Child Protection Policy
(Published on website)

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We are a UNICEF Rights Respecting School

CONTENTS

SAFEGUARDING AT STEPNEY PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

The safeguarding of children is a joint responsibility for all staff, students and volunteers working in the school, therefore this policy applies to all.

All staff at Stepney Park Primary School are well placed to observe the signs of abuse because they have daily contact with the children. Early recognition of the signs and taking safeguarding action is key to keeping children safe. That is why this policy and our safeguarding procedures are shared with all staff. Through CPD staff are given the opportunity to refresh their knowledge and reflect on safeguarding practice.

In addition, we aim to develop an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, and where they are encouraged to talk and listen.

Whilst the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

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 disclosed and reported will be taken seriously.
- All children have the right to have a life free from harm, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, all have equal rights to protection. This includes children's lives in digital and online environments.
- The child's wishes and feelings will always be taken into account at the school when determining what action to take and what support to provide.
- All staff including supply staff, contractors and volunteers have an equal responsibility to act immediately on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm or has been harmed.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that all pupils and staff involved in safeguarding and child protection issues will receive appropriate support.

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

2.   PURPOSE OF POLICY

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

3.   SAFEGUARDING LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

- 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 Equality Act 2010
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018 (Updated July 2022)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 (1 September 2022)
- The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Department advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities (May 2014)
- The Teacher Standards 2012
- Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018 (Updated December 2020)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- UKCIS Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes: Advice for Education Settings Working with Children and Young People (December 2020)

4.   TOWER HAMLETS SAFEGUARDING SUPPLEMENTARY SAFEGUARDING GUIDANCE

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

- London Child Protection Procedures revised 7th Edition (London Safeguarding Children Board, March 2021)

- Tower Hamlets SCP Multi-Agency Safeguarding Thresholds Guidance

- Tower Hamlets SCP Supplementary Guidance for Schools and Education Settings on Child Protection Procedures - September 2022

- Tower Hamlets SCP LADO Procedures and Flowchart re Allegations made against staff working in the children's workforce - Information about reporting and managing allegations

- Tower Hamlets SCP Supplementary Guidance for Schools and Education Settings on Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff – September 2022

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

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

The school will engage with the borough's Designated Safeguarding Lead Forums, cooperate with the Rapid Review process and any Local Learning Reviews,[1] participate in the THSCP multi-agency safeguarding training offer, and co-operate with the borough's Section 175/157 School Safeguarding Audit cycle.

6.   KEY DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is:

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

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.

7.   ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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

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[1] For more information on the Rapid Review process, Local Learning Reviews and Child Death Reviews, Working Together 2018 Chapters 4 and 5 should be consulted. Working Together 2018 paragraphs 25-27 provide more information on the expectation of the school's role within the safeguarding partnership arrangements.

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

The Head Teacher 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.

Details of contact information for persons relating to safeguarding can be found in appendix 2.

All staff should recognise that as frontline workers they are in an 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. Information on reporting procedures can be found in appendix 1.

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

All staff are expected to keep safeguarding values at the core of their daily conduct. The best interests of the child should determine their decision making, behaviour and any action taken.

8.   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). [School to insert a cross-reference to 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.

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[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.

At Stepney Park Primary, we are committed to promoting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. As such, we continue with accreditation as a Rights Respecting School. This journey involves all stakeholders at school. Through this we are learning more about the rights of the child and how children, staff and the wider community can support and develop our knowledge and understanding in this area. This inclusive learning is incorporated into our PSHE curriculum to give children and adults a broader understanding of diversity, equality and how to take positive action in the protection of children's rights.

As evident in the Serious Case Review Child Q, 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.

9.   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;

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[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;
- is at risk of so-called honour based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care; and
- is a privately fostered child;
- 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.

10. 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 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. At Stepney Park Primary we are 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. This may involve regular wellbeing calls or meetings in school. Further support can also be provided through ELSA provision at school.

When a child is known to a social worker this information is shared with relevant adults and any additional concerns which may come to light are communicated immediately to the DSL. These children will also be discussed in our monthly vulnerable children meetings, where information is shared with relevant adults and specific actions are agreed upon.

At Stepney Park Primary we will cooperate with the 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.

11. 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. 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.

Through our PSHE curriculum, children are given opportunities to explore ways to develop good mental health as well as ways to deal with challenges. Further support can be provided through our ELSA team for which teachers can make a referral. In addition, specific or more focused support can be provided by our Mental Health Lead* and/ or Tower Hamlets CAMHS.

*Details, including contact email/ number can be found in appendix 2.

12. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND PREVIOUS LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

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

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

The DSL , who is also the Designated Teacher for LAC and Previous LAC will work with relevant agencies and take immediate action to safeguard and provide support to this vulnerable group of children.

LAC and Previous LAC will receive the academic and pastoral care support they need. Progress and well being will be reviewed during our Vulnerable children meetings and appropriate actions will be taken.

The Designated Teacher for LAC and Previous LAC will attend meetings with the Virtual School and provide reports and updates as required.

The 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.

13. SEND CHILDREN

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 disproportionately 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), but staff should speak with the DSL and SENDCO in the first instance.

All staff are trained to understand and be aware of the additional barriers that exist when safeguarding SEND children. All staff need to be aware that SEND children 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.

As with all pupils at Stepney Park Primary, SEND children take part in weekly discussion time and have access to the Student Hub, where they can share concerns about all aspects of school and home life. Teachers are aware of the additional need of these children and how to support their learning.

Further support for adults and children can be provided by SEND lead (see appendix 2).

14. CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION AND CHILDREN MISSING

The school closely monitors attendance, absence and exclusions. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including child sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation or mental health problems. Staff should be alert to children already known to be vulnerable going missing from education especially Children known to a Social Worker and Looked After Children.

The school follows up on absences as part of its safeguarding duty. Staff must be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

Further information on this can be found in the schools Attendance and Punctuality policy.

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

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

15. 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 head teacher of their intention to electively home educate their child, the school will convene and coordinate a meeting between the LA, relevant school staff, parents and all key professionals currently working with the child and family. In accordance with LBTH Policy this meeting must occur before any final decision is made by the parents, to ensure that the best interests of the child have been taken fully into account and carefully considered. The occurrence of this meeting is especially important when the children have known vulnerabilities including Children known to a Social Worker and SEND children.

16. 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 Stepney Park Whistleblowing Policy can be found here.

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 including:

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

17.   ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF & REPORTING OF LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS

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 2021 Part 4 and THSCP Supplementary Guidance- Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff – September 2021.

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 Head Teacher and ensure that it is put in writing, signed and dated. If the subject of the allegation is the head teacher then the allegation should be directly reported to the Chair of Governors.

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

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

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

Concerns about staff that do not meet the harm threshold and the allegation criteria set out above are known as Low-Level Concerns. Staff should report low-level concerns and self-report low-level concerns about themselves in accordance with the school's procedures on low-level concerns, which are found in the school's Staff Code of Conduct.

Staff also follow our Touch Protocol (see APPENDIX 4)   which outlines appropriate physical contact with children in our care.

18. STAFF TRAINING- INCLUDING TRAINING FOR GOVERNORS

Staff will have regular training, which is recorded by the DSL in training logs. This includes:

- Child protection procedures and contents of Child protection Policy (Annually at start of academic year).
- An annual update of the latest version of the DFE statutory guidance on 'Keeping children safe in education.'
- Child Protection refresher training at least once every 3 years. This will be done at school, and is provided by an external and accredited provider.
- In addition to the formal training set out above, staff knowledge and skills is developed with regular updates via staff meetings and/ or year group meetings.

All staff are expected to acknowledge their responsibility regarding Child protection by signing and dating the **Child Protection Related Record of Acknowledgement.** This includes the following acknowledgements and responsibilities: :
- An awareness of the statutory DFE guidance on 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and having received a copy of this.
- An awareness of their duty to disclose potential 'Disqualification' if their circumstances change.
- An acknowledgement of having received induction training OR having been reminded of the Stepney Park Child protection policy and procedures including the Designated Child Protection Leads and their role, the types, signs and symptoms or abuse, how to handle a disclosure, how to report and the need to maintain confidentiality.
- An acknowledgement of having received induction training OR having been reminded of the Staff Code of Conduct.
- An acknowledgement of having received induction training OR having been reminded of the Stepney Park Staff handbook.
- An awareness of the school's policy around online safety.
- An acknowledgement of needing to be able to demonstrate an understanding of the whole Child Protection system of agencies working together as part of a multi-agency system.

New staff joining our team during the school year:
- All new contracted and long term supply staff are expected to attend an induction meeting. They will receive in house training and be told about the Named Person for Child Protection in the school and the urgency of reporting any type of abuse promptly.
- Will be expected to read and understand Part One of the latest version of the DFE statutory guidance on 'Keeping children safe in education.
- All new staff and staff who were not present at the whole school Level 1 accredited training are expected to complete an online accredited Child Protection course, in the presence of the School business Manager.
- New staff will be expected to acknowledge their responsibility regarding Child protection by signing and dating the Child Protection Related Record of Acknowledgement, after their induction meeting.
- DBS and other safer recruitment procedures will be followed.
- The DSL is responsible for keeping the induction log/training logs up to date.

School Governors
Governors are required to have compulsory safeguarding training as part of their induction and to maintain their knowledge through regular safeguarding training and updates. Through regular safeguarding training and updates governors are given the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively and governors/trustees will be empowered and equipped to provide strategic challenge and gain assurance that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place.

The Designated Governor for Child Protection:
The Designated Governor for Child Protection will hold at least Level 1 safeguarding training, which will be refreshed at least every three years.

All Designated Leads for Child Protection (DSL & Deputies)
The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role.

They will have the following additional statutory training, which is recorded by the DSL in the CP training log:
- DSL accreditation upon taking on the role of DSL: Newly appointed staff who take on the DSL role in Stepney Park or new to the borough must complete the LSCB Multi-Agency, Advanced Safeguarding Training and Prevent awareness training
- DSL refresher training at least 2 days every 2 years
- Safer Recruitment every 5 years (Headteacher essential and Deputy Head desirable)
- Prevent training

19. 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 to establish the risk relevant and unfamiliar visitors may pose to children. The visitor/speaker will be vetted by one or more of the following:
- Seeking a recommendation by trusted sources
- DBS
- Internet search
- Contacting Tower Hamlets Prevent project manager for advice.

A risk assessment (Form 2) will be completed, visitors deemed to be a risk to the children will not be invited into the school. The Risk Assessment must be submitted to the DSL for approval.

Where practical, visitors will not be left with children without a member of staff present. Visitors will be asked to leave if what they are communicating does not adhere to our safeguarding policies and our school ethos.

Visitors who have contact with children unsupervised may be expected to sign an "External Visitors Speakers Declaration" (Form 3) which states that:

- They have received a copy of the Stepney Park Child Protection Policy.
- They support the school in ensuring that all relevant safeguarding requirements are met , including those on preventing children from being exposed to extremist views.
- They are aware of the Stepney Park values and that they will not communicate any personal views that would contradict these.

Responsibilities
- Vetting and risk assessing visitors/ speakers - Any teacher inviting visitors/ speakers, to be signed off by DSL
- Access for groups using school facilities - Headteacher
- Curriculum Development – SLT

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.

20.   EXTENDED SCHOOL AND OFF-SITE ARRANGEMENTS

Extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment which runs in line with the school's Child Protection Policy and safeguarding procedures.

Where services or activities are provided separately by another organisation, the school will seek assurance that the organisation has effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place. 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.

Further information can be found in our Educational Visits Policy.

21.   IDENTIFYING ABUSE

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

The school is aware that children can be at risk of abuse, harm and exploitation beyond the family home. Extra familial harms include sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, 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 children in the setting.

22.   INDICATORS OF ABUSE

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

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

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

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

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

23.   VOICE OF THE CHILD

All staff recognise that it takes great courage for a child to share a concern and speak up about any form of 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 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 are aware of and promote the systems in place at the school which enable children to share their concerns and report abuse confidently, because they know that their concerns will be taken seriously by staff and action will be taken to safeguard and protect them.

Weekly discussion times allow children to talk about what matters to them. They can raise concerns or suggest their ideas for improving the school. As this does not always provide a confidential space to share disclosures, children are regularly reminded about the Student Hub, where they can discreetly log any concerns. At Stepney Park Primary, we also aim to create nurturing relationships with our children which will allow them to share any concerns with members of staff across the school. We regularly refer to the NSPCC 'Speak out, Stay Safe' motto and work with children to develop an understanding of their rights, allowing them to seek out an adult if they don't feel safe.

24. SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

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 reports 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 our PSHEE and RSE curriculum, children at Stepney Park Primary will be taught about consent and the related 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.

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 'trap house 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.

As a Primary School we are aware of the increased vulnerability of children under 10 years old being exploited because they are under the age of criminal responsibility.

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.

ONLINE HARMS

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

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

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

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

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example, pornography, fake news, racism, prejudice-based content, misogyny, 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/).

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). It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests

At Stepney Park Primary, we have our own, in school, filtering system which prevents children from accessing material which is not appropriate for their age. During specialist ICT lessons ,and with their class teacher, children are regularly reminded about online safety. If children have concerns about any issues relating to online access or ICT they can add concerns on the Student Hub or speak to an adult.

Further details can be found in our <u>Internet, E Safety and Social Media Policy</u>.

Staff should report Online Safety concerns about pupils to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as with all other safeguarding concerns. When it comes to the safety and well-being of the child, the response to the risks and harms that children may experience in the online or digital environment should be no different than the offline, face to face world. For most children there is little distinction between the online and face to face, physical environments, as the two intersect with one another in their daily lives. Staff should 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.

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. Such workshops take place throughout the academic year and are on offer for all parents.

DOMESTIC ABUSE

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

Staff should be aware that all children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health. wellbeing, 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. Young people can

also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child on child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'.

Stepney Park Primary has signed up to the Metropolitan Police's Operation Encompass system and on receipt of a notification from the Police will provide appropriate support to the child or children concerned, who attend the school. Operation Encompass ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, and where there are children in the household, the police will inform the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead before the child or children arrive at school the following day. The purpose of Operation Encompass is to enable the school to provide 'silent support' and is not intended to replace statutory procedures.

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.

HM Government Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance on FGM

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. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

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

<u>**The Right to Choose**</u> **(Updated June 2022)**

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 <u>Virginity testing and hymenoplasty: multi-agency guidance</u> (July 2022).

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).

Staff CPD allows adults to access the <u>Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty</u>, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.

At Stepney Park Primary School we regularly complete and review our Prevent Risk Assessment and Prevent Checklists as part of our Prevent Duty.

Through our PSHEE curriculum and programme of assemblies, children are able to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture. These are also an opportunity to promote fundamental British Values as part of SMCS (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education).

In LBTH the Prevent Education Officer is Eleanor Knight <u>Eleanor.Knight@towerhamlets.gov.uk</u>.

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

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 if there are no reported cases of child on child abuse among pupils, such abuse may still be taking place and 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.

Child on child abuse will be reported in line with our reporting procedure. This means reporting without hesitation to the DSL and making sure that the incident is logged on CPOMS.

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.

Victims of child on child abuse will be supported by the various teams in school, dependent on need. This may be specific ELSA support or through the Pastoral Care Team. This will be done in partnership with parents if deemed an appropriate and proportionate response.

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 a 'it could happen here' approach in regard to child on child sexual violence or sexual harassment and understand that children may be experiencing such forms of peer on peer abuse, including that facilitated by technology, regardless of the number of reports the DSL receives.

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

Sexual Harrassment

Sexual Harrassment 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 Harrassment 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

At Stepney Park Primary, reports of child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment will be brought to the immediate attention of the DSL. This will lead to an immediate response. The result of this, depending on the incident(s), may include:

- Risk Assessments/ action plans
- Pastoral support for victim and perpetrator (ongoing)
- Meetings with parents and external agencies

On a case-by-case basis the school will liaise with Children's Services 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 Services, the Police and other specialist services.

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 young people 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 disclosures of Youth Produced Sexual Imagery, staff must be aware that it is illegal for staff to view or share such imagery. Staff should immediately report the disclosure to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

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 Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy.

HOMELESSNESS

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

CHILDREN AND THE COURT SYSTEM

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

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

CHILDREN WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN PRISON

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders, NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

YOUNG CARERS

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

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.

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 them to the National Referral Mechanism is available in the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance.

25. 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, without hesitation (appendix 1)
- 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 an incident report on CPOMS, tagging this as 'Safeguarding Concern or Disclosure'
- Seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

26. EARLY HELP

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

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

All staff 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 7 of this policy.

In Stepney Park, our Pastoral Care Team, in coordination with the DSL, provides early help support, including the use of Early Help Assessments. EHA reviews and Team Around the Child/ Family meetings are also led in school when there is a multi agency approach. Referrals to Children's Social Care are made if thresholds are met.

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

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

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

The DSL will apply the LBTH Thresholds Guidance to decide what level of safeguarding response is required as part of the Early Help response. If in doubt about the level of need the DSL will telephone the LBTH Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for a discussion.

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

Child Protection Advice Line
020 7364 3444

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

27. HANDLING DISCLOSURES

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

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

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

- Allow the child to speak freely

- Remain calm
- Allow silences
- Do not ask leading questions
- Tell the pupil what will happen next
- Inform the DSL as soon as possible
- Seek support if they feel distressed.

The DSL will always seek advice from CSC on whether parents should be informed, and by doing so will always act in the best interests of the child.

28. CONFIDENTIALITY AND SHARING INFORMATION

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

All staff should understand that safeguarding requires a high level of confidentiality. Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL, Deputy DSL or the headteacher.

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

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

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.

29. REFERRING TO CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

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

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

Child Protection Advice Line:
020 7364 3444

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

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

Safeguarding reports are stored on our CPOMS system and it is the responsibility of the DSL to store, manage and share relevant reports and information.

30. ESCALATION PROCEDURES

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

In accordance with the Tower Hamlets Threshold Guidance Appendix D the DSL will first make contact with the team manager followed by the service manager followed by the divisional director. At every level of escalation there should be discussion and concerted effort to resolve any professional difference.

APPENDIX 1- SAFEGUARDING REPORTING PROCEDURE

Stepney Park Safeguarding Procedure

Andy Kay- DSL   Louisa Beringer- Deputy DSL   Khaleda Begum- Deputy DSL

Disclosure/ Concern

Concern about a member of staff

Concerns should be reported immediately to Edith (Headteacher). If the allegation is against the Headteacher, the matter can be reported to the to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 0207 364 3506.

Concern/ disclosure about a child

If the issue is urgent, report the disclosure verbally without delay to a safeguarding lead. If a Designated Person is not available, then report the issue to any other member of the Leadership Team*. Should none of the above staff members be available, then report the issue directly to the Tower Hamlets Child Protection Advice Line on 0207 364 3444.

Our Safeguarding Duty

It is the responsibility of **all** staff to promote and ensure the wellbeing and safeguarding of our children. If a child does share concerns we will:
- **Listen**, be supportive and take them seriously
- **Reassure** the child that they have done the right thing
- **Let the child lead** and ask open questions
- **Be honest** about what you'll do next

Recording Safeguarding Concerns

Staff will, as soon as reasonably possible, complete a incident report on CPOMS. Detailed, factual records must be added and categorised as 'safeguarding.'

Safeguarding leads will follow up and subsequent actions will be added.

*Please note that all of our SLT members have received safeguarding lead training.

APPENDIX 2- SAFEGUARDING CONTACT LIST

Name	Contact
Child Protection Governor: Ros Coffey	**rcoffey3.211@apps.stepneypark.towerhamlets.sch.uk**
Designated Safeguarding Lead Andy Kay	**akay31.211@apps.stepneypark.towerhamlets.sch.uk**
Deputy DSL Louisa Beringer Khaleda Begum	**lberinger3.211@apps.stepneypark.towerhamlets.sch.uk** **kbegum20.211@apps.stepneypark.towerhamlets.sch.uk**
Headteacher/ Safeguarding Lead Edith Philipsen	**ephilipsen.211@apps.stepneypark.towerhamlets.sch.uk**
Safeguarding Lead Shapna Begum	**sbegum55.211@apps.stepneypark.towerhamlets.sch.uk**
SENCO and Mental Health Lead Nathalie Palacio	**npalacio.211@apps.stepneypark.towerhamlets.sch.uk**

APPENDIX 3- MASH FORM

INTER-AGENCY REFERRAL FORM

This form is to be used by all agencies referring child/children to London Borough of Tower Hamlets CSC for assessment as a child in need, including in need of protection.

All urgent referrals should be initiated by phone/fax and with completion of as much of this form as possible or an updated CAF or a Signs of Safety Mapping tool. If information is incomplete, a MASH worker will work through the form to ensure the information is accurate and good quality. If you are a service provider in Tower Hamlets, as part of the Family Wellbeing Model, you may be asked to provide a CAF as well as this form. You should get feedback within 24 hours on this referral and we will proactively work with you and other services to ensure a service is provided to the child, even if it does not meet the thresholds for a statutory response as outlined in the Family Wellbeing Model.

A. CHILD/ YOUNG PERSON

Family Name					Forename/s			
DOB/EDD		M		F		*Ethnicity code	3c	Religion	Islam
Child's first language		Bengali			Is an interpreter or signer required?			
Address								
Postcode				Tel.				
Current address if different from above								
Postcode				Tel.:				

ONS Ethnicity Codes: White British 1a; White Irish 1b; White other 1c;White & Black Caribbean 2a;White & Black African 2b; White & Asian 2c; Other Mixed 2d;Indian 3a;Pakistani 3b;Bangladeshi 3c; Other Asian 3d; Caribbean 4a;African 4b;Other Black 4c; Chinese 5a;Other ethnic group 5b

B. CHILD/YOUNG PERSON'S PRINCIPAL CARERS

FULL NAME	DOB If known	Relationship to child	Ethnicity code	Parental responsibility
First language of carers: Is an interpreter or signer required: Y/N				

C. OTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

FULL NAME	DOB If known	Relationship to child/ young person	Ethnicity code	Tick if also referred

D. OTHER SIGNIFICANT PEOPLE IN THE CHILD/YOUNG PERSON'S LIFE, INCLUDING OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS

FULL NAME	Relationship to child/young person	Address	Tel No

Referrals will be shared with the family and should not be made without their knowledge/agreement unless this would jeopardise the child/young person's safety		
	Y / N	If no, state reason
The child/young person knows about the referral		Age of children.
The parent/carer knows about the referral The parent/carer has given consent to the referral.		

F. INFORMATION ON STATUTORY STATUS

	Y/ N	Please give details of name of child/young person, dates, category (if known)
Any child in family is/has been on the disability register?		
Any child in family is/has been on the child protection register (CPR)?		
Any child or other family member has been looked after by a local authority?		

G. KEY AGENCIES INVOLVED

Insert name of professional if involved		Tel	Insert Name of professional if involved		Tel
H.V.			G.P.		

Nursery			EWO		
School			Police		
YOT			Dentist		
Community mental health	CAMHS		Community Paediatrician		
School Nurse			Midwife		
Hospital Consultant			Other		

H. INFORMATION SUPPORTING THIS REFERRAL

The purpose of this section is to assist the inter-agency assessment. Where you have no information about a particular area, please write N/K (not known). Please record strengths as well as areas of need or risk so that resources can be directed appropriately.

REASON FOR REFERRAL/REQUEST FOR SERVICES

What are your concerns? (If an allegation of possible physical abuse, please give specific details of any injury including dates and explanations given)

<mark>Scale how safe you think the child is:</mark>
With 0 being I am certain the abuse will happen again if something isn't done immediately and 10 being the case needs action but I don't think the child is in immediate danger, what rating would you give?
Comments on Score: Please tell us how you reached this score.
What existing safety is there for the child(ren) – are there safe people around the child?
What are you most worried will happen to the child(ren) if the situation doesn't change?

What convinced you to take action now and contact us?
Have you done anything to address this problem (apart from making this referral)? For example has your agency used a CAF or a TAC to focus professional efforts on addressing the concerns? Has the Social Inclusion Panel been consulted for support?
What do you see as the cause of the problem?
What do you expect to happen as a result of this notification?

I. DETAILS OF REFERRER AND SOCIAL WORKER TAKING REFERRAL

Name of worker completing this referral (please print)	Andrew Kay	
Agency		
Address		
Ward/Consultant		
Telephone number		
Signature		Date	

Name of social worker taking referral		
Team		Date	
Social work context scale **(for social worker to complete)**: *On a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 being this is the worst case that the agency has ever worked with and 10 indicates that this is a case the agency would take no further action with, where would you rate yourself?*		

APPENDIX 4   TOUCH PROTOCOL

Aim

There are occasions when physical contact with a pupil is proper and necessary. Extensive neurobiological research shows that appropriate touch makes a positive contribution to brain development, emotional regulation, mental health and the development of social skills.

Physical contact should always be brief and about meeting the age or developmentally appropriate needs of the child, so staff should always think before making any physical contact. They should be clear about why their actions are in the best interest of the child concerned, including the child's personal response to touch.

Our policy rests on the belief that every member of staff needs to know the difference between appropriate and inappropriate touch. Hence, staff need to demonstrate a clear understanding of the difference.

This protocol should be read in conjunction with school policies relating to interaction between adults and pupils, specifically the school's **Positive Handling Policy**, **Behaviour Policy**, **Child Protection Policy** and the **Code of Conduct for Staff**.

Appropriate Touch

Examples of where touching a pupil might be proper or necessary:
- To calm, comfort or reassure a child (Please refer to the relevant guidance below)
- To prevent an accident, protect someone or protect school property (Please refer to the relevant guidance below)
- To support a child who has an EHCP and who has an agreed Individual Touch Plan
- To join in with pupils' age appropriate and child initiated games like 'it' or 'rock/paper/scissors' or clapping games
- To congratulate or praise a child (e.g. shaking hands, a high five/fist bump)
- To demonstrate:
    - the correct use of school equipment, such as a musical or technical instrument or cutlery (use careful, unforced movement of hand or fingers alongside clear verbal instructions - ask for permission first - 'Can I show you?')
    - correct techniques during PE or swimming, for example when supporting a child to roll, climb or balance (Touch in these instances should be used alongside clear verbal instructions, staff should ask for permission first - 'To help I will need to take your hand. Is that ok?')
- To support a younger child to dress or undress for PE (but only if the child would inappropriately struggle without the support)
- To support a child with toileting or to change nappies. Please follow the school Risk Assessment around Toileting and Changing Nappies in the 📄 Whole School Risk assessments document)
- To give first aid where touch is required.

Calming, comforting or reassuring a child:
Before using touch, staff need to consider using other methods, including:
- Slowing down the pace
- Lowering the voice
- Breathing more deeply
- Talking slowly, firmly and quietly in an unhurried, unflustered way
- Providing clear, predictable, consistently held boundaries.

- Offering choices
- Distraction /positive redirection

If these methods do not help, then the following appropriate use of touch can calm, soothe and regulate a child's emotions:
- A reassuring pat on the arm
- Stroking a child's head, back or an arm
- Putting an arm around a child's shoulders
- Taking a child by the hand
- A brief hug
- Allowing an EYFS child to sit on an adult's lap for a very limited period of time (when initiated by the child)

Prevention of an accident, protecting someone or protecting school property:
Situations in which appropriate touch may be considered include:
- The child is incensed and out of control
- There is an immediate danger or safety concern
- Verbal attempts to engage the child have failed

Appropriate types of touch in preventing accidents, protecting someone or protect school property**:**
- Holding a child's hand (e.g on a trip or whilst moving around school)
- Physically interposing between pupils
- Blocking a pupils' path
- Leading a pupil
- In extreme circumstances
  - Holding a pupil
  - Carrying a pupil

Further guidance can be found in the Positive Handling Policy. A child who requires touch to prevent harm to themselves or others generally would have an Individual Behaviour Action Plan, which would refer to situations which are likely to escalate and would identify actions to be taken to prevent this.

Recording:
- Most instances of touch which were used to prevent accidents, to protect someone or to protect school property need to be recorded on a proforma which can be found in the **Positive Handling Policy - Appendix B,**
- The completed form should then be saved on CPOMS, and a senior member of staff needs to be made aware
- A senior member of staff will normally contact the parents and inform them that an incident has occured
.
Supporting children who have an EHCP
Some (but not all) children with an EHCP and who have special, additional, sensory or medical needs, such as the children in Forest Class, may need an adult to handle or touch them for a variety of different reasons. Due to their communication needs, children who fall into this group may not always be able to respond to verbal instructions.

The reasons for appropriate touch may include:
- To keep the child safe,
- To keep others safe
- A specific way or strategy to help the child calm down and regulate

- To clean the child, to support the child with toileting, to change the child's nappy or to change the child's clothes
- To meet a child's sensory needs such as TAC / PAC
- A form of specialised communication such as intensive interaction

Individual Touch Plans

For children likely to need more use of touch, an Individual Touch Plan (see proforma below) should be completed.

Individual Touch Plans should:
- Be personalised for an individual child, written for their specific needs, based on knowledge we have about the child and taking into account the advice from experts
- Based on the principle which follows the least 'amount of touch needed'.
- Always have child safety as the highest priority
- Be agreed with the SENDcos and where appropriate, other professionals
- Be agreed and signed by the parents.
- Should be regularly (but at least annually) reviewed
- Should describe:
  - What situations and/ or teaching activities are likely to require touch
  - What appropriate touch types are acceptable
  - Where applicable:
    - What the triggers might be that necessitate touch
    - How touch can be minimised
- Be saved on CPOMs and Edukey
- Be shared with all relevant adults, including support staff.

Inappropriate Touch

Touch should never be:
- Longer than necessary in order to meet the child's needs
- To redirect a child because they are off task
- Impulsive or ill-thought out
- A punishment
- Aggressive (e.g. grabbing, pushing, striking, or pulling)
- To satisfy the staff member's own need for physical contact or reassurance.
- Experienced as invasive, confusing, traumatising or potentially erotic.
- Of a sexual nature for adult gratification.

Safeguarding:
- All staff, including staff working with relevant children with EHCPs will be provided with training and support.
- Staff need to be vigilant and follow our low level concerns reporting protocol
- All injuries resulting from touch need to be reported as follows:
  - An injury received by a staff member as a result of contact with a child needs to be reported on CPOMS. Appropriate support needs to be offered by a senior member of staff.
  - An injury received by a child as a result from an interaction with a staff member needs to be reported to the Headteacher and must be reported to the parents.

Staff Code of Conduct
- Staff should self-report or report others who use touch inappropriately, following the disclosure reporting procedures.

- Allegations of inappropriate touch will be investigated and appropriate actions will be taken.
- The staff Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy can be found here: 🗎 Code of Conduct Policy and 🗎 Disciplinary Policy & Procedure.docx

Pro forma Individual Touch Plan

Individual Touch Plan for	
DOB	

Photo Here

Date of last review *This ITP needs to be reviewed at least annually*		
Parental Consent *Consent needs to be gained at the time of writing this plan and after any changes*	**I confirm that I agree to my child's individual touch plan**	
	Name:	
	Signature:	
	Date:	
Signature SENDco *I can confirm that this ITP will be shared with all relevant staff and that support will be given*	Name:	
	Signature:	
	Date:	

What are the child's likely triggers and reasons that might necessitate touch?
To support routines: ● example ● example **For emotional regulation:** ● example ● example **To keep safe:** ● example ● example **For communication & interaction:** ● example

● example
For toileting and changing:
    ● example
    ● example	

How can the need for touch be minimised?	

Situations and teaching activities which are likely to require touch	Appropriate touch
	●
	●
	●
	●
	●
	●
	●