



## **Child Protection Policy**

**Date agreed:** 23/02/2021

**Review Date:**Aut 2021

**We are a UNICEF Rights Respecting School**

**Part 1:**

**Procedures for Dealing with Child Protection related issues**

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**Recognising signs and symptoms of abuse**

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**This policy should be read in conjunction with the following other Stepney Park School policies:**

- Code of Conduct
- Staff Handbook
- Induction
- Recruitment and Selection
- Whistleblowing
- Disciplinary Code
- Internet Acceptable Use, E-safety and Social Media
- Visitors Policy
- Behaviour and Anti-bullying
- Physical Intervention and Restraint

**The following policies and guidance should also be followed:**

- Tower Hamlets:
  - Procedures for Dealing With Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers, Volunteers and Other School Staff
  - Supplementary Guidance for Schools on Child Protection Procedures
  - Guidance on Children Missing in Education, Missing Children and the Missing Children Register
  - Guidance on Preventing Violent Behaviour and Extremism
  - Standards on Effective Inter-agency Working
  - Multi Agency Safeguarding Thresholds Guidance
- Department for Education guidance:
  - Searching Screening and Confiscation
  - Statutory Guidance on Children Missing in Education
  - Working Together to Safeguard Children
  - Disqualification Under the Childcare Act
  - The Prevent Duty - Departmental Advice
  - Multi-agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation
  - Keeping Children Safe in Education (**Sept 2020**)
  - Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children - Advice
- The UK Centre for Internet Safety (UKCIS) - Non-Statutory Guidance for Schools: Sharing Nudes and Semi Nudes (**December 2020**)
- Statutory framework for EYFS

**As a Unicef Rights Respecting School, we aim to act upon all relevant Articles of the 'Unicef Convention on the Rights of the Child'**

## **PART 1: Procedures of Dealing with Child Protection Related issues**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Purpose of a Child Protection policy:**

- To inform staff, parents / carers and governors about the school's responsibilities.
- To enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how these responsibilities should be carried out.

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

Teachers and other school staff are particularly well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour and failure to develop because they have daily contact with the children.

We recognise the important role our school has in the early recognition of the signs and symptoms of abuse, neglect and the appropriate referral process.

As a school 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.

### **STATUTORY FRAMEWORK**

All schools are required to follow the statutory procedures for protecting children from abuse. Schools are also expected to ensure they have appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which they believe that the child has been abused or are at risk of abuse – these procedures should also cover circumstances in which a member of staff is accused or suspected of abuse.

#### **The following responsibilities are placed on the school.**

- Staff should be alert to signs of abuse and know to whom they should report any concerns or suspicions.
- A designated teacher/s should have responsibility for co-ordinating action within the school and liaisons with other agencies.
- Staff with a designated responsibility for Child Protection should receive appropriate training.
- Schools should be aware of and follow the correct procedures established by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- Schools should have procedures (of which all staff are aware) for handling suspected cases of abuse of pupils, including procedures to be followed if a member is accused of abuse, or suspected of abuse.

Parents are made aware of the school's Child Protection Policy and the fact that this may require cases to be referred to statutory services (i.e. Children's Social Care) or the police, in the interests of the child.

#### **THE DESIGNATED TEACHERS FOR CHILD PROTECTION IN STEPNEY PARK ARE:**

- Sharron McGuicken ( main safeguarding lead and PREVENT lead)
- The deputy safeguarding lead: Andy Kay
- Other people to report to in the event of both the above named people being absent include: Edith Philipsen or Geri Askin
- Any other member of SLT
- Designated Governor for child protection: **Ros Coffey**

#### **Tower Hamlets Contact details:**

**020 7364 3444:** Child Protection Advice Line (9.00am to 5.00pm)

**020 7364 5006/3:** Children's Social Care Emergency 'Out of Hours' Duty Team. (5.00pm onwards)

**020 7364 5290:** LADO team (Allegations against staff) (Melanie Benzie)

**079 5118 8431:** LADO team (allegations against staff)  
**0208 217 6484:** Police Child Abuse Investigation Team (or use 999 if not available)  
**0207 364 6448:** Social inclusion panel  
**0207 364 4691:** Safeguarding Adults Panel  
**0207 364 5006:** Early Help Hub  
**020 7426 2375:** CAMHS duty for urgent support out of office hours and on weekends  
**0800 073 0003:** 24hour crisis helpline

Child Protection advice emails: (Note – information should only be emailed following prior discussion with the Duty Officer)

- [CPAL@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:CPAL@towerhamlets.gov.uk)
- Secure: [MASH@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:MASH@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

All Tower Hamlets Safeguarding related documents can be found at the TH Safeguarding Children Partnership:

[https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ignl/health\\_social\\_care/children\\_and\\_family\\_care/Safeguarding\\_Children\\_Partnership\\_Arrangements.aspx](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ignl/health_social_care/children_and_family_care/Safeguarding_Children_Partnership_Arrangements.aspx)

It is the duty of the Designated Child Protection Lead (DCL) and other trained Designated Child Protection Teachers based in the school to:

- Ensure that Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership (THSCP) procedures are followed in the school.
- Ensure that the school effectively monitors children who have been identified as 'at risk'.
- Decide whether to take further action about specific concerns or suspected abuse (e.g. refer to the Local authority Social Care services or the police).
- Ensure that the Headteacher is kept informed of any concerns and ensure that accurate chronological records relating to individual children are kept on the secure online CPOMS website
- Liaise with Children's Social Care over suspected cases of child abuse.
- Submit reports to (and attend) Child Protection Conferences.
- Develop effective working relationships with other agencies and services
- Provide guidance to parents / carers, children and staff about obtaining suitable support.
- Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required;
- Support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required
- Support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care
- Ensure that all staff are aware of these procedures.

## **SCHOOL PROCEDURES**

If any member of staff is concerned about a child he or she must inform one of the Designated Child Protection Leads

Information regarding the concerns must be recorded by the member of staff on the same day on the Disclosure/ Concern report (Form 1) and must then be scanned and uploaded on CPOMS.

The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observation.

The DSL to whom the report has been handed will abide by the guidance of the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership (THSCP), and may refer the matter to the Integrated Pathways Support Team in Tower Hamlets Children's Social Care. In some circumstances, parents may be notified, but staff should not notify parents in advance if there is any risk of endangering evidence which may later be made used in court, or of any alleged perpetrator of child abuse being protected from investigation.

Only DCLs should make decisions about when to disclose Child Protection issues to parents and other staff must assume that information about Child Protection issues is strictly confidential, and act accordingly. All concerns should be recorded on the secure website CPOMS.

Particular attention is paid to the attendance and development of any child who has been identified as 'at risk' or who has been made subject to a Child Protection Plan, or has 'Family in Need' status. If a pupil about whom safeguarding concerns have been raised changes school, one of the DCLs will inform the social worker responsible for the case (if there is one) and transfer the appropriate records to the receiving school.

### **WHEN TO BE CONCERNED**

Staff should be concerned about a pupil if he or she:

- Has any injury, which is not typical of the bumps or scrapes normally associated with children's injuries.
- Regularly has unexplained injuries.
- Frequently has injuries (even when apparently reasonable explanations are given).
- Confused or conflicting explanations are given on how injuries were sustained.
- Exhibits significant changes in behaviour, which is usually explicit and/or inappropriate to his or her age.
- Discloses an experience in which he or she may have been significantly harmed
- Is absent from school, and a plausible, evidenced reason has not been given

For further signs and symptoms and types of abuse see the Appendix.

### **PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS AND CONCERNS REGARDING ABUSE**

If you have any concerns about a child (including concerns where a child's behaviour or circumstances have changed), please record your concerns. The concerns must be recorded by the member of staff on the same day on the Disclosure/ Concern report (Form 1) and must then be scanned and uploaded on CPOMs.

Regardless of the way you record this, **please ensure you alert DSL in person straight away**

ALL cases of abuse or neglect, any disclosures and any concerns about parents should be referred to the DSL– if you are in any doubt, it's safer to let the DSL/Deputies know, so they can assess the situation.

Ensure notes about a disclosure are written as soon as possible after the discussion. Record exactly what the child said and what was happening immediately beforehand e.g. (description of the activity). Note the time, date and place of the conversation and the name of any other person present. Attach any original documents to the report, or upload it in the CPOMs document vault.

Urgent cases, in the absence of a DSL or Deputies, can be phoned through to the Social Services duty line on 0207 364 3444, who will seek to clarify the nature of the concern and whether immediate action is needed to make them safe from harm.

You should not discuss your suspicions or allegations with anyone other than those named in the above points. Under no circumstances should you attempt to carry out any investigation into allegations or suspicions of abuse.

The DSL/Deputies will check current CP records on CPOMs to establish if concerns about the child have been raised previously. The DCL/Deputy will then decide whether a call to the relevant CP services should be made, or whether parents should be spoken to.

If the CP advice line is called, the DSL/Deputies and Social Services should be clear about who will be taking what action or that no further action will be taken. The decision will be recorded on the chronology file on CPOMs. All emails will also be copied and saved on the CPOMs chronology file.

Only if appropriate, should information then be passed onto the initial referrer / class teacher, any other relevant staff who will be supporting the child. This may include the SENDcos, the EP, the school social worker, the admin staff or the Pastoral Care workers. Information is shared on a 'need to know' basis, and appropriate confidentiality must be maintained at all times.

Social Services should decide on the next course of action within 3, 7 or 12 hours. On the basis of available evidence they have a responsibility to address whether there are concerns about both the child's health and development, or actual and/or potential harm which justify further inquiries, assessment or intervention.

Referrals may lead to:

- No further action
- The provision of services or other help
- A fuller assessment of the needs and circumstances of the child which may in turn lead to child protection inquiries or Child in need status being undertaken

CP records will be kept for the entirety of a child's time at Stepney Park, on the secure CPOMs website. At the time of the child's transfer to secondary school, CP records with Social Services involvement will be passed onto the DSL at the receiving school under separate cover to ensure confidentiality. The records of children who have left Stepney Park will be retained for 5 years, and will then be destroyed securely.

## **HOW TO DEAL WITH A DISCLOSURE**

If a pupil discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff should:

- Keep calm; listen to what is being said without showing shock, disgust or disbelief.
- Accept what the child says without passing judgement (however unlikely the disclosure may sound)
- Allow the child to talk freely.
- Reassure the child, let them know you will need to tell someone else, don't promise confidentiality
- Listen, rather than ask direct questions.
- Ask open questions rather than leading questions.
- Not criticise an alleged perpetrator.
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told in an age appropriate way.
- Look directly at the child
- Be honest
- Be aware the child may have been threatened and may fear reprisals for having spoken to you
- Never push for information or question the child as this can undermine any subsequent criminal investigation. If at any point a child decides not to continue, accept that and let them know that you are ready to listen should they wish to continue at any time.
- Concluding the conversation:
  - o Reassure the child that they were right to tell you
  - o Let the child know you are going to do next and tell them that you will let them know what is happening at each stage.

## **HOW TO RECORD DISCLOSURES**

When a pupil has made a disclosure the member of staff should:

- Make brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation.
- Not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court.
- Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child.
- Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury. This could be done on paper or electronically on CPOMs
- Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions.
- Complete the school standard pro-forma or enter the details on CPOMs as soon as possible,

## **SUPPORT**

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and a Child Protection case in general, is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff should, therefore, consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with one of the designated teachers.

## **ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING SCHOOL STAFF**

If a child, or parent, makes a complaint of abuse against a member of staff, the person receiving the complaint must take it seriously and immediately inform the Headteacher.

Any member of staff who has reason to suspect that a pupil may have been abused by another member of staff, either at school or elsewhere, must immediately inform the Headteacher. He or she should also make a record of the concerns including a note of anyone else who witnessed the incident or allegation. (If the concerns are about the Headteacher, the Local Area Designated Officer ( LADO) must be contacted on 020 7364 3506.)

The Headteacher will not investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements, but immediately refer the matter to Tower Hamlets Children's Social Care LADO team. For further information please see TH Safeguarding Children Partnership:

[https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ignl/health\\_social\\_care/children\\_and\\_family\\_care/Safeguarding\\_Children\\_Partnership\\_Arrangements.aspx](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ignl/health_social_care/children_and_family_care/Safeguarding_Children_Partnership_Arrangements.aspx)

Alternatively, contact:

Children's Social Care Integrated Pathways Support Team

Telephone: 020 7364 3444

Children's Social Care Out of Hours Team

Telephone: 020 7364 4079

Police Child Abuse Investigation Team

Telephone: 020 8217 6484

## **VETTING PROCEDURES**

All new staff and volunteers will have a DBS check prior to starting work. All staff will be re-checked every 3 years. Staff who are internally promoted to an SLT position will also be re-checked.

All staff are expected to complete a **Disqualification** disclosure prior to starting work.

Members of the Governing Body are also DBS checked upon their appointment.

## **BOUNDARIES AND TOUCH**

All staff are responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate boundaries and or ensuring that meeting their own emotional needs are not dependent on their relationships with children and young people. Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors. Touch should be related to a child's needs not the adult's. Touch should be age-appropriate. Avoid any physical activity, which is, or may be construed as, sexually stimulating the child, for example, fondling, or touching private parts of the body. Members of staff should take responsibility for monitoring one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to challenge constructively if necessary.

## **USE OF REASONABLE FORCE**

It is recognised that there are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools and colleges to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people.

The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.

'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom.

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

The use of mobile phones for the taking of children's images is not permitted within school. Other devices, such as cameras and iPads can be used for taking photographs for educational and display

purposes, but must not be removed from the school premises at the end of the day. Further information on appropriate conduct can be found in the 'Staff Code of Conduct'.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Dealing with Child Protection matters often raises issues of confidentiality, which must be clearly understood by all staff. Both teaching and non-teaching staff have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies (Children's Social Care and the police). If a child confides in a member of staff and requests that the information be kept a secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the child sensitively that he / she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies for the child's sake. Within that context, the child should, however, be assured that the matter will only be disclosed to people who need to know about it. Staff who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contacts. Child Protection records should be kept securely locked, and only stored on the secure areas on the school server.

## **PARENTS/CARERS AND CHILD PROTECTION**

At Stepney Park we do the following to inform parents of our duty around Child Protection, and to secure their involvement in helping us do so:

- We publish our Child Protection and Safeguarding policy on our website
- We regularly remind parents of our duty in newsletters
- We give all new parents a parent friendly booklet explaining our wider role in securing the welfare of their children and our duty around protecting them from harm.
- We organise parent meetings when needed ( for example workshops on FGM and extremism)

## **CPD AND INDUCTION AT STEPNEY PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

All staff must demonstrate an understanding of the whole CP system of agencies working together as part of a multi-agency system. Staff will have regular training, which is recorded by the DSL in the Single Central record section on CPOMS. This includes:

- Child protection procedures and contents of Child protection Policy (Annually at start of academic year)
- An annual reminder 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 should be refreshed (this might be via staff briefings, phase -meetings, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role. This includes updates on changes to legislation, policy and procedures in the area of child protection, as well as guidance in recognising specific signs of abuse, for example: FGM, child trafficking and exploitation, child sexual exploitation, children at risk from extremism and radicalisation, domestic violence, E-safety (use of ICT, the Internet and Social Media), forced marriage, violence against women and girls, involvement in gangs, drugs and neglect is shared as part of the policy. (Annually and specific additional staff meetings when needed)
- 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 with a member of the SLT. During this meeting, this policy and signs of abuse are discussed, as well as the steps staff need to take if they suspect abuse. Staff will be briefed on appropriate questioning and keeping records of conversations. They will 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.
- The DSL is responsible for keeping the induction log/training logs up to date

#### 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

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments;
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;
- Are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- Are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;

## **PREVENTION**

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Include in the curriculum opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

## **EARLY HELP**

Staff at school are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating. All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.

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

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

Tower Hamlets has an Early Help Hub, which can be contacted for advice, guidance and support on:

**Tel:** 020 7364 5006 – Choose Option 2

**Email:** [EarlyHelp@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:EarlyHelp@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## **GOVERNING BODY**

In order to support the Governing Body in executing its safeguarding duties, the Designated Lead for Child Protection will ensure that the Governing Body will get termly updates on safeguarding. An annual safeguarding audit will be completed with the designated Governor for Child Protection, and a comprehensive audit report will be presented to the Governors annually.

## **WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**

If staff have any concerns about safeguarding practices within the school they can:

- Follow Whistleblowing Policy and procedures so that such concerns can be raised with the school's or college's senior leadership team.
- Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed they can contact NSPCC whistleblowing helpline – 0800 028 0285

## PART 2: Recognising signs and symptoms of abuse

### Definition of Abuse:

#### **'A form of maltreatment of a child'**

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by **inflicting harm**, or by **failing to act to prevent harm**.

Staff should be aware of this definition and recognise that abuse can be wide-ranging in terms of form and perpetrators.

### General types of abuse, abusers and settings

- Child abuse exists and can present itself in any of the following **forms**:
  - physical,
  - emotional,
  - neglect,
  - sexual,
  - alone or in combination
  
- Abuse may be perpetrated by:
  - individuals,
  - groups
  - network of individuals

Children of all races, religions and cultures, with or without disabilities, from any model of family life have the equal right to protection from abuse.

Child abuse can take place in a number of different **settings** such as (but not exclusively):

- Home
- Schools
- Church
- Sports club
- Youth club
- Community schools

Abuse is most likely to occur where the young person knows the individual/s and is trusted.

Child abuse can be committed by a number of different **types of abusers**, such as (but not exclusively):

- parents,
- family members ,
- foster parents,
- private foster parents,
- babysitters,
- family friends,
- carers,
- guardians or other trusted adults,
- strangers,
- paedophiles
- or by other children (**peer on peer abuse**)

The abuser is sometimes someone **in authority** such as (but not exclusively):

- Teacher,
- Teaching assistant,
- Youth leader,

- o Children's worker
- o Church worker/leader.
- o Sports coach

Sometimes a paedophile or other person specifically sets out to join organisations to obtain access to children.

### **Peer-on-Peer abuse:**

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer-on-peer abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault and sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sharing of nude or semi-nude videos, images or live streams by young people under the age of 18 online, formerly known as 'sexting'; initiating/hazing type violence and rituals; upskirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.

### **Measures to prevent peer-on-peer abuse:**

- a robust Behaviour Policy that focuses on the rights of the child, what respectful relationships and behaviour looks like and takes a zero tolerance stance with regards dismissing negative behaviours thus accepting and normalising these behaviours.
- PSHEE Policy and Curriculum that is age appropriate and inclusive and equips children with the skills and confidence to speak out, know what respectful relationships look like, gender roles, stereotyping and equality, prejudiced behaviour, consent and sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- Early identification of signs to prevent escalation through regular staff training

### **Our response to peer-on-peer abuse incidents:**

- report immediately to DSL
- gather all the facts
- assess any risks and make decisions on a case-by-case basis

### **Support offered to the victim of peer-on-peer abuse:**

- listen carefully and reassure them that you are taking them seriously
- record the incident as factually as possible using the language the child uses
- consider short term support for e.g. not coming in contact with the perpetrator
- consider longer term support for e.g. therapy
- consider the help the child's support network will need to protect the child
- keep the child central in all decisions that may affect them

### **Support offered to the child that has displayed abusive or harmful sexual behaviour:**

- consider the risks to the child's safety and what multi-agency responses are needed to support the child and the family
- talk calmly as the child may not realise they have been abusive; avoid language that may make them feel judged or criminalised
- consider sanctions inline with our Behaviour Policy
- work with the child and their support network to put measures in place that will help the child change their behaviour
- work with local partners who may have valuable information, resources or expertise such as the police, youth offending teams as well as the local safeguarding children board
- consider what targeted therapeutic support the child may need

### **Private fostering arrangement**

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a 'close relative'. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and a

carer, for 28 days or more. Close relatives are defined as step-parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts (whether of full blood, half blood or marriage/affinity). When the school becomes aware of this arrangement, it will notify the local authority to allow the local authority to check the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child.

### **Children missing from education**

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of their school's or college's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

### **Children with SEND**

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Staff should be aware of the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

- assumptions that changes in behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability
- lack of verbal and non-verbal communication skills

Children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying- without outwardly showing any signs

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside the school or college. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as **contextual safeguarding**, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

The first step in helping abused or neglected children is learning to recognize the signs of child abuse and neglect. The presence of a single sign does not prove child abuse is occurring in a family, but a closer look at the situation may be warranted when these signs appear repeatedly or in combination.

As an organisation working with children and young people, Stepney Park Primary School has a responsibility to act if abuse comes to light, to protect children from the possibility of being abused within school, and to respond to disclosures of abuse outside school. For the purposes of this policy a child or young person is anyone under the age of 18 years of age.

If you do suspect a child is being harmed, reporting your suspicions to the DSL may protect the child and get help for the family. Any concerned person can report suspicions of child abuse and neglect.

## **DEFINITIONS AND GENERAL SIGNS OF ABUSE**

### **Signs of Physical Abuse**

This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding drowning, suffocating, female genital mutilation (FGM) or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child who they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as fictitious illness by proxy, or Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.

### **Consider the possibility of physical abuse when the child:**

- Has unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, or black eyes
- Injuries which appear to have been caused by a weapon e.g. cuts, welts, etc
- Has fading bruises or other marks noticeable after an absence from school

- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Instances where children are kept away from school inappropriately or without explanation
- Self-mutilation or self-harm e.g. cutting, slashing, drug abuse
- Seems frightened of the parents and protests or cries when it is time to go home
- Shrinks at the approach of adults
- Reports injury by a parent or another adult caregiver
- **FGM** (Female Genital Mutilation): Signs that a girl has had female genital mutilation include: being unable to cross her legs while sitting on the floor, trying to avoid PE, frequent urinary tract infections, being in pain or clutching at her body, going to the toilet more often than usual and staying there for an unusually long time and taking a week off school when she has her period.

**Consider the possibility of physical abuse when the parent or other adult caregiver:**

- Offers conflicting, unconvincing, or no explanation for the child's injury
- Describes the child as "evil," or in some other very negative way
- Uses harsh physical discipline with the child
- Has a history of abuse as a child

**Signs of Neglect**

Neglect is 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. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

**Consider the possibility of neglect when the child:**

- Is frequently absent from school
- Begs or steals food or money
- Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunizations, or glasses
- Is consistently dirty and has severe body odour
- Lacks sufficient or inadequate clothing for the weather
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs
- States that there is no one at home to provide care
- Exhibits persistent tiredness
- Has an excessive appetite
- Fails to thrive e.g. poor weight gain

**Consider the possibility of neglect when the parent or other adult caregiver:**

- Appears to be indifferent to the child
- Seems apathetic or depressed
- Behaves irrationally or in a bizarre manner
- Is abusing alcohol or other drugs
- fails to provide equipment for physical well-being (i.e. inhalers, hearing aid, glasses, walking supports)
- Leaves the child alone and unsupervised

**Signs of Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production or, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Consider the possibility of sexual abuse when the child:**

- Has difficulty walking or sitting
- Suddenly refuses to change for gym or to participate in physical activities
- Reports nightmares or bedwetting
- Experiences a sudden change in appetite
- Becomes pregnant or contracts a venereal disease, particularly if under age 14
- Runs away
- Reports sexual abuse by a parent or another adult caregiver
- Shows excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and has detailed unusual sexual knowledge of adult sexual behaviour.
- Has a preoccupation with sexual activity through words, play or drawing and/or regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
- Is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Has inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Has severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations

**Consider the possibility of sexual abuse when the parent or other adult caregiver:**

- Is unduly protective of the child or severely limits the child's contact with other children, especially of the opposite sex
- Is secretive and isolated
- Is jealous or controlling with family members

**Child sexual exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or 80 increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology.

**Signs of Emotional Maltreatment**

This is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve 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 ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

**Consider the possibility of emotional maltreatment when the child:**

- Shows extremes in behaviour, such as overly compliant or demanding behaviour, extreme passivity, or depression/aggression
- Shows changes or regression in mood and behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy.
- Shows sudden changes in behaviour e.g. under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Is either inappropriately adult (parenting other children, for example) or inappropriately infantile (frequently rocking or head-banging, for example)
- Is delayed in physical or emotional development
- Has attempted suicide
- Reports a lack of attachment to the parent
- Nervousness/inappropriate fear of particular adults e.g. frozen watchfulness
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults e.g. excessive dependence
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Wetting or soiling of bed or clothes by an older child

### **Consider the possibility of emotional maltreatment when the parent or other adult caregiver:**

- Constantly blames, belittles, or berates the child
- Is unconcerned about the child and refuses to consider offers of help for the child's problems
- Overtly rejects the child

## **SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES**

### **CHILDREN AT RISK FROM EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION**

The DSL is the Prevent Lead. Issues in this area are covered within the 'Prevent' Strategy and specific guidance is given in 'Channel: Protecting young people from being drawn into terrorism'. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/118194/channel-guidance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118194/channel-guidance.pdf)

Since 2012, it has been required by law for teachers "not to undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs."

### **In our school there are five strands that support the prevention of violent extremism:**

1. Understanding how an extremist narrative, which can lead to harm can be challenged by staff in schools; and model to pupils how diverse views can be heard, analysed and challenged in a way which values freedom of speech and freedom from harm
2. Understanding how to prevent harm to pupils by individuals, groups or others who promote violent extremism, and manage risks within the school
3. Understanding how to support individuals who are vulnerable, through strategies to support, challenge and protect
4. Increasing the resilience of pupils and of school communities through helping pupils acquire skills and knowledge to challenge extremist views, and promoting an ethos and values that promotes respect for others
5. Using teaching styles and curriculum opportunities which allow grievances to be aired, explored and demonstrate the role of conflict resolution and active citizenship

Exposure of children to extremist ideology can hinder their social development and educational attainment alongside posing a very real risk that they could support or partake in an act of violence. Radicalisation of young people can be compared to grooming for sexual exploitation.

"Safeguarding vulnerable people from radicalisation is no different from safeguarding them from other forms of harm." Home Office – The Prevent Strategy

The overall role of schools in safeguarding children is set out in the Government's statutory guidance '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)'

### **STAFF TRAINING AND AWARENESS AROUND THE PREVENTION OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM**

Annual CP training will focus on the signs and symptoms of recognising children at risk of being radicalised. Regular additional training will be organised as appropriate

Further training on recognising and responding to the risk of Violent Extremism and the role of professionals is available for school staff and other professionals from the LA's Prevent Project Manager.

### **Why might a young person be drawn towards extremist ideology?**

It appears a decision by a young person to become involved in violent extremism:

- may begin with a search for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
- may be driven by the desire for 'adventure' and excitement



- may be driven by a desire to enhance the self-esteem of the individual and promote their 'street cred'
- is likely to involve identification with a charismatic individual and attraction to a group which can offer identity, social network and support
- is likely to be fuelled by a sense of grievance that can be triggered by personal experiences of racism or discrimination

### **Recognising Extremism - early indicators may include:**

- Showing sympathy for extremist causes
- Glorifying violence
- Evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- Advocating messages similar to illegal organisations such as "Muslims Against Crusades" or other non-prescribed extremist groups such as the English Defence League.
- Out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent.)

### **Reporting**

If you have concerns about a child or group of children being violent, or being drawn into violent extremism, or being vulnerable to this, you should respond as we would to all vulnerable children, and report this to the DSL (who is also the PREVENT lead) .

The DSL will follow the procedures below:

1. Talk to the family and other professionals working with the young person about the concerns and get their views.
2. All referrals for children suspected to be vulnerable to radicalisation will be referred through the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) as the initial 'front door' into the local authority. All referrals will be made using the LBTH Inter-Agency Referral Form to the email address MASH@towerhamlets.gov.uk. In addition the referral form should be copied to Prevent.referrals@towerhamlets.gov.uk.
3. Adults and children suspected to be vulnerable to radicalisation will be assessed by relevant services and where proportionate and necessary, and only after legal gateways have been satisfied, may be referred to a single multi-agency safeguarding panel.

**If in doubt: We will refer to the Child Protection Advice Line on 020 7364 5601/5606 or the MASH team on 0207 364 3444**

If you suspect someone is actually engaged in terrorist activity, you should also contact the police or the anti-terrorist hotline immediately on 0800 789 321

### **Interventions with individuals:**

The school may implement a number of strategies to support individuals, such as:

- Increased adult support, supervision and encouragement
- Positive buddying programmes
- Positive activities in and out of school
- Behaviour support / anger management programmes
- Attendance support
- 1 to 1 or group counselling
- Parenting programmes with a Preventing Violent Extremism element
- Links with relevant voluntary or religious organisations
- Advice on cyber safety (for pupils and parents)
- Referrals for:
  - Family Therapy / CAMHS programmes
  - Targeted Youth Support
  - YISP crime prevention programmes

Police Prevent team support  
Specialised theological / educational programmes  
Intensive Family Support Programmes

## **Prevention**

The school addresses this issue of prevention, through the curriculum and other activities:

These include:

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

The school has carried out a Risk Assessment, outlining all steps it takes in order to ensure children are kept safe from the risk of being radicalised ( Prevent RA)

## **VISITORS/ SPEAKERS AND THE USE OF SCHOOL PREMISES / FACILITIES**

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
- 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

## **SCHOOL GOVERNORS**

Governors are responsible for ensuring Prevent issues are being addressed through the curriculum and that the safeguarding policy reflects vulnerability to radicalisation.

The school will report on these to the Governing Body and the lead Governor for Safeguarding.

### **OTHER FORMS OF ABUSE AND OTHER SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS**

All staff should be aware safeguarding issues can manifest themselves in **many other different forms**, including (but not exclusively):

- Children and the court system
- Children with family members in prison
- Child sexual exploitation
- Child criminal exploitation: child trafficking and county lines
- Domestic abuse
- Homelessness
- So-called 'honour-based' violence
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges
- Gender based violence
- E-safety (use of ICT, the Internet, mobile technology and Social Media, including cyberbullying and texting)
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Organised abuse
- Forced Marriage
- Involvement in gangs
- Drug use
- Faith abuse
- Mental Health issues
- Children missing from education
- Serious violence

Please refer to **Appendix** or the latest version of 'Keeping Children safe in education' and other relevant policies for more information



## Form 1: Stepney Park Child Protection: Disclosure/ Concern report

<b>Name of child</b>	
<b>Date of Birth</b>	
<b>Name of member of staff who wrote disclosure/concern report</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

### **Aim:**

- For concerns: describe your concerns, referring to the CP policy for possible signs and symptoms.
- For disclosures: to establish if there are any visible marks or injuries, if any implements were used, if excessive force was used, how distressing the experience was for child, if support is needed

**Please ensure your questions are not 'leading' questions, keep them as open ended as possible (avoid 'yes/no' answers e.g. Did mummy do this? Did someone hurt you?)**

### **For disclosures, appropriate questions are:**

What happened? Who did this? Why did they do it? When did it happen? How did it happen? Can you show me how? Has it happened before? If pain or an injury is mentioned: 'Can you show me where?'

### **Remember the three Rs: Receive/ Reassure/ Respond**

### **Disclosure report:**

--



**Form 2: Stepney Park Primary School Risk Assessment For Visitors and Speakers**

1. Details			
Date of visit	Classes involved:	Description of task or activity:	Name of company or visitors:

2. Hazards identified (potential to cause harm)
Children developing extremist views and coming under the influence of adults promoting violent radicalization

3. Consequences of the Hazard (i.e. What is the potential harm?)
Children could be at risk of sympathizing with or joining violent radical organisations and eventually committing violent crimes

4. Persons at Risk
Children at Stepney Park

5. Current controls to minimize risk (including legal compliance)-
<p>The visitor/speaker will be vetted by one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Seeking a recommendation by trusted sources</li> <li>● Internet search</li> <li>● Contacting Tower Hamlets Prevent project manager for advice.</li> </ul> <p>A member of staff will be present? Yes/ No.</p>

**6. Severity of Outcome of Identified Hazards (if no control measures are taken)**

No risk	Minor risk	Moderate risk	Serious risk
		x	

**7 Probability of Harm (if no control measures are taken)**

No risk	Unlikely/improbable	Likely	Very High

**8 Final Assessment of Risk (if appropriate measures/risk controls are taken)PS: Visitors/ speakers will only be allowed to speak if the final risk assessment is either: no risk or unlikely/ improbable**

No risk	Unlikely/improbable	Likely	Very High

**9. Action Required (continue on separate sheet if necessary)**

**If a member of staff will be present during the visit:**

The visitor/ speaker will be carefully monitored to ensure that they are adhering to the school's safeguarding policies and procedures. They will be asked to leave if they are communicating inappropriate messages.

State here who will be that member of staff: \_\_\_\_\_

**If no member of staff will be present:**

- Visitors will be given a copy of the Stepney Park CP policy
- They will be asked to sign the Stepney Park External Visitors and Speakers Declaration, 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.

State here who will ensure that the CP policy will be given to the visitor and that the External Visitors and Speakers Declaration will be signed: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Date of Risk Assessment:</b>	
<b>Name of Assessor (The organiser of the visit):</b>	
<b>Approved by (DSL):</b>	

***This Risk Assessment and the External Visitors and Speakers' Declaration are to be handed to the DSL and to be scanned and saved on the school drive***



### Form 3: External Visitors and Speakers Declaration

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Organisation:</b>	
<b>Date of visit:</b>	
<b>Purpose of visit:</b>	
<b>I have received a copy of the Stepney Park Child Protection Policy and I support the school in ensuring that all relevant safeguarding requirements are met , including those on preventing children from being exposed to extremist views:</b>	<i>Please sign:</i>
<b>I declare that I am aware of the Stepney Park values and I will not communicate any personal views that would contradict these:</b>	<i>Please sign:</i>
<b>Date of signature:</b>	<i>Please date:</i>

## **Specific arrangements regarding whole staff Child Protection training and record keeping:**

### **Our Child Protection training agreements:**

- Induction: New staff will be given copies of:
  - DFE Statutory Guidance on Keeping children Safe in Education (latest version)
  - Stepney Park Child Protection policy latest version
  - Stepney Park Staff Handbook
  - Stepney Park code of Conduct
  - Stepney Park behaviour and anti-bullying policy
- Induction training:
  - During the meeting we will discuss: DSL and role, types, signs and symptoms or abuse, how to handle a disclosure, how to report, confidentiality. (date of induction meeting to be recorded by DSL)
  - After meeting: online training LV 1 in presence of office staff (date of training and certificate gained to be recorded by DSL, certificate to be filed in personnel file)
  - CPOMS log in details
- Signatures after Induction training and each September:
  - An acknowledgement that each member of staff has been reminded of their duty to disclose potential disqualification if their circumstances change.
  - That they have been given a copy of the latest version of the statutory DFE guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education.
  - An acknowledgement that they have received a reminder/ guidance regarding:
    - The Stepney Park Child protection policy and procedures including the CP leads and role, types, signs and symptoms or abuse, how to handle a disclosure, how to report, confidentiality
    - The staff code of conduct ( Date of signature to be recorded by HT)
    - Stepney Park Staff handbook
- Every three years: Whole staff Accredited Lv 1 Child Protection refresher training



## APPENDIX

### FURTHER INFORMATION ON OTHER FORMS OF ABUSE AND OTHER SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

#### **Children and the court system**

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

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

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

#### **Children with family members in prison**

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

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

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point. Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

Some children are at risk of being exploited sexually by a range of adults who appear to care for them. Staff should report any concerns where:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;
- 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.

For more information on CSE staff can look at 'What to do if you suspect a child is being sexually exploited'

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/279511/step\\_by\\_step\\_guide.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/279511/step_by_step_guide.pdf)

## **Child criminal exploitation: child trafficking and county lines**

### **Trafficking**

Detecting signs of trafficking is particularly difficult as children usually have been coached to provide suitable cover for the traffickers. In this situation staff may notice:

- signs of neglect
- poorly explained absences
- inconsistency in terms of adults who are responsible for the child

For a more detailed description of signs and symptoms staff can visit <http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/trafficking/>

### **County lines**

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns.

Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

### **Domestic abuse**

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

*Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.*

The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual;
- financial
- emotional

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

Advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

- NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects
- Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children
- Safelives: young people and domestic abuse

## **Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes 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.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live.

The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support.

Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances. The department and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/ or require accommodation.

## **So-called 'honour-based' violence**

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) 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. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBV 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 HBV, or already having suffered HBV.

## **Actions**

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV or who has suffered from HBV, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers that requires a different approach

## **Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges**

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of **any** age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable.

It is important that **all** victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- 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 behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

### **What is sexual violence and harassment?**

It is important that school and college staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

**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.

### **What is consent?**

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. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

### **Sexual harassment**

When referring to sexual harassment we mean ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. 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.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- 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. It may include:
  - Non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
  - Sexualised online bullying;
  - Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and

- Sexual exploitation; coercion and threats

### **The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment**

The initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured 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 sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

As is always the case, if staff are in any doubt as to what to do they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

### **Gender based violence -Domestic violence and violence against women and girls**

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

*Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.*

The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Staff should be aware that any disclosures made by children may have a background in domestic violence and that this violence may be part of an overall pattern of violence towards women and girls in the family. That said domestic violence can also be suffered by male members of the family and as such assumptions should not be made as to the perpetrators of domestic violence.

For more support please consult: 'Domestic violence and abuse'  
<https://www.gov.uk/domestic-violence-and-abuse>

### **Sharing nudes and semi-nudes (formerly known as youth produced sexual imagery or sexting)**

Nudes and semi-nudes can be shared by, and between, children and young people under a wide range of circumstances, and are often not sexually or criminally motivated. An education setting's response to an incident will differ depending on the motivations behind the incident and the appropriateness of the child or young person's/people's behaviour.

Incidents can broadly be divided into two categories:

**Aggravated: incidents involving additional or abusive elements beyond the creation, sending or possession of nudes and semi-nudes.**

**These can further be sub-categorised into:**

- **adult involved:** adult offenders attempt to develop relationships by grooming children and young people, in criminal sex offences even without the added element of nudes and semi-nudes. Victims may be family friends, relatives, community members or contacted via the Internet. The images may be solicited by adult offenders
- **youth only – intent to harm:** these cases can arise from interpersonal conflict, such as break-ups and fights among friends, or criminal/abusive conduct such as blackmail, threats or deception, sexual abuse or exploitation by young people
- **youth only – reckless misuse:** no intent to harm but images are taken or sent without the knowing or willing participation of the young person who is pictured. In these cases, pictures are taken or sent thoughtlessly or recklessly and a victim may have been harmed as a result

**Experimental: incidents involving the creation and sending of nudes and semi-nudes with no adult involvement, no apparent intent to harm or reckless misuse.**

### These can further be sub-categorised into:

- **romantic:** incidents in which young people in ongoing relationships make images for themselves or each other, and images were not intended to be distributed beyond the pair
- **'sexual attention seeking':** the phrase 'sexual attention seeking' is taken directly from the typology however it is important to note that incidents within this category can be a part of normal childhood. A child or young person should not be blamed for taking and sharing their image
- **other:** cases that do not appear to have aggravating elements, like adult involvement, malicious motives or reckless misuse, but also do not fit into the Romantic or Attention Seeking sub-types. These involve either young people who take pictures of themselves for themselves (no evidence of any sending or sharing or intent to do so) or pre-adolescent children (age 9 or younger) who did not appear to have sexual motives

Indecent imagery does not always mean nudity, however images are likely to be defined as such if they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- nude or semi-nude sexual posing e.g. displaying genitals and/or breasts or
- overtly sexual images of young people in their underwear
- someone nude or semi-nude touching themselves in a sexual way
- any sexual activity involving a child
- someone hurting someone else sexually
- sexual activity that includes animals

### Searching devices, viewing and deleting nudes and semi-nudes

#### Viewing the imagery

Staff and parents or carers must not intentionally view any nudes and semi-nudes unless there is good and clear reason to do so as outlined below. Wherever possible, responses to incidents should be based on what DSLs (or equivalents) have been told about the content of the imagery.

The decision to view any imagery should be based on the professional judgement of the DSL (or equivalent) and should always comply with the child protection policy and procedures of the education setting. Imagery should never be viewed if the act of viewing will cause significant distress or harm to any child or young person involved.

#### Assessing behaviour

DSLs will need to be mindful that behaviour, which may not initially appear to be sexually motivated, may have occurred as a result of risky or harmful behaviour or sexual abuse being 'normalised' for children and young people. There is a wide continuum from normal to abusive and violent behaviours, and may move fluidly between each category. It is important to note that an isolated incident that demonstrates problematic or abusive behaviour may not necessarily be indicative of the child or young person's overall sexual behaviour. The incident should be dealt with proportionally to the behaviour being displayed. (see Hackett's Continuum of children and young people's sexual behaviours' model ([https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/19Put3brRjZi6I29FIW\\_zZWCbHHvTaK2U](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/19Put3brRjZi6I29FIW_zZWCbHHvTaK2U)))

It is important for professionals to place a child's sexual behaviour within the context of their age and development. DSLs must ensure that they are familiar with and follow the relevant local policies and procedures to help them do so.

Any child or young person displaying harmful sexual behaviour should be safeguarded and supported in moving forward from the incident and adopting positive behaviour patterns. Where a child or young person displays appropriate sexual behaviour within the context of their age or development, consideration should still be given as to whether the taking or sharing of the nude or semi-nude raises any additional concerns.

Further support and resources on dealing with and addressing harmful sexual behaviour in education settings can be found at <https://csnetwork.org.uk>. and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settin>

## **E-safety (use of ICT, the Internet, mobile technology and Social Media, including cyberbullying and texting)**

### **Online safety**

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

The school has an ***Internet acceptable use, E-Safety and Social Media*** policy which includes guidance for all pupils in relation to E-safety and using the internet and social media.

Staff are encouraged to report where they believe children are using the internet, mobile technology e.g. **creating and sharing nudes and semi-nudes** or social media inappropriately. In these instances the designated child protection person will take advice from the Duty Advice Line on how to proceed with regards to talking to parents/ carers about E-safety.

In some extreme cases the Police may become involved if a child is at risk of exploitation due to their use of the internet or social media. Consequently staff must quickly report any concerns in a timely way so that advice and support can be sought. For more guidance please follow the link to Child Exploitation and Online Protection Agency (CEOP) <http://ceop.police.uk/>

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

- **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material
- **contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
- **conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm

Keeping Children Safe in Education states that schools and colleges 'should ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety'. Through compulsory Relationships Education for all primary-aged pupils and Relationships and non statutory Sex Education (RSE) for primary -aged pupils, all schools should provide opportunities for children and young people to learn about online safety and harms. This includes being taught what positive, healthy and respectful online relationships look like.

### **Online Remote Learning**

**We have the following additional safety measures in place**

#### **School Culture:**

- We have established a school culture which insist on conformity and consistency of Remote Teaching practice and procedures ,
- Staff receive very regular training and briefings
- All procedures and expectations are shared in our Remote Learning handbook

#### **Online meetings/ chats**

- We record 1:1 MEETs with pupils as a safeguarding measure. These recordings are set up using our disclaimer and filed in Year Group folders and disposed of after one month.
- Where possible we encourage children to blur the background or have a wall behind them when in MEETs.
- We insist that children are fully dressed in appropriate clothing when attending MEETs
- We monitor children's chats and deal with online bullying swiftly. We always engage parents in this process. We have amended our behaviour policy to reflect this



- Children cannot invite outsiders, who do not have a school email address to MEETS
- Where appropriate, we ensure children don't attend class Meets early, but where they do, we ensure that they are supervised by a member of staff.

### Online behaviour

- We have a system for managing online behaviour. [Procedure to Support Online Behaviour](#)
- Staff have regular short PSHE lessons with their classes, particularly on the subject of online safety, respectful behaviour and mental and physical health.
- Teachers and other staff check on children's wellbeing and follow up on all concerns.

### Supporting children emotionally

- Vulnerable children are offered a place to come and learn in school.
- Staff have regular short social chats with their classes, to enable them to socialise within a safe framework, with guidelines provided
- Teachers and other staff check on children's wellbeing and follow up on all concerns.
- Children are reminded regularly about what to do if they have encountered something that makes them unhappy or unsafe: report to parents, report to teachers, or report on Student Hub.
- Children can get in touch with us at any time using a Google Form on the [Student Hub](#) if they are worried or upset by anything that has happened while online.

### Supporting parents

- We have provided information to parents on online safety and there are relevant materials on our school website.
- We remind parents at regular intervals they must supervise children at home when they are online
- Regular newsletters (almost weekly) newsletters from the Headteacher are sent to parents with safeguarding reminders, links to websites for advice and offers of support
- A firewall can not be applied to the school provided chromebooks, as they rely on the wifi network settings at home. Parents are however given advice on setting up suitable firewalls at home.

### Monitoring welfare, attendance and engagement for all children

- All children are expected to attend a live registration twice a day
- Milestone leads monitor attendance twice a day and report concerns to the AH with the responsibility for attendance
- Non attendance is followed up by a phone call and a reason is recorded in a tracker
- Non attendance and no contact being made is referred to the AWO and followed up by a home visit. We have amended our attendance and punctuality policy to reflect this.
- Engagement with online learning is monitored twice a day by teachers and the Milestone leads., When children are not suitably engaged, they are considered to be vulnerable and will be offered a place in school
- Parents are advised to switch chromebooks off after school and to limit screen time
- The remote learning timetable designed to allow children to limit screen time
- The remote learning timetable designed to encourage physical exercise

### Monitoring welfare of vulnerable children who do not attend school, as a place has been refused

- Our Pastoral Care Team checks the wellbeing of targeted families with weekly phone calls and reports any concerns.
- We have an attendance and engagement tracker, and have clear processes for escalating actions where children are not attending MEETS at registration or where there is poor engagement with their learning
- The social workers for relevant children are updated at regular intervals, in particular where a place has been refused. This is recorded in CPOMS



## Reporting safeguarding concerns

- Staff have been advised to report concerns about safeguarding in the same way as normal safeguarding when in school:
  - Report immediately (verbally) to DSL Sharron or Deputy DSL Andy
  - The DSL will gather as much information as possible to assess risks and next actions and decide whether to call CSC for further advice
  - The DSL will ask staff to add brief facts to CPOMS
  - The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher can be contacted by phone outside of normal school hours for emergencies . Their mobiles numbers have been shared with all staff

## Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is Female Genital Mutilation. It is a procedure where female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but where there's no medical reason to do this. It is most commonly carried out on young girls from infancy, before the onset of puberty. FGM is against the law in the UK, as it has serious long term and often irreversible consequences for physical and mental health. FGM is considered child abuse.

### **Where FGM is commonly practiced:**

FGM is commonly practiced in 28 countries in Africa and some in the Middle East and Africa, including: Somalia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Eritrea, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Chad, Guinea-Bissau and Gambia. FGM is also found in the UK amongst members of migrant communities.

### **When to raise concerns:**

Suspicious may arise in a number of different ways in which a child is being **prepared for FGM** to take place, which often happens abroad. These include knowing that a child belonging to a community in which FGM is practiced is:

- Being taken abroad to take a holiday
- Arranging vaccinations or planning an absence from school.
- Talking about a 'special procedure/ ceremony' that is going to take place.

Indicators that FGM may **already have occurred** include:

- Prolonged absence from school or other activities
- Noticeable changes in behaviour upon return
- Possible bladder or menstrual problems
- Difficulties in sitting still or looking uncomfortable
- Complaints of pain between legs
- Talking of something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about

### **Common terms for FGM**

Communities tend to use local names for referring to this practice, including female circumcision, cutting, sunna, gudniin, halalays, qodiin.megrez and khitan.

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 will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory

Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also still consider

and discuss any such case with the school designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures.

For more guidance please refer to 'Female Genital Mutilation: Multi-agency practice guidelines' [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/355044/MultiAgencyPracticeGuidelines.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/355044/MultiAgencyPracticeGuidelines.pdf)

### **Organised abuse**

Organised or multiple abuse may be defined as abuse involving one or more abuser and a number of related or non-related abused children and young people. The abusers concerned may be acting in concert to abuse children, sometimes acting in isolation, or may be using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for abuse.

Organised and multiple abuse occur both as part of a network of abuse across a family or community, and within institutions such as residential homes or schools.

**Note:** Children whose situations do not currently fit the above categories may also be at significant risk of harm. This could include situations where another child in the household has been harmed or the household contains a known abuser.

### **Forced Marriage**

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. It is an appalling and indefensible practice and is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical (including threats, actual physical violence and sexual violence) or emotional and psychological (for example, when someone is made to feel like they're bringing shame on their family). Financial abuse (taking your wages or not giving you any money) can also be a factor.

Whilst it is unlikely that primary aged pupils will be victims of forced marriage they may disclose that older siblings may be at risk of suffering a forced marriage. Staff should report any concerns in the normal way so that the authorities can be made aware of the possibility of this form of abuse. For more information please see: 'Forced marriage' <https://www.gov.uk/forced-marriage>

### **Involvement in gangs**

Involvement in gangs can lead to children and young people to become involved in crime and can mean they become subject to exploitation in a range of ways. Consequently it is important that schools teach children how to be assertive and recognise the dangers of becoming involved in gangs. Identifying children with issues related to negative behaviour and providing mentoring support is highly effective and is preventing problems in the future.

Staff should report any concerns they have about a child's involvement in gangs as soon as possible so that the young person can be offered support and protection.

For more information see: 'Addressing Youth Violence and Gangs' [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/226293/Advice\\_to\\_Schools\\_and\\_Colleges\\_on\\_Gangs.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/226293/Advice_to_Schools_and_Colleges_on_Gangs.pdf)

## **Drug use**

There is a clear drugs policy in place to guide staff what to do in the event of a drug-related incident. Staff should report any drug-related incident in the usual way and the member of staff responsible for drug-related incidents will follow policy guidance

For more information on Drugs Policy and guidance for school staff see: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/270169/drug\\_advice\\_for\\_schools.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/270169/drug_advice_for_schools.pdf)

## **Faith Abuse**

Belief in witchcraft, spirit possession and other forms of the supernatural can lead to children being blamed for bad luck, and subsequently abused. Fear of the supernatural is also known to be used to make children comply with being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation.

Where staff have concerns about a child who may be subject to this form of abuse they should report it in the normal way.

For more information see 'Tackling Child Abuse linked to Faith or Belief' <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-action-plan-to-tackle-child-abuse-linked-to-faith-or-belief>

## **Mental Health Issues**

There are some children who experience mental health issues or have parents/ carers who may have mental health issues. At times these issues may not have been shared explicitly and a child may be vulnerable if the appropriate support is not in place to ensure his/her safety. If staff have concerns related to a parent or carers' mental health or a child's mental health, they should report it to the designated child protection person. In this way plans can be implemented to support all involved through starting a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) with the family and involving support as appropriate

## **Serious 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. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

## **Children missing education**

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

### Definition

The whereabouts of children who are defined as missing are unknown to statutory agencies and include the following: -

- Children in families who are victims of domestic violence who have to go into sudden hiding.
- Children in families who have disappeared without leaving a forwarding address.
- Children in families who have gone on extended leave and have failed to return when due to do so.
- Runaways.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Stepney Park school follow the agreed procedures for unauthorised absence (such as phoning on the first day of absence and reporting to the AWA at the appropriate time) and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future. This includes keeping a register for children who potentially have gone missing in education and children who have taken unauthorised leave abroad.

It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage.

It is recognised that children missing education (CME) are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of abuse, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later on in life.

### **Categories of CME**

**Typical examples of CME referrals from statutory agencies include the following: -**

- Children in families who are victims of domestic violence and have moved into Tower Hamlets.
- Families living in temporary accommodation/ refugees/ etc. in the local area.
- Children who have offered a school place in Tower Hamlets but the family are refusing to admit the child because the offered school is not the preferred school.
- Physical disability or mental health issues, preventing access to education.
- Exclusions from independent schools, academies or free schools in Tower Hamlets.
- Home educated children where the standard of education has been found to be 'unsuitable'.
- Children from the Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities.
- New arrivals from other countries.
- Children who arrive from another LA and have had previous Social Care involvement or who are the subject of a Child Protection Plan.

Staff at Stepney Park follow guidance specifically related to Children missing Education, as set out in the following documents:

- Tower Hamlets Guidance on children missing in education, missing children and the missing children register
- Department for Education: Statutory guidance on Children missing in Education
- Department of Education: Statutory guidance on Keeping children safe in Education

### **School Procedures**

We have an admission register and an attendance register. All pupils are placed on both registers.

We inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be removed from the admission register where the pupil:

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

This should be done as soon as these grounds for removal from the register are met, and in any event no later than removing the pupil's name from the register.

**We inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.**