CHILD PROTECTION PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy adopted by the Ben Jonson School Governing Body in September 2025

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School Ethos

- The governors and staff of Ben Jonson Primary school fully recognise the contribution the whole school community makes to safeguarding children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm. It is also a key role of school and college staff to promote all pupil's welfare. All relevant policies and procedures refer to this responsibility to enable all staff to play their part.

- It is the duty of the employer and the employee to report to the relevant authority if they suspect that an individual or group of individuals has:
  - behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
  - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
  - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children.
  - or behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

- All staff and governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:
  - protecting children from maltreatment.
  - preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
  - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
  - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

- This policy has been developed in line with the most up-to-date guidance as described in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025 and is updated at least annually to reflect any subsequent guidance issued unless an incident, new legislation or guidance calls for the need for a review.

- The procedures contained within the Child Protection Policy apply to all staff, volunteers, visitors and governors; all the procedures have been written in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 and reflect local safeguarding arrangements including the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership Supplementary Guidance documents on Child Protection Procedures and the Management of Allegations

- This policy is made available and accessible to staff, parents and visitors via our school website, shared drive, staff induction, staff training, and via our school office for visitors to school.

- The aims of this policy are:
  - To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.

- To raise the awareness of both teaching and support staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse, including an understanding of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm.
- To uphold the rights of a child to feel safe and that being subjected to harassment, violence and abuse, may breach the rights of a child, as set out in the Human Rights Act (KCSIE 2023 p.24)
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- To develop a structured procedure within the school, which will be followed by all members of the school community, in cases of suspected abuse or neglect.
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Social Services, including timely support from Tower Hamlets Early Help Hub.
- To ensure that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability.

1. CORE SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

- The welfare of the child is paramount and underpins all discussions, decision making, and actions taken at the school.
- All concerns shared and reported by children 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 concern shared 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; underpin the school's safeguarding policies, procedures and systems; and pervade the whole school approach to safeguarding at Ben Jonson Primary.

2. PURPOSE OF POLICY

- To ensure all pupils on the school roll are effectively safeguarded including those pupils in Alternative Provision placements.
- To provide all staff with key information to enable them to identify safeguarding concerns and know what action to take in response.
- To ensure consistent good practice throughout the school.

- To demonstrate the school's commitment to safeguarding to the whole school community: pupils, parents/carers and other partners.

3. SAFEGUARDING LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

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

Legislation

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (Local maintained schools only)
- Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 (Independent schools only, including academies and Free Schools)
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (Independent schools only, including academies and Free Schools)
- The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (as amended)
- Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021 (16-19 Academies and Independent Training Providers)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (HM Government December 2023, Updated 12th June 2025)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (Department for Education, 1st September 2025)
- Information Sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services (Department for Education, 2015, Updated May 2024)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015 (Department for Education, March 2015)
- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework for group and school-based providers (Updated 1st November 2024)
- The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Department advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities (May 2014)
- The Teacher Standards 2012

4. PAN LONDON & TOWER HAMLETS SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP GUIDANCE

The following Pan-London and Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance has informed the content of this policy:

- London Child Protection Procedures revised 7th Edition (London Safeguarding Children Board, 31st March 2025)
- Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership Levels of Need Guidance (September 2023)
- Tower Hamlets SCP Supplementary Guidance for Schools and Education Settings on Child Protection Procedures - September 2025
- Tower Hamlets SCP LADO Procedures and Flowchart re Allegations made against staff working in the children's workforce - Information about reporting and managing allegations
- Tower Hamlets SCP Supplementary Guidance for Schools and Education Settings on Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff and Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold – September 2025
- Tower Hamlets SCP Multi-Agency Escalation and Resolution Policy

5. 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: www.thscp.org.uk

In accordance with *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023*, the school is a protective factor for all children especially the most vulnerable and has a pivotal role to play in local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The school's contribution, insight and co-operation are vital to the successful delivery of these arrangements. The school has been named as a 'relevant agency' and as such is under a statutory duty to cooperate with the THSCP multi-agency arrangements. This includes responding to safeguarding audits of quality and compliance, as requested by the local authority and/or local safeguarding partners.

The school is committed to engaging with the THSCP multi-agency safeguarding training offer and the borough's Designated Safeguarding Leads Forums, participating in THSCP/LA's Section 175/157

School Safeguarding Audit Cycles, providing key information about children relevant to keeping children safe, participating fully in the Rapid Review process and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, and supporting the agreed safeguarding priority areas for 2025-2027, which are Think Family and Adolescent Safeguarding.[1]

6. LOCAL AUTHORITY STRATEGY

In recognition of the school's pivotal role in the local safeguarding system, the implementation of this Child Protection policy and other related policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils, will support the school's continued central contribution in driving improvements in outcomes for children in the borough, an overall objective set out in council strategy including:

- TH: Is Accelerate: The Tower Hamlets Children and Families Partnership Strategy 2024-2029
- Tower Hamlets Special Educational Needs, Disabilities and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2029
- Tower Hamlets Early Help Strategy 2023-25: Leaving No Families Behind: Supporting Access for All
- VAWG and Women's Safety Strategy 2024-2029
- Tower Hamlets Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategy

7. KEY DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is:

- 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 the impairment of a child's physical and mental health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

The phrase 'child protection' refers to the processes followed to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm.
Child includes everyone under the age of 18.
Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, carers, foster carers, and adoptive parents.
Staff refers to all those who work for the school or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

[1] For more information on the Rapid Review process, Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Child Death Reviews, Working Together To Safeguard Children 2023 Chapters 5 and 6 should be consulted. Working Together 2023 paragraphs 76-81, 125-130, and 230-233 provide more information on the expectation of school's role within the safeguarding partnership arrangements. For further information on the THSCP's priority areas, please visit www.thscp.org.uk

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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

In accordance with the statutory requirement for a named member of the Governing Body to take leadership responsibility for safeguarding at the school, the Safeguarding Link Governor is [XXX]

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the school's Child Protection Policy and other safeguarding policies are communicated to all staff, understood by all members of staff, and followed by all members of staff.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead takes the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding arrangements within the school on a day-to-day basis, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer at Ben Jonson Primary School is:

- Janet Coulburne (Deputy Headteacher and Senior Leadership Lead for Child Protection)

There are other members of staff who have had the same level of training as the DSL. These are designated as Deputy designated safeguarding leads (DDSL) and as such can deal with any child protection issues as they arise at the school. They can do this as directed by the DSL or in the absence of the DSL if required.

The Deputy designated safeguarding leads at Ben Jonson are:
Norma Marshall (Headteacher)
Sheila Baez (Assistant headteacher for inclusion)
Amarrah Batool (Pastoral and Welfare Lead)

Where the DSL is not available to deal with any child protection matters as they arise, they should be contacted in their absence. During school holidays the DSL and DDSLs have their out-of-office messages on and ask for urgent messages to be directed back to the local authority who can decide whether the request is urgent enough to contact the headteacher. DSL and DDSLs will often look at their emails during holidays but this should not be relied upon in an emergency. In an emergency, the headteacher will be contacted by the local authority and if necessary, the headteacher can contact the DSL.

The DSL takes the lead on supporting pupils during standard and non-standard transition points and ensuring that relevant information for the safeguarding of these children is shared. This includes ensuring that safeguarding files are sent separate from the main pupil file to the new school within

the first 5 days of the child starting there and that appropriate follow-up is done if the school is not receiving safeguarding information from the previous school the child attended.

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

All staff should recognise that as frontline workers they are in a vitally important position to identify concerns early, provide help and support to children, promote children's welfare, and prevent concerns from escalating.

All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

All staff have a responsibility to report safeguarding concerns immediately to the DSL.

Reporting concerns

1. If you have any concerns about a child (including concerns where a child's behaviour or circumstances have changed), please record the incident on CPOMS. If you think the incident is more serious, please also talk to the DSL promptly and inform them that you have put a serious cause for concern on the CPOMS system.

If for any reason you cannot access CPOMS, fill in a Cause for Concern Form (kept in the filing cabinet in the staffroom) immediately or email a DSL. Supply staff should also do this.

The expectation is that all permanent members of staff use CPOMS.

ALL cases of abuse or neglect, and any concerns about parents should be referred – if you are in any doubt, it's safer to let us know!

2. Ensure notes about a disclosure are written as soon as possible after the discussion. Record exactly what the child said and what was happening immediately beforehand e.g. (description of the activity). Note the time, date and place of the conversation and the name of any other person present. Attach any original documents to the Cause for Concern.

3. Record your concerns on CPOMS immediately and alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead or in their absence the Deputy designated safeguarding lead. All elements of the concern MUST BE RECORDED by the referring adult.

4. You should not discuss your suspicions or allegations with anyone other than those named in the above points. Remember we share information on a 'need to know' basis.

5. Under no circumstances attempt to carry out any investigation into allegations or suspicions of abuse.

6. The DSL will then consult CPOMs and our safeguarding record keeping and consider what is known about the child's wider context (previous concerns, family make up, siblings, disabilities etc.) and take the appropriate action in accordance with the THSCB Child Protection Procedures for Staff and will record their actions and any outcomes. The HT/DHT will be kept informed.

7. At this point a decision should be taken as to whether a referral is required to Children's Social Care. Initially a call can be made to the Social Services Duty Advice Line on 020 7364 3444 to seek advice regarding whether a formal referral needs to be made. If the line is busy or if the decision is to make a formal referral the Inter Agency Referral Form (appendix 3) should be completed in detail, using the initial cause for concern as a guide. This form should be emailed to MASH@towerhamlets.gov.uk to assist social workers in making decisions regarding next steps. The Multi-Agency Support Hub (MASH) will respond to this email within 24 hours with clear actions to take.

8. At the end of any disclosure process about a child, the referrer and Social Services should be clear about who will be taking what action or that no further action will be taken. The decision will be recorded by Social Services and the named person. Information should then be passed back to the initial referrer / class teacher.

9. Concerns should be discussed with the parent or carer and, where possible their agreement should be sought before making referrals to Social Services unless this places a child at increased risk of significant harm.

10. Social Services should decide on the next course of action within 24 hours. On the basis of available evidence, they have a responsibility to address whether there are concerns about both the child's health and development, or actual and/or potential harm which justify further inquiries, assessment, or intervention.

11. Referrals may lead to no further action, the provision of services or other help and/or, a fuller assessment of the needs and circumstances of the child which may in turn lead to child protection inquires being undertaken.

12. All concerns will be monitored by the DSL and DDSL.

13. The DSL, DDSL or the headteacher will challenge MASH and social care if we do not get a prompt response or are not happy with their decision or suggested outcome.

14. Records of concern will be kept for the entirety of a child's time at Ben Jonson. These are kept securely in the personnel manager's office. At the time of the child's transfer to secondary School all records of concern will be passed on the named designated safeguarding lead at the receiving school under separate cover to ensure confidentiality. CPOM records will also be transferred electronically or in hard copy.

15. Urgent cases, in the absence of a Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer, can be phoned through to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub on 0207 364 3444, who will seek to clarify the nature of the concern and whether immediate action is needed to make them safe from harm.

All members of staff take responsibility for writing up clear and comprehensive safeguarding concerns using the school's safeguarding record system. Through the DSL's oversight safeguarding records include:

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

If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

If in doubt about any safeguarding matter, staff should **always** speak to the DSL.

All staff are expected to keep the school values at the core of their daily conduct and understand that they have a legal duty to safeguard the child. Ultimately, the best interests of the child must be at the centre of all decision making, behaviours and actions taken in relation to children.

9. RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

The school upholds the Human Rights of the child in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998.[2] It is unlawful for schools to act in a way that is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. Specifically, the school embeds and upholds the following Convention rights of the child across its safeguarding policies and procedures:

- Article 3: the right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment (an absolute right)
- Article 8: the right to respect for private and family life (a qualified right) includes a duty to protect individuals' physical and psychological integrity
- Article 14: requires that all of the rights and freedoms set out in the Act must be protected and applied without discrimination
- Protocol 1, Article 2: protects the right to education.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the school must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics). This is also part of the school's Equality Policy. The school is committed to supporting and taking positive action towards children with regard to particular protected characteristics - including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race- who may be at a disadvantage and be disproportionately vulnerable.

[2] https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights

In fulfilment of the school's Public Sector Equality Duty, the school has due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation (and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act), to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

As evident through the Serious Case Review Child Q's findings, the school is aware that children from ethnically diverse groups are at risk of adultification whereby their vulnerability as a child is reduced or set aside because of racial bias and stereotypes impacting professional judgement.[3] All staff share in the whole school's commitment to ensure equity, diversity and inclusion remain at the centre of the school's safeguarding culture, so that all children receive the care, support, and protection they have the right to receive.

The school shares the London Borough of Tower Hamlet's commitment to being an anti-racist borough and to tackle and eliminate race discrimination. The council's Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Inequalities Commission (2021) concluded that racism still exists within institutions and structures in the borough and has developed an action plan to achieve race equality at pace.[4] The action plan recognises that schools have a powerful and significant role in changing narratives and bringing about social change through education. The school along with other safeguarding partners is fully committed to implementing the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership's Anti-Racist Charter (2025) across its safeguarding practice. The school also actively works to promote anti-racism through our policies and practices such as our Anti – Racist curriculum. Our curriculum is inclusive and responsive to the issues. Issues are discussed in assemblies or through restorative justice conversations with individuals and groups.

10. CHILDREN WHO MAY BE POTENTIALLY MORE AT RISK OF HARM

All staff should recognise that all children are vulnerable but that some children may be more vulnerable than others and at more risk of harm. Children known to a Social Worker, Looked After Children and Care Leavers are likely to have suffered abuse at some point in their childhood and may be more vulnerable to further abuse including exploitation. Staff need to be aware that other children who may be potentially more at risk of harm include:

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;

[3] https://chscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Child-Q-PUBLISHED-14-March-22.pdf
[4] https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/Inequality-Commission/Black-Asian-and-Minority-Ethnic-Inequalities-Commission.aspx

- 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;
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- has a parent or carer in custody, 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; and
- is at risk of so-called 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.

Staff must be more vigilant in their day-to-day work with children when the above vulnerabilities are known and report all concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

11. CHILDREN IN NEED OF A SOCIAL WORKER

Children who have been allocated a social worker may have experienced abuse including neglect and belong to a family that has many complex circumstances. Staff should recognise that these children will have experienced adversity and trauma that can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged, and have a negative impact on their attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

When making decisions about safeguarding, carrying out a risk analysis, making a safeguarding response to concerns such as unauthorised and persistent absence, and providing pastoral and academic support, the school will take seriously the fact that the child in need of a social worker will require enhanced pastoral and academic support alongside that provided by statutory services. School is also committed to providing further pastoral and academic support to children who have had historic contact with a Social Worker, in recognition that the abuse and trauma is likely to have an impact on the child beyond the duration of the involvement of statutory services. The school will co-operate with the Tower Hamlets Virtual School, which now has a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of children known to a social worker.

At Ben Jonson we have staff that are designated to support children who have been allocated a social worker. These include

- Head of Inclusion who is also a DDSL (maintains strategic overview of all children currently under a plan, or who have been under a plan in the past)

- A family support worker who supports the DSLs. They might support with child protection conferences and meetings, maintaining overview of the child's needs where they are supporting a family.
- Learning mentor support (if required)
- Class teacher (writing regular reports on the child and their progress
- Teaching assistant support (if required to support specific learning needs)

12. CHILDREN REQUIRING MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

All staff have an important role in supporting the mental well-being of children and to identify behaviour that may suggest a child is experiencing mental health problems.[5] All staff need to recognise that mental health may be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff should be aware of the trauma and mental health impact on a child who has had adverse childhood experiences including abuse, bereavement and separation of parents. Staff should also be aware that the pandemic has had a negative impact on the mental health of many children, some of whom have never previously experienced difficulties with their mental health. However, all staff should be clear that only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health difficulty.
If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

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.

The government has published advice and guidance on **Preventing and Tackling Bullying**, and **Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools** (which may also be useful for colleges). In addition, Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among young people including its guidance **Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing**. Its resources include social media, forming positive relationships, smoking and alcohol. See **Rise Above** for links to all materials and lesson plans.

Consequently, all staff have a key role in assessing children's needs in relation to mental health support. The school has trained staff who are skilled in 'mental health first aid' who can then signpost, through the DSL, what services and support a child may need. The school lead on mental health support is Le- Verne Synphorien.

[5] For further information staff should read relevant government guidance including *Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges (2022)* and *Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (2018)*

13. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN, PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN & CHILDREN IN KINSHIP CARE ARRANGEMENTS

The most common reason for children becoming looked after by the Local Authority is as a result of abuse including neglect.

Staff need to have the skills, knowledge and understanding to safeguard Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children in recognition of their heightened vulnerability.

The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Teacher will work together alongside relevant agencies and take immediate action to safeguard and provide support to this vulnerable group of children. The Designated Teacher will work with the Tower Hamlets Virtual School to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan.

Following the designation of a child as Looked after, the designated teacher /DSL will consider the plans in place and arrange to meet with the child's class teacher to enact any plans made and to share any targets set. Through termly Inclusion review meetings and meetings with the Virtual School, these plans and targets will be evaluated as to their impact on the child's progress. When a child leaves the care of the Local Authority, the child will remain on the Inclusion team's caseload to ensure that any learning targets are also developed and monitored. All staff who work with a child like this will have been briefed as to the needs of the child through the class context sheet which contains information on all vulnerable children.

The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead will work with the Local Authority's Personal Advisor appointed to guide and support Care Leavers, so that any issues or concerns affecting the care leaver can be explored and effective support put in place.

The school will work with the Tower Hamlets Virtual School to promote and champion the attendance, attainment and progress of children in kinship care arrangements. Since September 2024, the Virtual School has a non-statutory responsibility to promote the education of children in kinship care arrangements regardless of whether the children have been previously looked after by the Local Authority. Kinship Care is any situation in which a child is being raised in the care of a friend or family member who is not their parent. The arrangement may be temporary or longer term. Examples of kinship care arrangements include Private Fostering Arrangements, Special Guardianship Order, and Child Arrangements Order, where the child is being cared for by a relative or friend who is not a parent.

14. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

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

- professionals and other adults making assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration

- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities or certain medical conditions being vulnerable to experiencing peer exclusion and isolation and being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying (including prejudice-based bullying), without outwardly showing any signs

- children not understanding that what is happening to them is abuse; and

- communication barriers when reporting abuse and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

For some disabled children, their dependency on parents and carers for practical assistance in daily living, including intimate personal care, may increase their risk of exposure to abusive behaviour. Some children may also have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. Looked After Disabled Children may be particularly susceptible to possible abuse because of their additional dependency on residential and hospital staff for day-to-day physical care needs.

Further information on safeguarding SEND children is available in the non-statutory guidance Safeguarding Disabled Children (2009); NSPCC Safeguarding Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (May 2022), and NSPCC Safeguarding d/Deaf Children and Children who have disabilities at greater risk of abuse (June 2024). Staff should speak with the DSL and SENDCO in the first instance.

All staff are regularly trained to understand and be aware of the additional barriers that exist when safeguarding children with SEND. All staff need to be aware that children with SEND may be more vulnerable when online and using digital platforms, and it is important that Online Safety lessons and related advice are tailored to their individual needs.

At Ben Jonson our Inclusion team play a key role in supporting and safeguarding the needs of SEND pupils and those children with specific or medical needs. There is a thorough understanding of the needs of each child, captured in a SEND action plan. This details the targets, ways of working for each child. This is augmented by a 'Pupil Voice' document which captures the child's view of themselves and their needs. In addition, there are regular meetings, if needed or requested by a parent. Depending on need there may be additional team around the child meetings (TACs) which provide further opportunities to ensure the needs of each child are considered and met.

15. CHILDREN ABSENT FROM EDUCATION & CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

The school closely monitors attendance, absence, suspensions, and exclusions. A child absence from education, whether prolonged or on repeat occasions, can be a vital warning sign of a wide range of safeguarding issues and is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including child sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation, and child criminal exploitation (county lines).

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

Staff should follow the school's Statutory Attendance Policy and report any attendance concerns to the attendance team. All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education (except part time nursery) which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

Consequently, the law requires all schools to have an admission register and an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both registers. The school will inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g., home education;
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- have been permanently excluded.

The local authority will be notified when a school is to delete a pupil from its register under the above circumstances. This should be done as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, but no later than deleting the pupil's name from the register. It is essential that schools comply with this duty, so that local authorities can, as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory school age who

are missing education, follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect.

The school will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority (or in default of such agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State)

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

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

Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

16. 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 Keeping Children Safe in Education and LBTH Policy this meeting has to 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 children with SEND.

17. WHISTLEBLOWING

All staff members have a responsibility to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in any aspect of the school's safeguarding arrangements and staff should feel confident that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

The school's Whistleblowing Policy is shared annually with all staff and on induction for any staff that are new to the school. The policy is also available on the school website. This policy is reviewed

annually by the governing body and should also be read in conjunction with this policy and the staff Code of Conduct.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they should consider other channels available to employees as set out in Government's guidance on whistleblowing. To raise whistleblowing concerns externally school staff are advised to report to the Prescribed Bodies in the Government's List of Prescribed Bodies and Persons, which includes for safeguarding related concerns the NSPCC: Whistleblowing Advice Line 0800 028 0285 which is free & anonymous, more information can be found at nspcc.org.uk/whistleblowing.

18. REPORTING OF ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF & CONCERNS THAT DO NOT MEET THE HARM THRESHOLD

Allegations of harm may indicate that a person who works with children might pose a risk of harm to children if they continue in that role. When an allegation is made against a member of staff including supply staff and volunteers, the school's Managing Allegations Procedures should be followed, and all action taken needs to be in line with KCSIE 2025 Part 4 and the THSCP Supplementary Guidance- Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff – September 2025.

An allegation is made against a member of staff including supply staff, volunteers, contractors and governors, when an individual has:

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

All staff must report all allegations, irrespective of the source, directly to the headteacher and ensure that it is put in writing, signed and dated. If the subject of the allegation is the headteacher, then the allegation should be directly reported to the Chair of Governors.

On receipt of a report of an allegation, the headteacher will make immediate contact with the Local Authority Designated Officer for an initial discussion. If the allegation concerns the headteacher, then the Chair of Governors shall contact the LADO.

When an allegation is made against a supply member of staff, the headteacher will be the case manager and take the lead in contacting the LADO.
When schools receive a report of an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or external organisation was making use of the school premises for activities involving children, the headteacher should seek the advice of the LADO.

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

LBTH Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): Melanie Benzie

Email: Melanie.Benzie@towerhamlets.gov.uk or LADO@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Telephone: 0207364 0677

In accordance with the Early Years Framework registered Early Years settings must notify Ofsted of serious allegations of harms and the actions taken by the setting as soon as is reasonably practicable but no longer than 14 days. A registered provider who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with this requirement, commits an offence.

Concerns about staff that do not initially seem to fulfil the allegation criteria set out above are known as Concerns that do not meet the Harm Threshold, sometimes called low-level concerns, not because they are insignificant but because they do not initially seem to meet the harm threshold. Staff should report and self-report such concerns in accordance with the school's procedures, which are found in the school's Staff Code of Conduct. Contact will be made with the LADO for advice and guidance when appropriate as part of the Headteacher's or Chair of Governor's response to the report.

On occasion, following a thorough review of the details of the allegation, it may then be the school are asked to deal with the matter internally through the Code of Conduct or Discipline policies. These would be described as a not meeting the harm threshold/low-level concerns and dealt with through internal mechanisms. These concerns include any concern that an adult has acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is not considered serious enough to refer to the local authority designated officer (LADO).

Examples of low-level concerns could include:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- engaging with a child one-to-one in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

The school's Code of Conduct reflects the necessity to take any allegations seriously and report any concerns to the DSL or Headteacher in person or using CPOMS so that the concerns can be dealt with appropriately.

All staff should understand their responsibility to report ***all concerns*** about staff conduct which has taken place at the school or outside of the school including online environments, no matter how small or insignificant they might be perceived to be.

Whatever the outcome of any allegation the school takes the opportunity to learn lessons from the process, this ensuring a robust culture of reporting continues to keep pupils and staff safe.

All staff should understand their responsibility to report ***all concerns*** about staff conduct which has taken place at the school or outside of the school including online environments, no matter how small or insignificant they might be perceived to be.

19. STAFF SAFEGUARDING TRAINING INCLUDING TRAINING FOR GOVERNORS

School staff, Governors and Trustees are required to have compulsory safeguarding training as part of their induction and to maintain their knowledge through regular safeguarding training and updates. The safeguarding training at induction and indeed as part of continuous professional development should include Online Safety covering among other things an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles, and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring systems in place at the school. Through regular safeguarding training and updates staff are given the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively and governors will be empowered and equipped to provide strategic challenge and gain assurance that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place.

All staff will have regular training on areas related to child protection. Although this training is provided staff are expected to be proactive regarding their own training needs and regularly gets updates where required.

These areas include:

- Child protection procedures and contents of Child Protection Policy including reference to KCSIE updates (Annually). A register of those staff who have undertaken the training is kept and where staff miss this training they are asked to make arrangements to undertake the training in as timely a manner as is possible.
- General training on responsibility for child protection in school (Triennially by Educational Safeguarding Team in the Borough)
- Updates on changes to legislation, policy and procedure in the area of child protection (ongoing)
- Specific guidance in recognising signs of abuse, FGM, Honour Based Abuse, child trafficking and exploitation, child sexual exploitation, children at risk from extremism and radicalisation, domestic violence, online safety (use of IT, the Internet, social media and filtering and monitoring), forced marriage, violence against women and girls, involvement in gangs, drugs and neglect, sexual violence and sexual harassment between children is shared as part of the policy. (Annually including KCSIE updates contained within the updated child protection policy)

- Where a safeguarding concern is raised at the local authority, these concerns are shared with all relevant staff on the day in order to promote greater vigilance.
- Where staff are new to school, staff will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction, and Online Safety training will be provided as part of regular updates.
- Governors will have annual safeguarding training. Additionally, where a governor is newly appointed, they will receive appropriate safeguarding training as part of the induction process for new governors.
- Specific training for governors will be arranged through the Local Authority.
- Outcomes of learning from this training are sought through the school's monitoring systems and evaluations.

20. VISITORS

- The school monitors the activities of any clubs or groups operating under the name of the school or using their premises or facilities.
- Appropriate checks will take place for all visitors e.g., Google the person or company
- Visitors can be expected to sign an "External Speakers Policy" that ensures they uphold the values and policies of the school.
- Requesting DBS when necessary.

Responsibilities for managing visitors are as follows:

- Vetting visitors - office staff at point of entry; Human Resources manager for longer term interns/ trainees
- Access for groups using school facilities – HT/ DHT in conjunction with Premises manager.
- Visitors for curriculum and other associated activities and events such as assemblies-SLT
- Safeguarding and Child Protection – HT/DHT/DSL
- Curriculum Development – AHT (Curriculum) /SLT/DSL

When a Social Worker, Police Officer or another professional visits the school to meet with a child as part of statutory investigations or other work, the ultimate safeguarding responsibility remains with the school. The school is aware of the need for the child to have an appropriate adult when interviewed by the Police in accordance with the PACE Code C statutory guidance.

21. ALTERNATIVE PROVISION PROVIDERS

When the school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider in the best interests of the child, the school will continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and will take action to be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs.

In accordance with KCSIE and the statutory guidance Arranging Alternative Provision, as a minimum, the school will have a written record of where a child is based during school hours, the address of the alternative provider and any subcontracted provision or satellite sites the child may attend. The

school will regularly review at least half termly the alternative provision placements to obtain assurance that the child is regularly attending, and the placement continues to be safe and meets the child's needs. Where safeguarding concerns arise, the school will immediately review the placement and consider termination, if necessary, unless or until those concerns have been satisfactorily addressed.

In fulfilment of its safeguarding responsibilities towards the pupil placed there, the school will obtain written information from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the Alternative Provider, for example, the checks that schools would otherwise perform on their own staff. The school will also obtain written confirmation that the alternative provider will inform the school of any arrangements that may put the child at risk (i.e. staff changes), so that the commissioning school can ensure itself that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on new staff.

22. EXTENDED SCHOOL AND OFF-SITE ARRANGEMENTS

All off-site activities and trips are subject to a risk assessment and take into account the school's Child Protection Policy and these activities are subject to the school's safeguarding procedures where there is direct management and supervision from the school. Children will remain in groups through any visit under the guidance of a known adult. Any vulnerable situations should be covered by the risk assessment, e.g., use of toilet facilities which will detail further how children are safeguarded at all times.

Where services or activities are provided separately by another organisation outside of normal school hours, the school will seek assurance that the organisation has effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place. This applies regardless of whether or not the children who attend any of these services or activities are pupils on the school register. The safeguarding standards expected of non-regulated external organisations are set out in the Department for Education's After-School Clubs, Community Activities and Tuition: Safeguarding Advice for Providers (September 2023, Updated 29 May 2025). The school will ensure that all safeguarding requirements are set out clearly in the lease or hire agreement with the organisation, as a condition of use and occupation of the school premises; and that failure to comply would lead to the termination of the agreement.

23. IDENTIFYING ABUSE

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

The school is aware that children can be at risk of abuse, harm and exploitation outside of the family home. Such extra familial harms include sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, and abuse that occurs on digital and online platforms. All staff especially the DSL and Deputy DSLs must consider whether children are at risk of harm and exploitation in environments outside the family home. All staff should therefore apply a Contextual Safeguarding approach when

safeguarding pupils, which includes applying a Contextual Safeguarding approach in the school context.

[For further information on Contextual Safeguarding, see Contextual Safeguarding Program, Beyond Referral Toolkit: Harmful Sexual Behaviours and Beyond Referral Toolkit: Extra-familial harms in schools.

INDICATORS OF ABUSE

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

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

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

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

adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

The DSL is aware of the borough's LBTH Neglect Guidance toolkits and all school staff understand their important frontline role in identifying children who may be suffering from Neglect.

24. VOICE OF THE CHILD

All those with a responsibility to safeguard children need to recognise that it takes great courage for a child to share a concern and speak up about any form of abuse especially child sexual abuse.

There are many reasons why children are not able to articulate what they are experiencing. Children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or are currently being threatened by the perpetrator of abuse. Also, children may not feel ready or know how to tell a trusted adult that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected. They may not even realise that their experiences are harmful.

The barriers preventing a child communicating their concerns may be connected to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation, or language. The child's behaviour including misbehaviour may be the first sign that a child has experienced harm. Staff will therefore exhibit professional curiosity and understand that a child may be communicating a concern through their actions and behaviours and take a safeguarding approach when responding to behaviours.

Staff need to be aware of and promote the systems in place at the school which enable children to share their concerns and report abuse confidently. Children need to be assured that their concerns will be taken seriously by staff and action will be taken to safeguard and protect them. It is also important that staff determine how best to build safe and trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitates communication and the sharing of concerns.

At the start of the year all children will be told by their class teacher how to raise a concern if they have any. This will also be reiterated in whole school assemblies with photos of key individuals within the school who can support them if they have any concerns. Safeguarding posters are displayed throughout the school with the photo and names of safeguarding leads. Resources will be adapted to meet the needs of children.

25. SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

26. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Apart from age other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, include gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

CSE can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media).

CSE can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited, as they may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship. Children may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

Staff should be vigilant and be aware of the following indicators of CSE, which is by no means an exhaustive list, and report all concerns immediately to the DSL:

- 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 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; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Through the broad remit of the PSHE and RSE programmes in school, children are taught to recognise when a relationship is unbalanced and to be aware of the risks of CSE.
For further information staff can read the Home Office Statutory Guidance on Child Sexual Exploitation as well as speaking to the DSL. The Children's Society has provided useful guidance on Child Sexual Exploitation.

27. CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION INCLUDING COUNTY LINES

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

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country through County Lines, forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

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

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 is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in 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

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office and The Children's Society County Lines Toolkit For Professionals. Metropolitan Police information leaflets raising awareness about Cuckooing are available from the council website in English, Bengali and Somali.

When referring children at risk of Exploitation to MAST, the school will consider completing an Exploitation Screening Tool to support the Local Authority's assessment of risk to the child.

Awareness to the increase vulnerability of children under 10 years old being exploited because they are under the age of criminal responsibility]

28. SERIOUS YOUTH VIOLENCE

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

29. ONLINE HARMS

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

nudes. The Online Safety Act 2023 among other things makes cyberflashing, threatening communications and the promotion of self-harm criminal offences. Artificial Intelligence is the current technological innovation evolving with speed, which will benefit society including the education sector but also generate great risks and challenges compromising the safety of children, for example, Generative Artificial Intelligence is being misused to create sexualised images and videos of children especially girls.

For more information Schools are signposted to the Internet Watch Foundation's Professionals Guide: Understanding and Responding to AI-Generated Child Sexual Abuse Material and the IWF's Report and Remove Tool that may be useful for pupils.

In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse other children online, which 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. In accordance with Behaviour in Schools. Advice for headteachers and school staff (September 2022), the school promotes as part of its culture of excellent standards of behaviour that the same standards of behaviour are expected online as apply offline, and that every pupil should be treated with kindness, respect and dignity.

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

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk that should form the framework for school's approach to Online Safety:

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example, pornography, fake news, racism, prejudice-based content, misogyny, misinformation, disinformation, conspiracies, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism;
- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example, peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults with the intention of grooming or exploiting 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 or non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes), and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying.
- Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. When pupils are at risk of phishing, school can reports concerns to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (https://apwg.org/).

Ben Jonson School is committed to reviewing and implementing its Online Safety Risk Assessment to keep staff and pupils safe when using technology including the use of Artificial Intelligence.

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 on-line) 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), which provides early intervention where children 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.

In accordance with the Prevent Duty the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place when children access the internet via school devices and when using the school network. The school meets the Department for Education's Filtering and Monitoring Standards through

- identifying and assigning roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems.
- reviewing filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.
- blocking harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.
- having effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs.

Digital and Technology Standards.]

policy and procedure, the curriculum, staff training and induction, the role of the DSL, and parental engagement. This includes promoting an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring systems in place when children access the internet via school devices and the school network.

As part of a whole school approach the school is committed to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to be empowered and upskilled in keeping children safe online through the sharing of Online Safety information, advice and guidance including the offer of workshops to support parents for example in installing safeguards on to their children's digital devices.

The school has a robust filtering system in place, both at a school and service provider level. The school uses the LGFL. This has several layers of filtering:

- There is a global list of filtered sites that is determined by the Internet Watch Foundation, followed by a pan-London layer, also in compliance with the Internet Watch Foundation, applied across the capital by Atomwide.

- There is a LA layer where additional bespoke filtering for the borough can be applied, such as key words and URLs.

- Then there is a school layer. Again, with the ability to request specific URLs to be blocked (or allowed), or key words to be added to the proscribed list usually by a member of staff.

The school has the right to amend our filtering settings. The IT co-ordinator and IT technician have the necessary access rights. Training on how to do it is available from LGFL and Atomwide. The school chooses to share their access rights with the LA and would seek support in applying bespoke filtering policies.

The school use Google Classroom and only pupils who have a place at the school have access to the learning platform. Parents are invited to have their own login using their child's details and provided with passwords to access the platform. In this way we can be secure in knowing we have only shared this information with identified parents of the school.

As schools and colleges increasingly work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. As such, at Ben Jonson we ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place when pupils access the internet via school devices and on the school network.

The school has an IT technician who, in conjunction with our external provider regularly carries out weekly checks to look for any data breaches, threats to the IT system including malware and viruses to ensure the integrity of the school systems.

All parents and children set up a Google classroom account with password unique to each child. The only people who have access to this information are school staff working with that family and our IT support systems who administer Google Classroom. In this way accounts are secure and only accessible by known individuals.

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. This also includes promoting an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring systems in place when children access the internet via school devices and the school network.

As part of a whole school approach the school is committed to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to be empowered and upskilled in keeping children safe online through the sharing of Online Safety information, advice and guidance including the offer of workshops to support parents for example in installing safeguards on to their children's digital devices.

There is a clear guide to online safety published for parents on the school website as well as an Online safety and Acceptable Use Policy. Our behaviour policy outlines how we expect the children to behave in all aspects of their learning. Additionally, there is a summary of how pupils are kept safe online in school and the broad use of technology in school for learning. Where parents have

concerns regarding their child's online safety they are encouraged to contact the school as a matter of urgency.

The use of mobile phones for the taking of children's images is not permitted within school. Other devices, such as cameras and IPads can be used for taking photographs for educational and display purposes but must not be removed from the school premises at the end of the day.

The school has a clear policy on content of the Computing curriculum, use of computers and online work in school (including filters and monitoring of pupil learning) and expectations for pupils' use of computers in school.

The school is committed to continually reviewing its online acceptable use policy and learns from any incidents that are reported to adjust or modify that policy.

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 interactions as the two environments often intersect with one another in their daily lives. Staff should recognise 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.

Online Safety guidance and resources can be found on THESS's resources page and the THSCP's website.]

In accordance with Department for Education's guidance, Mobile Phones in Schools (February 2024), the school prohibits the use of mobile/smart phones throughout the school day as set out in the Behaviour Policy.

30. 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 and is not restricted to the family home. According to the definition the person perpetrating the abuse and the person to whom the abusive behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and be "personally connected". Domestic Abuse may involve a range of abusive behaviours, which may be a single incident or a pattern of abuse, including physical, sexual, emotional and economic abuse, and coercive and controlling behaviour.

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 and have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home because of the abuse. Children 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'.

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

The school has signed up to the Metropolitan Police's Operation Encompass project. 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 notify the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead before the child arrives at school the following day, so that the school can provide 'silent support' to the child and follow up with Children's Social Care where appropriate.

Schools can contact the Tower Hamlets Violence Against Women and Girls Team for support required on any of the VAWG strands including training needs and workshops for parents. Please contact the Prevent Training Officer: Amy-Kate.Garwood2@towerhamlets.gov.uk. Schools can also sign up to the VAWG Pledge.

31. SO-CALLED HONOUR-BASED ABUSE

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. All forms of so-called Honour Based Abuse are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of Honoured Based Abuse, or already having suffered Honour Based Abuse.

If staff have a concern regarding a child who might be at risk of Honour Based Abuse or who has suffered from Honour Based Abuse, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will follow local safeguarding procedures.

Female Genital Mutilation

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

School is aware of the HM Government Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance on FGM, Updated 30th July 2020]

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon **teachers**, along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should **not** be examining pupils or students. Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. However, teachers should notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead of this action as well as reporting the disclosure of FGM in line with school's safeguarding procedures.

The duty on teachers to report to the police 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 and report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If in doubt, staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Forced Marriage

In England and Wales, the practice of Forced Marriage is a criminal offence under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. Since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages. Schools and colleges play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

School and college staff should contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmu@fcdo.gov.uk.

The school is aware of the Forced Marriage Unit's Statutory Guidance and Multi Agency Guidelines The Right to Choose Updated April 2023]

Virginity Testing and Hymenoplasty

The government has made it illegal to carry out, offer or aid and abet virginity testing or hymenoplasty in any part of the UK, as part of the Health and Care Act 2022.

It is also illegal for UK nationals and residents to do these things outside the UK.

In response to any reports of a child/young person being subject to or at risk of virginity testing or hymenoplasty, the DSL will take action in accordance with the government's non-statutory guidance Virginity testing and hymenoplasty: multi-agency guidance (July 2022)

32. RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk is part of the school's safeguarding approach.

- Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

- 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. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home).
In line with the Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains the school's duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism;

We hold an annual Prevent Safeguarding session with all staff – this takes place in the Autumn Term
We also complete the Prevent Risk Assessments and Checklist as part of the Prevent Duty.
We work closely with parents
Alongside the staff training opportunities, we identify relevant parts in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture – through PSHE curriculum and through the promotion of the fundamental British Values as part of SMCS (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education)

In LBTH the Prevent Education Officer is Iona Karrman-Bailey,
Iona.Karrman-Bailey@towerhamlets.gov.uk
In LBTH all Prevent referrals related to children should be made through the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.

The Prevent Duty

As Since 1 July 2015, all schools have had a legal duty to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This is known as the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty is characterised by four key themes:

- Schools are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them. Schools and colleges should have clear procedures in place for protecting children at risk of radicalisation. These procedures may be set out in existing safeguarding policies. It is not necessary for schools and colleges to have distinct policies on implementing the Prevent duty.
- The Prevent duty builds on existing local partnership arrangements. For example, governing bodies and proprietors of all schools should ensure that their safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of Safeguarding Children Partnerships and other safeguarding / child death review partners.
- The Prevent duty guidance refers to the importance of Prevent awareness training to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. Individual schools are best placed to assess the training needs of staff in the light of their assessment of the risk to pupils at the school of being drawn into
  terrorism. As a minimum, however, schools should ensure that the designated safeguarding lead officer undertakes Prevent awareness training and is able to provide advice and support to other members of staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.
- Schools must ensure that they have policies in place to protect children from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in schools. Schools should ensure that suitable filtering is in place. It is also important that schools teach pupils about online safety more generally

Prevention

The school seeks to prevent extremism through its curriculum and other activities:

- These include:
- Work on community cohesion, tolerance and anti-violence addressed throughout curriculum: promoting alternative positive narratives to counteract extremist ideologies;
- Open discussion and debate of issues and the law in a supportive environment;
- Critical appraisal of sources / internet resilience / identifying propaganda – relevant for all subjects but especially when using the internet for research; Citizenship programmes – British Values;
- Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning;
- Anti-bullying work including homophobia and violence against women;
- Rewarding positive behaviour;
- Pastoral and induction support;
- Work on safety, risk and crime prevention;
- Opportunities for channelling positive engagement e.g. charity work / fundraising;
- Positive in and out of school hours programmes;
- Parenting programmes to ensure consistent messages between home and school.

Issues in this area are covered within the 'Prevent' Strategy and specific guidance is given in 'Channel:Protecting young people from being drawn into terrorism'. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118194/channel-guidance.pdf
In LBTH the Prevent Education Officer is Iona Karrman-Bailey: Iona.Karrman-Bailey@towerhamlets.gov.uk

In LBTH all Prevent referrals related to children should be made through the Multi Agency Support Team.

33. 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 of child-on-child abuse.

Staff should treat all reports of child-on-child abuse very seriously and make it clear that all forms are unacceptable. As with all forms of abuse the occurrence of child-on-child abuse is an infringement of a child's human rights. Abuse is abuse and will never be dismissed as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. The school adopts a Zero Tolerance Approach to child-on-child abuse.

All staff should recognise that even though there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse among pupils, such abuse may still be taking place and that it is simply not being reported.

Staff should be aware that it is more likely that boys will be perpetrators of child-on-child abuse and girls will be victims of child-on-child abuse. However, all forms of child-on-child abuse are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at the school.

Staff should recognise that child-on-child abuse can take many forms and may be facilitated by technology, including:

- 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 attention 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.

Although a child identifying as LGBTQ+ is not in itself a safeguarding concern, such children may be more vulnerable to forms of child-on-child abuse. This includes children who are perceived to be LGBTQ+ even though they do not identify as such. The school is committed to providing a safe space for LGBTQ+ children to share any concerns they may have and in ensuring an inclusive culture is maintained. In the support that is provided to children questioning their gender, the school will adhere to any specific guidance issued by the Department for Education.

The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Include in the curriculum opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.
- Take opportunities to teach safeguarding within the context of covering relevant issues for schools through Relationships Education (for all primary pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for all secondary pupils) and Health Education (for all pupils in state-funded schools) which will be compulsory from September 2020.
- Undertake a key role in assessing children's needs in relation to mental health support. The school has trained staff who are skilled in 'mental health first aid' who can then signpost, through the DSL, what services and support a child may need.
- On entry into school a child should be assessed as to whether they have certain health conditions or whether there are other factors that may mean they are of greater concern in terms of safeguarding (e.g., mental health needs, parent in prison etc.) Staff should have a greater awareness of the potential for multiple issues overlapping, be vigilant and report this as soon as possible during the settling in process.
- The school carefully considers how they are supporting their pupils and students with regard to particular protected characteristics - including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race. This includes teaching within the parameters of the PSHE curriculum and Relationships education. These characteristics are presented as factual without prejudice or judgement and the school takes care not to overstep its remit with regard any non-statutory elements of the sex and relationships education and regularly consults with parents in this area.

Where an incident has taken place, the following procedure is followed-

- Take child's initial statement and treat any disclosures seriously.
- Pass disclosure on to DSL as per usual procedure. All victims will be reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school or college will not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously. A victim should 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 or their experience minimised.
- Clear records should be kept of this investigation and recorded on the school's cause for concern log. Additionally, a record should be kept of any outcomes on the school's information system as a behaviour note by the perpetrator's name. Finally, the incident should be reported to the DSL so that it can be noted as part of the school's monitoring of discriminatory incidents.
- Staff should be aware of the possible health needs that might arise following sexual assault, such as physical, mental and sexual health problems.
- After a thorough investigation, if the disclosure is found to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL should consider whether the child or person who has made the allegation is in need of support or may have been abused by someone else.
- It should also be remembered that where a child has suffered abuse or been part of an abusive act, there may be an impact on other family members, including the siblings who may or may not attend the same school. Care should be taken to consider the whole family's needs when designing and carrying out the next steps to ensure that harm is minimised for all involved.
- According to the Equality Act, schools and colleges must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics). Consequently, where pupils are subject to discrimination on this basis, a thorough investigation is carried out, restorative conversations are enabled to resolve issues and appropriate sanctions are put in place in line with the school's behaviour policy.
- Pupils are taught what to do if they feel they are being bullied or discriminated against, particularly if this is related to a protected characteristic. Annually the school has an anti-bullying week where this teaching happens, and pupils are given time and space to reflect on who they can talk to and ask for support if they have concerns or worries.
- Through the school's clear values (Brave, kind and curious) and the teaching around Zones of regulation, children have a very clear understanding of what are expected behaviours and unexpected behaviours. There are clear processes contained within the school written statement on behaviour on how unexpected behaviour is tackled and what is deemed a 'Red Card' i.e., serious anti-socially behaviour. Child-on-child abuse would fall within this category and as such would be tackled in the appropriate way.
- When incidents occur, they are investigated and logged on the school's online safeguarding system CPOMS. Again, the school's written statement details how incidents are resolved, including any sanctions and who will be involved.
- Where clear harm has been done, the school enacts conflict resolution measures within our Restorative Justice framework to make sure that lessons can be learned by all involved, so

that we give the young people involved the best chance of understanding what led to the incident and how best to avoid something happening in the future.

The school is aware of THESS's safeguarding resource webpage that contains links to key organisations that can support schools in their response to forms of child-on-child abuse]

34. 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 and it can happen in any environment including schools, the family home as part of intra-familial abuse and via online platforms. It can also occur when a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or a group of children. The abuse may be perpetrated by a younger child towards an older child because of an imbalance of power caused by factors such as height difference or cognitive ability.

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 and sexual harassment and understand that children in the school and the local community 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 of child-on-child abuse 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 will a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. As part of the reassurance to children, it will be made clear to children that the law is in place to protect them from abuse rather than to criminalise them.

Staff should be aware that some groups of children 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 upskirts. 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.

Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this will be referred to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of referring to the police remains. In parallel to this the school will make a referral to Children's Social Care via the Multi Agency Support Team.

Sexual Harassment

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 (schools and colleges should be considering 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

On a case-by-case basis the school will liaise with Children's Social Care and the Police as well as specialist services as part of the immediate response to child-on-child sexual harassment and the ongoing support for all the children involved.

Harmful Sexual Behaviours

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. School recognises that Harmful Sexual Behaviours can, in some cases, progress on a continuum. It is therefore important for all staff to address inappropriate behaviours to help prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. Children displaying harmful sexual behaviours have often experienced their own abuse and trauma.

School takes seriously its duty to respond appropriately to all reports and concerns about children's sexual behaviours both online and offline, in and outside of the school, including reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment. The DSL has completed relevant training in responding to and managing harmful sexual behaviours and will draw upon appropriate resources such as the AIM Checklists and Assessment Tools. The DSL will liaise where appropriate with Children's Social Care, the Police and other specialist services.

Where incidents relating to harmful sexual behaviours are identified, staff should follow the same procedures for reporting any concern and report it to the DSL as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, part 5. It would then be the responsibility of the DSL to follow up the incident and put into action any appropriate measures to safeguard the young people involved. This would be recorded in the same way as other incidents and should also be logged on CPOMS.

To support its overall prevention of and response to harmful sexual behaviours the school will give consideration to the best practice resources such as that available through the Contextual Safeguarding Program in particular the Beyond Referrals Toolkit: Harmful Sexual Behaviours

35. YOUTH PRODUCED SEXUAL IMAGERY

Youth Produced Sexual Imagery is one of the terms professionals use to describe the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by children and young people under the age of 18 online. The term 'nudes' is used by children and covers all types of image sharing incidents. Alternative terms used by children include 'dick pics' or 'pics'.

The sharing of nudes and semi-nudes can happen publicly online, in 1:1 messaging or via group chats and closed social media accounts. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's AirDrop which works offline. Nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams may include more than one child or young person.

Incidents may also occur where:

- children and young people find nudes and semi-nudes online and share them claiming to be from a peer
- children and young people digitally manipulate an image of a young person into an existing nude online
- images created or shared are used to abuse peers e.g. by selling images online or obtaining images to share more widely without consent to publicly shame. Such images can be shared via web pages and social media accounts called 'Bait Out' pages/accounts.

Creating and sharing nudes and semi-nudes of under-18s (including those created and shared with consent) is illegal.

When handling reports of Youth Produced Sexual Imagery, **staff must be aware that it is illegal for staff to view or share such imagery**. Staff should immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will act in accordance with KCSIE 2025 and non-statutory guidance, Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes. Advice for Education Settings working with Children and Young People (Updated March 2024).

Where any staff member becomes aware of possible to Youth Produced Sexual Imagery in accordance with UKCIS's non-statutory guidance, Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes/ Advice for Education Settings working with Children and Young People 2020 – refer to the DSL and report on CPOMS.

36. BULLYING (INCLUDING CYBERBULLYING)

Bullying is a very serious issue that can cause anxiety and distress. All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through the school's Anti-Bullying Policy/Pupil Behaviour Policy/Child-on-child abuse Policy, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 and Behaviour in Schools. Advice for Head teacher and School Staff (September 2022).

In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 and Behaviour in Schools. All staff must adhere to the Anti Bullying policy when dealing with all aspects of Bullying at Ben Jonson School. In all incidences the disclosure must be recorded on CPOMS and a named member of the SLT will facilitate the next steps – including the strategies and their effectiveness. Where appropriate parents will be involved and must also be met with regularly. We minimise Bullying within school by ensuring pupils are informed about what bullying is and what to do if it is happening. We communicate through assemblies, posters and through designated days and weeks within the school year

37. HOMELESSNESS

Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live.

The DSL will raise concerns at the earliest opportunity about a family at risk of homelessness through the Tower Hamlets Homeless and Housing Options service.

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. However, it is also recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Local authority children's social care will be the lead agency for these children and should be contacted in the first instance. For general enquiries about support for young people who might be at risk of or experiencing homelessness in the borough, please contact Tower Hamlets Housing Options: Host@towerhamlets.gov.uk

38. CHILDREN AND THE COURT SYSTEM

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed.

The DSL will ensure that the children concerned are supported and where appropriate make use of the guides provided by the HM Courts & Tribunals Service for children 5-11-year olds and 12-17 year olds.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following parental separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children too. Where appropriate parents can be signposted to the Department of Justice's information toolkit for families on making child arrangements which sets out each party's responsibility including the importance of putting the needs of the children first in the process.

39. CHILDREN WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN PRISON

An estimated 310,000 children every year have a parent in prison in England and Wales and 10,000 visits are made by children to our public prisons every week. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health.

The DSL will draw upon the resources and guidance offered through The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders (NICCO) to support the children involved and mitigate negative consequences for those children.

40. PRIVATE FOSTERING

Private fostering occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home. A child is not privately fostered if the person caring for and accommodating them has done so for less than 28 days and does not intend to do so for longer.

Staff should be vigilant about children who are in private fostering arrangements and report concerns to the DSL, who will notify the Local Authority through a MAST Request for Support Form, as set out in the THSCP Multi-Agency Private Fostering Guidance (January 2022). The Local Authority will check the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child in accordance with the Private Fostering statutory guidance.

41. YOUNG CARERS

A young carer is a person aged 18 or under who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member. This can include, but is not limited to a person with:

- a long-term illness or condition
- a physical or learning disability
- a substance misuse condition
- a mental health condition

The support provided by a child can vary based on the condition of the person they are caring for, but typically young carers provide a combination of personal (such as helping to dress or bath them), practical (such as cooking, cleaning and shopping) and emotional care (such as talking through their concerns with them).

It is estimated by the Children's Society that 1 in 5 children are young carers and many are hidden and unidentified.

No young carer or young adult carer should take on caring roles which are inappropriate, excessive, or which negatively impact their life opportunities, health or wellbeing.

The school is committed to raising awareness about young carers, among staff, pupils and parents/carers, so that young carers can be identified and receive the support they need. The school will utilise the Young Carers in Schools program resources provided by the Carers Trust and the Children's Society: https://youngcarersinschools.com/ alongside the Tower Hamlets guidance for schools, 'Young Carers in School: A guide for education practitioners to identify and support young carers in schools' and other resources available from THESS's safeguarding resource webpage.

The DSL will take the lead for Young Carers at the school and ensure that there is a whole school approach to improving the outcomes for young carers.

When young carers are identified, the DSL or Deputy DSL will have a conversation with the child using if helpful the Tower Hamlets Young Carers Identification Tool.

School recognises that in accordance with the Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014 young carers have the right to an assessment by the Local Authority to identify needs and support and the person they are caring has the right to have a reassessment of their needs.

If the school thinks that the child or young person or a member of their family requires more support than the school alone can provide, the DSL/Deputy DSL should refer to the Tower Hamlets Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST), so that a Young Carers Assessment can be undertaken. This assessment can help to identify what additional support can be provided from other services including housing and adult social care. Schools should complete the Tower Hamlets Young Carers Identification Form and attach it to the MAST referral form that is sent.

42. CHILD ABDUCTION AND COMMUNITY SAFETY INCIDENTS

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a child from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.

All incidents of Child Abduction should be reported immediately to the Police and Children's Social Care.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst staff, children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation. All incidents that occur during the school day should be immediately reported to the DSL, and steps taken to ensure the safety and well-being of the children involved.

43. MODERN SLAVERY

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

Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer to the National Referral Mechanism is available in the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance.

The DSL will refer all potential child victims of modern slavery to the Local Authority via MAST.

44. TAKING SAFEGUARDING ACTION

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

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

45. EARLY HELP

All staff are trained and prepared to identify children who may benefit from Early Help, which is providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. This can be support provided through school's internal pastoral system and resources and/or Local Authority services and other external agencies.

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

All staff need to recognise that all children may benefit from Early Help at any point in their childhood, but some children may benefit from Early Help more than others. These are children with known vulnerabilities, which are listed on page 9 of this policy.

When all causes for concern are considered, a judgement will be made as to the best immediate course of action. Where this does not involve an immediate referral to social care a judgment will then be made as to what support would be useful. Our DSLS and carry the overview for all logged causes for concern and regularly reviews these to ascertain which families/ children would benefit most from early help within school or a referral to the borough's Early Help team. Following an examination of the needs at this point, the DSL will develop a needs-based plan, highlighting key

actions, to provide support as required. including signposting to relevant services and including these services in developing the plans. The actions are recorded on CPOMS. The actions are reviewed termly to ensure there is adequate support and positive outcomes for those involved. Where the planned support is not working, we retain the option to refer on to Social Care for additional advice and support.

The DSL will contact the LBTH MAST for support and advice if required: 020 7364 5006 (Option 3) 020 7364 3444/5601/5606/5358/7796

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

The DSL will apply the THSCP Levels of Need Guidance to decide what level of safeguarding response is required as part of the Early Help response. If in doubt about the level of need the DSL will telephone the LBTH Multi Agency Support Team (MAST) for a discussion.

MAST:
020 7364 5006 (Option 3) 020 7364 5601/5606/5358/7796

Child Protection Advice Line
020 7364 3444

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

46. HANDLING THE REPORTING OR SHARING OF CONCERNS

If a child discloses to a member of staff, the other staff will free this member of staff up to listen to the child. They should listen attentively to the child and make a record of their concerns, noting their actual words where possible. Concerns should be recorded on CPOMS as soon as possible. Where it is a more urgent concern, staff should seek out a DSL or senior member of staff urgently. When a child shares that they have been or are being abused including exploitation and neglect, they may feel ashamed, especially if the abuse is sexual, and may feel frightened lest their abuser finds out they have sought help and support from a professional. The child may have been threatened and may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe that they are to blame for the abuse. Sometimes the child may not understand that what is happening is abusive.

When a child shares that they have been or are being abused including exploitation and neglect, they may feel ashamed, especially if the abuse is sexual, and may feel frightened lest their abuser finds out they have sought help and support from a professional. The child may have been threatened and may have lost all trust in adults; or they 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 children that what they are sharing is 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.

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
- refrain from asking leading questions
- tell the pupil what will happen next
- inform the DSL as soon as possible
- seek support from their line manager if they feel distressed.

Dependent on the nature of the disclosure and following social care advice we will make a decision about notifying the parent/ carer about any disclosure. Whilst our preferred option will always be to be open with parents/ carers about what their child might have said, we understand that it may be in the best interests of the child to not share the content of a disclosure until the child has been spoken with by a member of the Social Care team and/or a police officer.

47. CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Staff should never assume a colleague or another professional will take safeguarding action through the sharing of information that might be critical in keeping children safe. Staff 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 their 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 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.

Staff will have due regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to ensure that personal information is processed fairly and lawfully and they will adhere to

the seven golden rules for sharing information. Information sharing will take place in a timely and secure manner.

The GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 do not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, as safeguarding and protecting children provide a legal basis for sharing information.

We would take advice from social care on gaining consent for a child to talk with a social worker. However, we understand that where a child may be deemed to be at more risk as a result of sharing a disclosure, we may take the option offered by Social Care not to seek consent from parents. In this situation the school is following the advice of Social Care.

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision to share has been taken. Child protection information will be stored securely separate from the pupil's school file. Child protection information is stored and handled in line with the school's Retention and Destruction Policy. Where safeguarding information is stored electronically and online, the school has cybersecurity measures in place, which meets the Department for Education's Cybersecurity Standards, to ensure the data is safe and not vulnerable to evolving cyber-crime.

48. REFERRING TO CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

The DSL will make a referral to Children's Social Care applying the THSCP Levels of Need 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 Support Team:
020 7364 5006 (Option 3) 020 7364 5601/5606/5358/7796

Child Protection Advice Line:
020 7364 3444

The DSL will contact CPAL/MAST in the first instance to seek advice and guidance. When the DSL completes a MAST Request for Support form and sends it securely to the Multi-Agency Support Team, the referral form will be accurate and sufficiently detailed to enable the MAST to make a decision on the level of response required in accordance with the THSCP Levels of Need Guidance.

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

[1] In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part Four of this guidance.
[2] Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children provides detailed guidance on the early help process.
[3] Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children.
[4] Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children.
[5] This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

49. ESCALATION PROCEDURES

If, after a referral to Children's Social Care, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL will consider following local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.

In accordance with the THSCP Multi-Agency Escalation and Resolution Policy the DSL will first make contact in writing with the team manager followed by the service manager followed by the divisional director. At every level of escalation there should be discussion and concerted effort to

resolve any professional difference. It is important that the DSL at each point of escalation puts the concerns in writing.

Appendix 1: MAST Poster
Appendix 2: MAST Request for Support Form

Tower Hamlets
Safeguarding
Children
Partnership

MULTI – AGENCY SUPPORT TEAM (MAST)

0207 364 3444 / 5601 / 5606 / 5358 / 7796 / 3342 / 7828 / 6469 / 3181

direct line 9.00am – 5.00pm weekdays
(excluding bank holidays)

Designated Safeguarding Lead:.....**Date**.....