officers to attend.
- A child will not be searched on site by police at all, or taken offsite to a police station without an appropriate adult (DSL, DH) being present if their parent cannot accompany them.

In the event that a child is interviewed on site by police, the DSL will act in loco parentis at that interview to provide support to the child. Parents/carers will be informed directly that the police have been called to the school in connection with their child, subject to the safeguarding guidelines below. A suitably trained 'Appropriate Adult' must be present if the child is subsequently arrested and/or taken to a police station and the DSL will ensure that arrangements for such support are in place before the child leaves the school premises, with the reason for the arrest and the name of the appropriate adult concerned, confirmed. Appropriate Adult | Youth Justice Legal Centre (yjlc.uk); DRAFT GUIDE FOR (publishing.service.gov.uk) (role and responsibilities of an Appropriate Adult).

No child may be subject to a search by police on school premises. Any such search should be carried out at the police station with an 'Appropriate Adult' in attendance to the search.

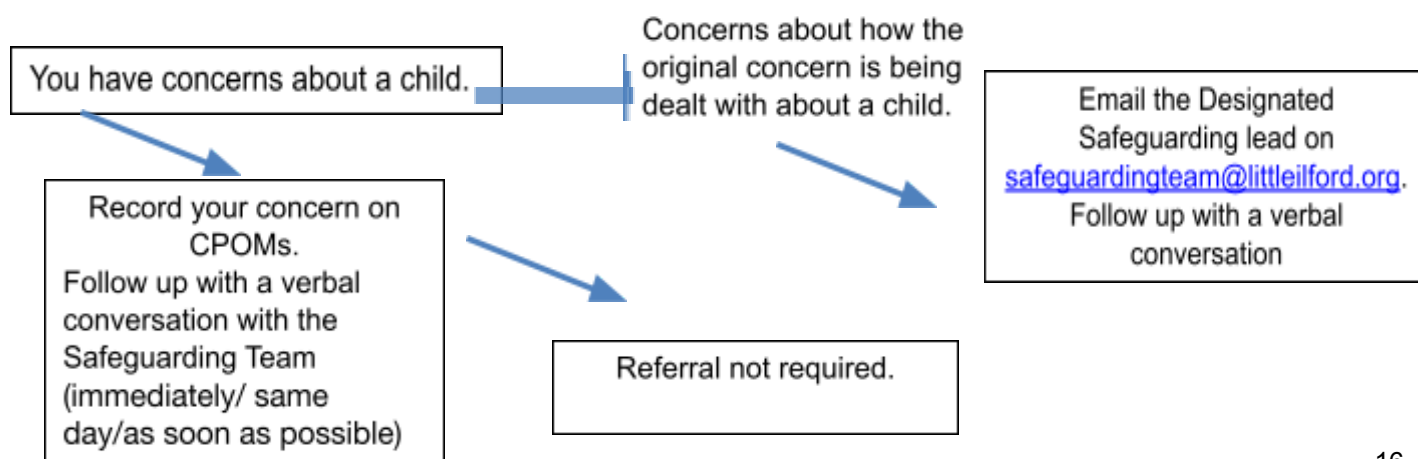
Wherever possible, the school will share any safeguarding concerns, or an intention to refer a child to the MASH with parents or carers. However, we will not do so where it is felt that to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On occasions, it may be necessary to seek advice from the MASH team or the Police in making decisions about when it is appropriate to share information with parents or carers.

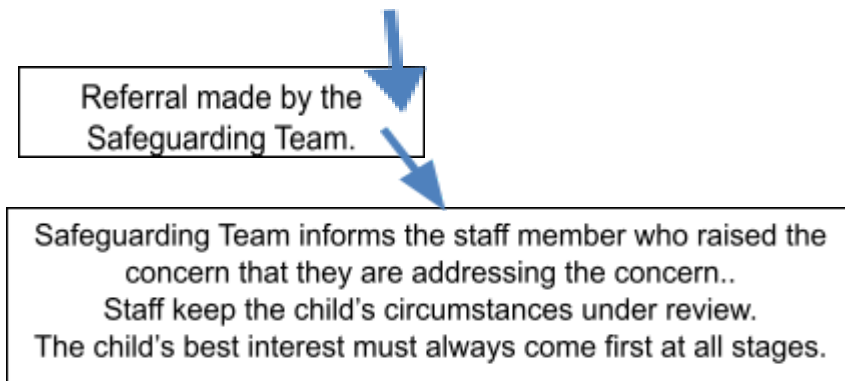
Any safeguarding concerns regarding a child should be recorded by staff on the CPOMS portal. If there are further concerns (i.e. you are not satisfied with how the concern is being dealt with) you should report them (via email) to the Designated Safeguarding Lead on safeguarding@littleilford.org. Any further concerns should be raised with the Headteacher and/or then the LADO. All reported concerns should be followed up, as soon as possible, with a verbal conversation.

If, for any reason, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Safeguarding contact details are displayed in the school to ensure that all staff members have unfettered access to safeguarding support, should it be required. Any individual may refer to the Newham MASH where there is suspected or actual risk of harm to a child. All staff should be aware of how to access the portal.

If a child resides outside Newham the DSL will be aware of the need to refer to the MASH in their LA. If unsure, always refer to the Newham MASH who will forward to appropriate areas.

Protocol if you have concerns about a child's welfare*





*If you believe a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, make a referral to Children's Social Care and/or the police immediately. Anyone can make a referral. A referral to Children's Social Care should be made in accordance with the referrals procedure via the MASH team on 020 3373 4600 or 020 8430 2000 as well as completing the online referral at https://azcareportal-live.newham.gov.uk/aztriageportal/jsp_mash/admin/login.jsp

Inform the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

Early Help:

All staff should, in particular, be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

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

- has experienced multiple* suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or pupil referral unit.
- is experiencing repeated removals from the classroom due to behavioural conflict.
- has been placed on a part-time timetable, which may signal unmet academic or pastoral needs.

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

When new staff, agency staff, volunteers or regular visitors join our school they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place, the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy and how to share concerns with them. **Appendix 2 Early Help pathway in Newham.**

(*frequent and multiple is the wording used in KCSiE. Each situation will be assessed individually, therefore in some cases support will be sought immediately.)

6. Training

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Safeguarding Team undertake child protection training appropriate to the role at every two years as a minimum. The Headteacher, all staff members and governors receive appropriate child protection training that is regularly updated. In addition, all staff members receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Records of any child protection training undertaken is kept for all staff and governors.

The school ensures that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Safeguarding Team also undertake training in inter-agency working and other matters as appropriate.

Positive Handling and de-escalation practice keeps children and staff safe in school. This is refreshed every 3 years and is undertaken by all staff in a rolling programme which builds a collegiate responsibility for everyone's safety and wellbeing.

All agency staff must complete the safeguarding induction programme within 5 days of starting work in the school, which prioritises safeguarding practice and appropriate language to be used in school. Certificates for Positive Handling training and the date of the last refresher are part of the recruitment process.

7. Professional confidentiality

A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to anyone about a safeguarding concern (including parents / carers or children) or promise to keep a secret. In accordance with statutory requirements, where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and may require further referral and subsequent investigation by appropriate authorities.

Information on individual child protection cases may be shared by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with other relevant staff members. This will be on a 'need to know' basis only and where it is in the child's best interests to do so.

8. Records and information sharing

Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. School staff must have due regard for the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) Our school is confident of the processing conditions that allow us to store and share information for safeguarding purposes. This allows us to share information without consent, if it is not possible to gain consent or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records should be shared with other agencies.

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, will record it as soon as possible on Safeguard noting what was said or seen, using a body map to record if appropriate, with the date, time and location. All records will be dated and signed, with the name printed and will include the action taken. This is then presented to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who will decide on the appropriate action and record it accordingly.

Any records related to child protection are kept in an individual child protection file for that child, separate to the file. All child protection records are stored securely and confidentially and will be retained for 25 years after the child's date of birth, or until they transfer to another school or educational setting. We acknowledge the guidance for transferring records as below.

Where a child transfers from our school to another school or educational setting including colleges, their child protection records will be forwarded or transferred electronically to the new educational setting with notice given to the receiving DSL. These will be marked 'Confidential' and for the attention of the receiving school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL will actively confirm and secure a formal, written confirmation of data receipt from the destination setting within 5 working days of transfer. Prior to arrival, the transferring DSL should arrange direct communication to hand over high-level context regarding complex risks (such as serious youth violence or weapon history) to guarantee a safe continuity of care. If paper files are sent they will be securely sealed and sent, under arrangements for immediate return if delivery to the receiving school's DSL/Head Teacher is not possible. A receipt is expected.

Lack of information about their circumstances can impact on the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. In addition to the child protection file, the DSL should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school or college. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives. (*Keeping Children Safe in Education 2012*)

Transferring settings do not need to keep copies of child protection files, but if they do they must be kept in accordance with data retention (and for the shortest practical time).

In CP cases where there may be ongoing involvement from transferring settings, for example **if any siblings still attend your setting**, DSLs may wish to take copies of chronologies. Electronic systems may have an option to link this information.

If a child who is subject of a child protection plan leaves your setting and you are unaware of the name of the child's new education placement, you should contact the child's key worker from Early Help or Children's Social Care to discuss how records should be transferred.

Where a child joins our school, we will request all child protection records from the previous educational setting. If none are received within the statutory time, we will renew the request and report this to the Education Safeguarding Officer.

9. Inter-agency working

Our school will be proactive and prioritise inter-agency working to contribute to safeguarding children. It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to ensure that the school is represented at and a report is submitted to any child protection conference or core group meeting for children on the school roll or previously known to them. Where possible and appropriate, any report will be shared in advance with the parent(s) and/or carer(s). Whoever represents the school will be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the school has and will be prepared to contribute to the discussions and planning at the meeting(s).

If a child is subject to a child protection or a child in need plan, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will ensure the child is monitored regarding their school attendance, mental health and emotional well-being, academic progress, welfare and presentation. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will ensure the school prioritises attendance at core group meetings and provide appropriate information to contribute to the plan at these meetings. Any concerns about the child protection plan and/or the child's welfare will be discussed and recorded at the core group meeting, unless waiting for the next meeting would place the child at further risk of significant harm. In this case the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will inform the child's key worker immediately and then record that they have done so and the actions agreed.

When we become aware that a child who is being, or is going to be, privately fostered our school has a duty under Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 to inform the Local Authority to ensure the appropriate safeguards are in place. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will make an appropriate referral using the Newham referral pathway.

10. Allegations about members of the workforce

The aim of our school is to provide a safe and supportive environment that secures the well-being and best learning outcomes for children. All staff members are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are outlined in the Staff Handbook and/or Code of Conduct. We do, however, recognise that sometimes allegations of abuse are made and when they occur they are distressing and difficult for all. We also understand that some allegations are

genuine and that there are adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children. Our school takes all possible steps to safeguard our children and ensure that the adults in our school are safe to work with children.

Supply staff, whilst not employed by the school are under the supervision, direction and control of the governing body when working in the school. If we receive an allegation about an individual that is not directly employed by the school for example, supply teachers we will discuss with the employer/agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher or to redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out an investigation. We will usually take the lead in collecting the facts from children and other staff and work in partnership with the employer and LADO to manage the process.

We will always ensure that the procedures outlined in Chapter 7 of the London Child Protection Procedures are adhered to and will seek appropriate advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) by telephone 0203 373803 or email cppt.lado@nwham.gov.uk

If an allegation is made or information is received about any member of staff or volunteer who works with children (even an outside organisation using the school premises) has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children;

The member of staff receiving the information should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Headteacher immediately. This includes concerns relating to agency and supply staff. Should an allegation be made against the Headteacher, this will be reported to the Chair of Governors. In the event the Chair of Governors is not contactable the same day, the information must be passed to the Vice Chair. The Headteacher or Chair of Governors will seek advice from the LADO within one working day. No member of staff will undertake further investigations before seeking advice from the LADO.

If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers, trainee teachers or contractors) that does not meet the harm threshold, then this should be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher in accordance with the school low-level concerns policy. Further details can be found in our Recruitment Policy and in Part four of the DFE guidance on Safeguarding.

Any concerns regarding staff (including any about the designated safeguarding lead/Headteacher) can also be raised directly to the Newham Local Authority Designated Officer

Email; CPRT.DUTY@Newham.gov.uk

Telephone; 0203 373 3803

Out of hours; 0208 430 2000

Any member of staff or volunteer who does not feel confident to raise concerns within the school should contact the LADO directly.

The school has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person from regulated activity. If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at our school, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the LADO and/or the HR department.

10.1 Low-Level Concerns Regarding Staff, Volunteers, Trainee Teachers, Supply Staff, and Contractors

A. Definition alongside KCSIE In line with statutory guidance outlined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*, a "low-level concern" is any concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than a sense of unease or a "nagging doubt", that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work.

A low-level concern does not meet the "harm threshold" required for a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Examples of low-level concerns include, but are not limited to:

- Being over-friendly with children;
- Having favourites among the student body;
- Taking children one-on-one into a room without reasonable justification, or failing to ensure room vision panels are completely uncovered;
- Using inappropriate, over-familiar, sexualised, or intimidating language;
- Engaging with students via personal social media accounts or personal mobile numbers outside school protocols.

B. Necessity and Purpose Little Ilford School maintains a low-level concerns framework to promote an open, transparent, and vigilant safeguarding culture. This framework is necessary and purposeful because it:

- **Ensures Early Identification:** It allows the school to identify problematic, inappropriate, or unsafe behaviour at the earliest possible stage;
- **Minimises Risks:** It ensures that minor boundary slips are not left unchallenged, dramatically minimising the risk of abuse or grooming behaviours;
- **Empowers Staff:** It gives staff a clear, safe mechanism to voice "soft" concerns confidently, which in turn reduces the likelihood of misunderstandings escalating into unfounded severe allegations;
- **Provides Professional Support:** It protects staff from drifting into deeper professional difficulties by allowing the school to provide early support, corrective guidance, or targeted training.

C. Clear Internal Procedures To ensure all low-level concerns are managed effectively and safely, the school operates the following strict procedures:

1. **Reporting Process:** All staff, volunteers, trainee teachers, supply staff, and contractors must report any low-level concern immediately to the Headteacher. If the low-level concern relates directly to the Headteacher, it must be reported directly to the Chair of Governors.
2. **Recording:** The concern must be documented in writing on the Staff Concerns tile. The record must include the name of the individual involved, the date/time of the occurrence, a clear contextual description of the behaviour, and the name of the person reporting (though anonymous reports will still be accepted and reviewed).

3. **Assessment & Triage:** The Headteacher will review the report to verify that it is entirely "low-level" and does not meet the LADO harm threshold. If there is any ambiguity or if the concern could potentially meet the harm threshold, the Headteacher will consult Newham's LADO within 24 hours.
4. **Secure Storage:** Records of low-level concerns will be stored securely and confidentially on a dedicated, restricted-access safeguarding database (CPOMS). These records will be kept completely separate from the staff member's main personnel file.
5. **Pattern Tracking and Retention:** The DSL and Headteacher will review low-level concerns periodically to identify any patterns of behaviour concerning an individual or a wider cultural trend in a specific department. These records will be retained at least until the individual leaves the school, or for the statutory period required by local authority guidance, after which they will be reviewed for safe disposal.

11. LONE WORKING

Staff are encouraged not to work alone in school. Where lone working cannot be avoided staff should:

- Ensure they do not put themselves or others at risk.
- Ensure they have means to summon help in an emergency, e.g. access to a telephone or mobile telephone.
- Report any incidents or situations where they may feel/have felt unsafe or uncomfortable.
- Inform the site team that they will be in the building

Home visits must be undertaken in pairs. Staff conducting home visits should gain permission from the Senior Leadership Team line manager, they should not enter the premises unless they are sure it is safe to do so.

12. Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is defined as '*making a disclosure in the public interest*' and occurs when a worker (or member of the wider school community) raises a concern about danger or illegality that affects others, for example students in the school or members of the public.

All staff members are made aware of the duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of staff in line with the school's Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing policy.

We want everyone to feel able to report any child protection or safeguarding concerns. More information is available called Advice for Whistleblowing in Maintained Schools (DfE 2014). However, for members of staff who feel unable to raise these concerns internally, they can contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on: 0800 028 0285 or email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Parents or others in the wider school community with concerns can contact the NSPCC general helpline on: 0808 800 5000 (24 hour helpline) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk

If an allegation is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the LADO and the case manager should consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to local authority children's social care may be appropriate.

Our Recruitment policy refers to outcomes to protect staff when allegations against them have been found to be false or unfounded (paras 419 410 KCSiE 26).

Safeguarding Practices

1. Reporting concerns

All staff and volunteers must act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this, both for children still attending school and those at home.

The DSL and Safeguarding staff work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

The following information has been shared with staff:

- Staff should use the CPOMS software to inform the Safeguarding team/SLT of any safeguarding concerns regarding a student.
- Follow up with a verbal conversation with the safeguarding team.

How to log a concern:

--> Click on the CPOMS tile. (If the tile is not working - type CPOMS into google and it should be the first link)

--> Click on create a concern on the left hand side

--> Follow the instructions, i.e. child's name, state the concern, state the name of any staff involved, and notify staff. (Ensure you click "notify" so any staff involved, the year team, inc. the SLT LM and DSL are notified via CPOMS.) There are some tick boxes that can be clicked on, to state the title of the concern. If you do not see a relevant title, complete the concern without a title. (N.B.: Operation Encompass relates to police involvement with Domestic Abuse). More detail (with visual aids) is shared in the school bulletin

2. Feedback you receive:

As always, you will not be informed of any details but you should receive a reply from the Safeguarding team within two days, stating whether the year team will be looking into the case, whether the issue is already known or whether it is not a safeguarding concern.

If you are unsure about whether the concern you have is a safeguarding concern or not, please feel free to speak with the DSL about it. If in doubt, err on the side of caution and log the concern.

Telephone numbers are on the school telephone list.

3. Working with other agencies

We work with

- Children's Social Care, and with Virtual School heads for looked-after, previously looked-after children and children in kinship care.
- The Department for Education (DfE)
- Newham local authority about children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's Social Care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need
- Police by working with named officers, or other partnership arrangements to ensure the safety of the student and the community