



St Edmund's Catholic Primary School

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

September 2022

Approved by:	Stella Oladinni	Date: 17 th October 2022
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Ethos of the School

At St Edmund's Catholic School, we are committed to safeguarding children and young people and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment. The school aims to develop an atmosphere in which children feel secure, in which their viewpoints are valued, and in which they are encouraged to talk and listen. Adults in our school take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them. We will always act in the best interest of the child. 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 the school has in the early recognition of the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. We ensure that we make effective and fair use of all the appropriate referral process.

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Staff code of conduct
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Complaints
- Health and safety
- Whistleblowing
- Attendance
- Online safety
- Equality
- Sex and relationship education
- First aid
- Privacy notices
- Tower Hamlets Local Safeguarding Children Board: Procedures for Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff working in Children's

This policy will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident; new legislation or guidance calls for the need for a review.

Safeguarding Statement

St Edmund's Catholic Primary School recognise their moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. The staff and Governing Body will endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where all children and adults are respected and valued. They will make sure that all children and young people have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. The staff and Governing Body are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect. They follow procedures to ensure that children and adults receive effective support, protection and justice and recognise the additional needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, especially around communication. Child protection forms part of the school's safeguarding responsibilities. The school Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is

available in the staff room and on the shared drive and the school website: <http://www.st-edmunds-school.org/website/safeguarding/621931>

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy and Child Protection procedures applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and they have been written in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 and Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership supplementary guidance (THSCP)]. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

1. CORE SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

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

These 6 core principles are embedded within the school's safeguarding arrangements; underpin the school's safeguarding policies, procedures and systems; and pervade the whole school approach to safeguarding at St Edmund's Catholic Primary School.

2. PURPOSE OF POLICY

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

3. SAFEGUARDING LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

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

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (Local maintained schools only)
- Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 (Independent schools only, including academies and Free Schools)

- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (Independent schools only, including academies and Free Schools)
- Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021 (16-19 Academies and Independent Training Providers)
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018 (Updated July 2022)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 (1 September 2022)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Department advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities (May 2014)
- The Teacher Standards 2012

4. TOWER HAMLETS SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP SUPPLEMENTARY SAFEGUARDING GUIDANCE

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

- London Child Protection Procedures revised 7th Edition (London Safeguarding Children Board, March 2022)
- Tower Hamlets SCP Multi-Agency Safeguarding Thresholds Guidance
- Tower Hamlets SCP Supplementary Guidance for Schools and Education Settings on Child Protection Procedures - September 2022
- Tower Hamlets SCP LADO Procedures and Flowchart re Allegations made against staff working in the children's workforce - Information about reporting and managing allegations
- Tower Hamlets SCP Supplementary Guidance for Schools and Education Settings on Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff – September 2022

5. TOWER HAMLETS SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP

The Children Act 2004 as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017 has brought about the establishment of the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership (THSCP). The Partnership coordinates the work of all agencies and ensures that this work is effective in achieving the best outcomes for Tower Hamlets children. The three statutory safeguarding partners have published arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs. More information about the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership can be found on the website: <http://www.childrenandfamiliestrust.co.uk/the-lscb/>

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

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

6. KEY DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is:

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

The phrase 'child protection' refers to the processes followed to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, carers, foster carers, and adoptive parents.

Staff refers to all those who work for the school or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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

In accordance with the statutory requirement for a named member of the Governing Body to take leadership responsibility for safeguarding at the school the Safeguarding Link Governor is **Stella Oladinni**.

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

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

Let's Keep Each Other Safe!



If somebody upsets or hurts you or one of your friends,
or somebody is in danger...**please tell someone.**



We are a **telling** school and we will always **listen.**

				
Mrs Savva-Brown (Headteacher - Designated Safeguarding Lead)	Mr McKenzie (Assistant Headteacher - Deputy Safeguarding Officer)	Mrs Simms (Assistant Headteacher - Deputy Safeguarding Officer)	Mr Ramesar (School Leader – Deputy Safeguarding Officer)	Miss O'Reilly (SENDco – Deputy Safeguarding Officer)
All week	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

Don't forget you also have your Trusted Person to also talk to.

Role at St. Edmund's	Name	Contact
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mrs Savva-Brown (Headteacher)	dsavvabrown2.211@lgflmail.org
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mr McKenzie (Assistant Headteacher - KS2)	Via admin@st- edmunds.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mrs Simms (Assistant Headteacher - EYFS and KS1)	Via admin@st- edmunds.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mr Ramesar (Leadership Team)	Via admin@st- edmunds.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Miss O'Reilly (SENDco and Leadership Team)	Via admin@st- edmunds.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Safeguarding Link Governor	Ms D. Winship	Via admin@st- edmunds.towerhamlets.sch.uk

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. The DSL can also be contacted out of school hours by email. When the DSL is absent, the deputies Mr McKenzi, Mrs Simms, Mr Ramesar and Miss O'Reilly can be contacted. If the DSL and DSL deputies are not available, concerns should be reported to the most senior member of staff on site. During school holidays DSLs should be contacted via phone/email and the headteacher must be notified. If a DSL is not contactable they will set up an automated email informing which DSL is available to contact.

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

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

All staff have a responsibility to report safeguarding concerns immediately to the DSL. Staff report concerns using CPOMS <https://www.cpoms.co.uk/> Designated Safeguarding Leaders are notified and then respond in line with school expectations.

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

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

8. RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

The school upholds the human rights of the child in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998.² It is unlawful for schools to act in a way that is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. Specifically, the school embeds and upholds the following Convention rights of the child across its safeguarding policies and procedures:

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

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

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

St Edmund's is committed to the safeguarding of and promoting welfare of pupils with protected characteristics - including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race. This

² <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights>

can also include taking positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils or students with a particular protected characteristic in order to meet their specific need, this includes a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children, including those with long term conditions. Actions are identified and reflected in the school's Equalities objectives which are reviewed on an annual basis. Interim action is also taken in response to emerging issues where appropriate

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

The school shares the London Borough of Tower Hamlet's commitment to being an anti-racist borough and to tackle and eliminate race discrimination. The council's Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Inequalities Commission (2021) concluded that racism still exists within institutions and structures in the borough and has developed an action plan to achieve race equality at pace.⁴ The action plan recognises that schools have a powerful and significant role in changing narratives and bringing about social change through education. Actions to implement a whole school approach to anti-racism are identified and reflected in the school's Equalities objectives which are reviewed on an annual basis. Interim action is also taken in response to emerging issues where appropriate.

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

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

A Child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- has a mental health need;
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is at risk of so-called honour based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;

³ <https://chscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Child-Q-PUBLISHED-14-March-22.pdf>

⁴ https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lqnl/community_and_living/Inequality-Commission/Black-Asian-and-Minority-Ethnic-Inequalities-Commission.aspx

- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care; and
- is a privately fostered child;
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

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

10. CHILDREN IN NEED OF A SOCIAL WORKER

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

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

A named member of the Safeguarding team will take the lead for any child with a Social Worker and will liaise with other staff as needed and will ensure that suitable pastoral and academic support is in place.

11. CHILDREN REQUIRING MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

All staff have an important role in supporting the mental well-being of children and to identify behaviour that may suggest a child is experiencing mental health problems.⁵ All staff need to recognise that mental health may be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff should be aware of the trauma

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

and mental health impact on a child who has had adverse childhood experiences including abuse, bereavement and separation of parents. Staff should also be aware that the pandemic has had a negative impact on the mental health of many children, some of whom have never previously experienced difficulties with their mental health. However, all staff should be clear that only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health difficulty.

There are some children who experience mental health issues or have parents/ carers who 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 carer's mental health or a child's mental health, they should report it to a DSL. In this way plans can be implemented to support all involved through starting an EHA with the family and involving appropriate external agencies. At St Edmund's School we identify pupils who might need more support to be kept safe or to keep themselves safe by:

1. Regular review and discussion at Vulnerable Children Meetings
2. Discussion as part of SEN review meetings
3. Appropriate resources and additional teaching support identified needs
4. Extra pastoral support for pupils with SEND and disabilities such as social stories, social skills groups and ELSA
5. Training and support for staff working with identified pupils
6. Place2Be 7. CAHMS

The mental health lead at St Edmund's is Ms Laurel John.

12. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND PREVIOUS LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

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

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

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

In particular, we will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads

We have appointed a designated teacher, Mrs Savva-Brown who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with statutory guidance.

The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.

As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

- Work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
- Work with virtual school heads and teachers to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how pupil premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans

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

13. SEND CHILDREN

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

- professionals and other adults making assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities or certain medical conditions being vulnerable to experiencing peer exclusion and isolation and being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying (including prejudice-based bullying), without outwardly showing any signs;
- children not understanding that what is happening to them is abuse; and
- communication barriers when reporting abuse and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

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

Further information on safeguarding SEND children is available in the non-statutory guidance [Safeguarding Disabled Children](#) (2009), but staff should speak with the DSL and SENDCO in the first instance.

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

At St Edmund's we have increasing numbers of children with Special Educational Needs (SEND) or physical health issues. To address these challenges, we have enhanced pastoral support for these children in place, with teams around each child maintaining regular and effective communication about their needs and ongoing progress. Children with SEN and disabilities will have access to a variety of forms of in school mentoring and support which include:

- In class teaching assistant support;
- 1:1 teaching assistant support;
- Support from an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA);
- Place2 Be.
- Health Care Plans and support from the school nurse and Occupational Health.
- Intimate Care Policy procedure.
- Support from outreach services e.g. visual and hearing impaired, Phoenix, BASS
- Provision to ensure that all pupils, regardless of need, can access the 'worry box' in their classroom in one way or another so that they are able to communicate a need/worry/concern if they wish to.

14. CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION AND CHILDREN MISSING

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

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

As part of our Safeguarding Procedures if a child is absent the school will,

- Endeavour to contact the parent or carer and other emergency contacts if no message has been received regarding the reason for the absence to check on the safety of the child.
- Keep a list of persistent absentees and monitor their attendance rigorously.
- Challenge parents of persistent absentees and ask for medical evidence for all absences if attendance falls below 90%
- Remind parents of the importance of good attendance.
- Acknowledge good attendance.
- Contact parents where there are concerns over poor attendance.
- Seek advice or refer to the AWA if we continue to have concerns.

- Invite parents to meetings with the AWA in school.
- Arrange for the school nurse to advise parents on how to improve their child's attendance

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who 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 going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

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

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

15. ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

The school recognises that parents have a legal right to electively home educate their child at home; however, it is expected that the parents' decision to do this is made with their child's best education and best interests at its heart. Staff should be aware that even though most home educated children have a positive experience, this is not the case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

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

16. WHISTLEBLOWING

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

What is whistleblowing?

- Whistleblowing is when someone raises a concern about a dangerous or illegal activity or any wrongdoing within their organisation.

- Raising a concern is known as "blowing the whistle" and is a vital process for identifying risks to people's safety.
- Sharing information or talking through a concern can be the first step to helping an organisation identify problems and improve their practices.

When to call: If you have any concerns about a child in your workplace you should raise this with your employer or organisational safeguarding lead in the first instance.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they should consider other channels available including:

The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line 0800 028 0285 which is free & anonymous, more information can be found at [nspcc.org.uk/whistleblowing](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/whistleblowing).

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

Allegations of harm may indicate that a person who works with children might pose a risk of harm to children if they continue in that role. When an allegation is made against a member of staff including supply staff and volunteers, the school's Managing Allegations Procedures should be followed, and all action taken needs to be in line with KCSIE 2022 Part 4 and THSCP Supplementary Guidance- Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff – September 2022.

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

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

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

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

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

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

LBTH Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): Melanie Benzie

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

Telephone: 0207364 0677

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

18. STAFF TRAINING INCLUDING TRAINING FOR GOVERNORS

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

All staff

All staff members, including long term agency staff will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including on whistle-blowing procedures, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect. This training will be regularly updated and will be in line with advice from the 3 safeguarding partners.

All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings) as required, but at least annually.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable. Day to day agency staff receive a copy of our safeguarding leaflet. Safeguarding Policies and KCSIE 2022 part 1 are communicated to staff by the DSL. To measure learning outcomes at the end of the training sessions staff complete a short assessment. A record of the completed assessment is kept and any staff who are absent will attend training when they return or complete on line training.

The DSL and deputies

The DSL and deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years. In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, DSL forums, half termly meetings

with DSL & deputies in school or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments). They will also undertake Prevent awareness training. Governors All governors receive training about safeguarding, to make sure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities. As the chair of governors may be required to act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, they receive training in managing allegations for this purpose.

19. VISITORS

Visitors are welcome to St Edmund's Catholic Primary School. They make a contribution to the life and work of the school in many different ways. The learning opportunities and experiences they bring are encouraged and appreciated. It is the school's responsibility, however, to ensure that the security and welfare of its pupils is not compromised at any time. The school is equally responsible to the whole school community for ensuring that visitors comply with the guidelines in our Visitor Policy and Visiting Speaker Agreement. Permission should be granted by the Headteacher or member of the SLT before any visitor is asked to come into school. The Headteacher and/or members of the Senior Leadership Team should be given a clear explanation as to the relevance and purpose of the visit and intended date and time for the visit.

All visitors must walk straight to the reception and must not enter the school via any other entrance.

- At reception, all visitors must state the purpose of their visit and who has invited them. They should be ready to produce formal identification where appropriate.
- All visitors will be asked to sign in, in the signing in book, then all visitors will be asked to read and sign a visitors leaflet with a copy kept on file.
- All visitors will be required to wear an identification label/ ID given to them by a member of the admin team.
- Visitors will then be escorted to the point of contact or their point of contact will be asked to come to reception to receive the visitor. The contact will then be responsible for them while they are on site.
- At no point should a visitor be left on their own with children (if the visitor is meeting a member of staff).
- In the event of a fire alarm/drill, the visitor should be accompanied to the assembly point in the playground.
- On departing the school, visitors should leave via reception, sign out using the signing n book and return their identification label/ visitor ID to reception.

All External Agencies and Speakers must read the Visiting speakers agreement. Our school will assess the suitability and effectiveness of input from external agencies or individuals to ensure that:

- Any messages communicated to students support fundamental British Values and our school values.
- Any messages communicated to students are consistent with the ethos of the school and do not marginalise any communities, groups or individuals

- Any messages communicated to students do not seek to glorify criminal activity or violent extremism or seek to radicalise students through extreme or narrow views of faith, religion or culture or other ideologies
- Activities are properly embedded in the curriculum and clearly mapped to schemes of work to avoid contradictory messages or duplication.

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

20. EXTENDED SCHOOL AND OFF-SITE ARRANGEMENTS

Extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment and the school's child protection policy and procedures apply. When pupils attend off site activities, including day and residential visits and work-related activities, risk assessments and safeguarding recruitment arrangements will be requested. When pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related activities, the school will undertake checks ahead of the visit to ensure they have the correct procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures and if applicable the Childcare Disqualification 2018 Regulations

Where services or activities are provided separately by another organisation, the school will seek assurance that the organisation has effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place. The school will ensure that all safeguarding requirements are set out clearly in the lease or hire agreement with the organisation, as a condition of use and occupation of the school premises; and that failure to comply would lead to the termination of the agreement.

21. IDENTIFYING ABUSE

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

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

22. INDICATORS OF ABUSE

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

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

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

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

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

23. VOICE OF THE CHILD

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

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

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

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

At St Edmund's the staff are aware of the importance of the child's voice.

- Staff will take children's disclosures and concerns seriously and refer to the DSL and safeguarding team using CPOMs with reference to school safeguarding procedures.
- Children are encouraged to share feelings/disclosures with trusted members of staff and the safeguarding team.
- Posters around the school identify the members safeguarding team for staff and children alike.
- Children are made aware of the school's Place2Be services, including self-referral through Place2Talk.
- The Place2Be Manager regularly visits classes to encourage them to use the service
- Mental wellbeing, healthy relationships and staying safe online are embedded into PSHE/Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education curriculum.
- Class circle time provides opportunities for children to voice any concerns

24. SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

25. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a

child into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Apart from age other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, include gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

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

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

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

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

The RSE curriculum will be used to ensure that children have age appropriate understanding of risks.

For further information staff can read the [Home Office Statutory Guidance](#) on Child Sexual Exploitation as well as speaking to the DSL.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office and The Children's Society [County Lines Toolkit For Professionals](#).

[N.B. Primary schools should be alert to the increase vulnerability of children under 10 years old being exploited because they are under the age of criminal responsibility]

27. SERIOUS YOUTH VIOLENCE

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

28. ONLINE HARMS

Children should have the right to explore the digital environment but also the right to be safe when on it. However, technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm, and the use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues.

Examples of which include child sexual exploitation; child criminal exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation/grooming; and forms of child-on-child abuse.

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

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

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

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

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

When there are concerns about a child in this area, staff should notify the DSL, who will consider referring the child into the Cyber Choices programme (cyberchoices.uk), which provides early intervention where children are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

The school has a robust filtering system in place, both at a school and service provider level. The school uses the London Grid for Learning. This has several layers of filtering: There is a global list of filtered sites that is determined by the Internet Watch Foundation, followed by a pan-London layer, also in compliance with the Internet Watch Foundation, applied across the capital by Atomwide.

There is a school layer. This gives the school the ability to request that specific URLs should be blocked (or unblocked), or to add key words to the prescribed list.

Suitable filtering is in place to ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in schools. It is also important that schools teach pupils about online safety more generally.

The school has the right to amend its filtering settings. The Connetix technician has the necessary access rights, and they also receive training from LGFL and Atomwide. The school chooses to share its access rights with the SBS / LA and seeks appropriate support in applying bespoke filtering policies.

The LGFL website has documents to explain these policies and processes in detail under the Support tab on their website www.lgfl.net. Pupils are required to log in using individual USOs (Unified Sign Ons) so that it is possible to track their personal online activity. Further levels of security can be added with other LGFL services such as Webscreen2 and MailProtect.

Clear policy and procedures are in place to ensure that Online Remote Learning is safe for both staff and pupils as and when it is done. These are shared with children and parents.

School is committed to ensuring that Online Safety is a running and interrelated theme throughout its safeguarding arrangements including policy and procedure, the curriculum, staff training and induction, the role of the DSL, and parental engagement. School is committed to ensuring that Online Safety is a running and interrelated theme throughout its safeguarding arrangements including policy and procedure, the curriculum, staff training and induction, the role of the DSL, and parental engagement. As part of a whole school approach the school is committed to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to be empowered and upskilled in keeping children safe online through the sharing of Online Safety information, advice and guidance including the offer of workshops to support parents for example in installing safeguards on to their children's digital devices.

The school has a clear Online Safety policy. The school enforces an Acceptable Use Policy, which includes provisions such as preventing access to private email on the network, ensuring web connected computers are in public areas, and monitoring browsing history. There is also, as always, a need to ensure that everyone knows what to do should they become concerned about something they find, or contact they receive, online.

The use of mobile phones is only allowed in designated areas and never when children are present. Children in Y6, who travel to and from school by themselves, are allowed to bring mobile phones to school but must sign a mobile phone agreement and hand the phone in at the beginning of the day. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Online Safety policy and Acceptable Use Policy. Online Safety is kept under constant review and the policy and procedures updated and developed in response to any new of emerging threats.

Staff should report Online Safety concerns about pupils to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as with all other safeguarding concerns. When it comes to the safety and well-being of the child, the response to the risks and harms that children may experience in the online or digital environment should be no different than the offline, face to face world. For most children there is little distinction between the online and face to face interactions as the two environments often intersect with one another in their daily lives. Staff should recognise that children's experience of abuse in the digital environment may be even more pronounced, where the identity of the abuser is unknown and the abuse can continue 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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

29. DOMESTIC ABUSE

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse recognises that domestic abuse may occur in different types of relationships, including ex-partners and family members and is not restricted to the family home. According to the definition the person perpetrating the abuse and the person to whom the abusive behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and be "personally connected". Domestic Abuse may involve a range of abusive behaviours, which may be a single incident or a pattern of abuse, including physical, sexual, emotional and economic abuse, and coercive and controlling behaviour.

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

The school has signed up to the Metropolitan Police's Operation Encompass project. Operation Encompass ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, and where there are children in the household, the police will notify the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead before the child arrives at school the following day, so that the school can provide 'silent support' to the child.

30. SO-CALLED HONOUR-BASED ABUSE

So-called 'honour'-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving 'honour' often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. All forms of so-called Honour Based Abuse are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of Honoured Based Abuse, or already having suffered Honour Based Abuse.

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

Female Genital Mutilation

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

[HM Government Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance on FGM](#), Updated 30th July 2020.

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

The duty on teachers to report to the police does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures and report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If in doubt, staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Forced Marriage

In England and Wales, the practice of Forced Marriage is a criminal offence under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

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

See also the Forced Marriage Unit's Statutory Guidance and Multi Agency Guidelines [The Right to Choose](#) Updated June 2022.

Virginity Testing and Hymenoplasty

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

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

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

31. RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM

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

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

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

The Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, explains schools' duties under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism. Paragraphs 57-76 pertain to schools. As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, schools have a duty to 'prevent people being drawn into terrorism'. This has become known as the 'Prevent Duty'.

Staff training will cover awareness of risks related to Islamism and the Far Right.

We complete and review regularly a Prevent Risk Assessment, and Prevent checklists are shared with staff. We ensure that there are staff training opportunities and relevant parts in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and how the school promotes fundamental British Values as part of SMCS (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education). School to reference Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism. Paragraphs 57-76 pertain to schools. There is specific statutory guidance for further education colleges.]

In LBTH the Prevent Education Officer is Eleanor Knight
Eleanor.Knight@towerhamlets.gov.uk.

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

32. CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE

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

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

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

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

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

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- physical abuse such as biting, hitting, kicking or hair pulling
- sexually harmful behaviour and sexual abuse including inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault or rape

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

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

Although a child identifying as LGBTQ+ is not in itself a safeguarding concern, such children may be more vulnerable to forms of child-on-child abuse. This includes children who are perceived to be LGBTQ+ even though they do not identify as such. The school is committed to providing a safe space for LGBTQ+ children to share any concerns they may have and in ensuring an inclusive culture is maintained.

At St Edmund’s School we seek to minimise the risk of child on child abuse through the implementation of our curriculum and associated policies: Our policy on the prevention and management of bullying acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. Our Relationships and Health Policy/PSHE Scheme outline how the school prepares the children for age appropriate relationships and physical contact. See the curriculum section on the school’s website where information about the TEN: TEN programme can be found. This shows the coverage and units being taught across the school. In particular, at St Edmund’s our relentless focus on our school core values, strives to enable children to be respectful of one another and to be responsible for their ‘positive’ impact upon one another in a safe way. We are clear however that abuse is abuse, it could happen here, but if it does, it will not be tolerated. As staff we must remain objective to the facts and we must avoid passing incidences off as ‘banter’ or ‘part of growing up’.

Part of our duty for safeguarding is also teaching the children appropriate behaviours/language to avoid safeguarding matters escalating for them.

If a report of peer on peer abuse is reported, it will be immediately investigated, and other agencies such as the police or MASH contacted if appropriate. Any concerns about child

on child abuse must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately, who will comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 2 (2022).

Each report will be considered on a case by case basis and is likely to result in one or more of the following:

- Internal management in line with behaviour and bullying policies, with follow on pastoral support;
- A referral for Early help services;
- A referral to children's social care;
- In partnership with children's social care, a referral to the police.

Clear records will be kept on CPOMS and written risk assessments recorded and shared with appropriate staff/partners. We recognise that both the victim and the perpetrator will require follow on support. The perpetrator more than likely will have unmet needs. Risk assessment will need to be undertaken to minimise further risk to others as well as harm to the perpetrator themselves. Partnership with agencies outlined above will be essential in guiding our response to each individual case. Details of the ongoing response and support for victims and perpetrators will be clearly recorded on CPOMS and the impact monitored closely.

33. CHILD-ON-CHILD SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

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

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

In response to reports of child-on-child abuse school will reassure all victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor will a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. As part of the reassurance to children, it will be made clear to children that the law is in place to protect them from abuse rather than to criminalise them.

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

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- challenging inappropriate behaviours;
- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting upskirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours will help to normalise them.

Sexual violence offences are defined under the Sexual Offences Act 2003

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

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

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

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

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

All Staff need to be aware of the following:

- children under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity;
- the age of consent is 16

- sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

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

Sexual Harassment

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

Sexual Harassment may include the following:

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

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

Harmful Sexual Behaviours

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. School recognises that Harmful Sexual Behaviours can, in some cases, progress on a continuum. It is therefore important for all staff to address inappropriate behaviours to help prevent

problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. Children displaying harmful sexual behaviours have often experienced their own abuse and trauma.

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

Any concerns about sexual violence and sexual harassment must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately, who will comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 5 (2022).

Each report will be considered on a case by case basis and is likely to result in one or more of the following:

- Internal management in line with behaviour and bullying policies, with follow on pastoral support;
- A referral for Early help services;
- A referral to children's social care;
- In partnership with children's social care, a referral to the police.

Clear records will be kept on CPOMS and written risk assessments recorded and shared with appropriate staff/partners. We recognise that both the victim and the perpetrator will require follow on support. The perpetrator more than likely will have unmet needs. Risk assessment will need to be undertaken to minimise further risk to others as well as harm to the perpetrator themselves. Partnership with agencies outlined above will be essential in guiding our response to each individual case. Details of the ongoing response and support for victims and perpetrators will be clearly recorded on CPOMS and the impact monitored closely

34. YOUTH PRODUCED SEXUAL IMAGERY

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

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

Incidents may also occur where:

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

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

When handling reports of Youth Produced Sexual Imagery, **staff must be aware that it is illegal for staff to view or share such imagery**. Staff should immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will act in accordance with non-statutory guidance, [Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes. Advice for Education Settings working with Children and Young People 2020](#).

In partnership with you, the Designated Safeguarding leads will decide what further action to take which may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Discussions with alleged victim and perpetrator to understand the extent of the harm;
- Discussions with the alleged victim and perpetrators parents regarding the extent of the harm and a support plan to respond;
- The use of restorative practices to enable children to fully learn about and understand the extent of the harm that has been committed and to empower them to take responsibility for their actions;
- A support plan may include a referral to Place2Be/ ELSA
- Discussions with the Early Help Hub may be sought to determine what support could be sought by both the alleged victim and perpetrator. This is likely to be appropriate if the 37 Child Protection Policy September 2022 abuse may have stemmed from a lack of structured time outside of school.
- If it is suspected that a device may contain inappropriate images the school will follow the DfE's guidance on 'Searching, screening and confiscation, January 2018' to seize the evidence. If there is evidence of producing or sharing sexual imagery, social care and the police will be informed immediately.

35. BULLYING (INCLUDING CYBERBULLYING)

Bullying is a very serious issue that can cause anxiety and distress. All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through the school's Anti-Bullying Policy/Pupil Behaviour Policy/Child-on-child abuse Policy.

Staff should have read, be familiar with and follow the school's anti-bullying policy and procedures, which includes the procedures to be followed when responding to incidents of Bullying/Cyberbullying.

36. HOMELESSNESS

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

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

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. However, it is also recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Local authority children's social care will be the lead agency for these children and should be contacted in the first instance.

37. CHILDREN AND THE COURT SYSTEM

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

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

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

38. CHILDREN WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN PRISON

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

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

39. PRIVATE FOSTERING

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

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

40. YOUNG CARERS

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

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

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

It is estimated by the Children's Society that 1 in 5 children are young carers and many are hidden and unidentified. School recognises that young carers have the right to an assessment by the Local Authority to identify needs and support and the person they are caring for can have a reassessment of their needs.

The DSL will follow the LBTH guidance for schools, 'Young Carers in School: A guide for education practitioners to identify and support young carers in schools' (2020) and refer to the Young Carers program accordingly: Young.Carers@towerhamlets.gov.uk

41. CHILD ABDUCTION AND COMMUNITY SAFETY INCIDENTS

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

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

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

42. MODERN SLAVERY

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

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

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

43. TAKING SAFEGUARDING ACTION

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

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

44. EARLY HELP

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

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

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

At St Edmund’s, we are able to offer support to families via our Place2Be. In addition to this, we also work with Tower Hamlets Early Help and can refer families there for extra

support. The Tower Hamlets Early Help Strategy recognises the important role schools have in identifying children and families who are at risk of poor outcomes without early intervention. All staff need to recognise that all children may benefit from Early Help at any point in their childhood, but some children may benefit from Early Help more than others. These are children with known vulnerabilities, which are listed on page 9 of this policy. At St Edmund's DSLs hold half termly meetings to discuss and review vulnerable children. Extra pastoral support for SEND/vulnerable pupils is given such as social stories, social skills groups, Place2Be and ELSA. All pupils in Year 1 –Year 6 can self refer to Place2Talk. We also support families via our Attendance and Welfare Advisor (AWA). We use Early Help Assessments (EHA) to help coordinate with other agencies and EHA reviews, and we also have Team Around the Child/Family (TAC/ TAF) meetings when there is a multi-agency approach. We refer to Children's Social Care if the threshold has been met.

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

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

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

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

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

Child Protection Advice Line
020 7364 3444

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

45. HANDLING THE REPORTING OR SHARING OF CONCERNS

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to safeguard the children at St. Edmund's and carry out their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse or neglect. You're more likely to identify abuse from behavioural and/or physical signs, than from a disclosure. It is therefore important to report any concerns to the designated/Deputy Safeguarding Leads.

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

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief;
- Accept what is being said;

- Allow the child to talk freely;
- Reassure the child, but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep;
- Not promise confidentiality – it might be necessary to refer to Children’s Services: Safeguarding and Specialist Services;
- Reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault;
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell;
- Listen, without prompting or asking the child leading questions. However, it is important for the welfare of the child that the adult seeks further clarification if necessary, using TED. T – tell me, E- explain to me, D – describe to me
- Not criticise the alleged perpetrator;
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told;
- The adult should as soon as possible record the conversation on CPOMs and alert the DSL group, but also verbally tell a DSL you have recorded a concern on CPOMS.;
- Or the adult should make a written record of their conversation and pass on to the Designated/Deputy Safeguarding Lead or designated member of staff on an offsite visit.
- When writing up your concern think who, what, where and when
- If a pupil should divulge to any member of staff an incident that raises concern, or the member of staff has visually noted suspicious bruising/marks to the body, the adult should record their concerns on CPOMs or using the school recording forms and should specify where the injury is and the child/adult's account of how it happened;
- Pass the information to the Designated/Deputy Safeguarding Lead immediately. The completed recording sheet must be given (**not left on a desk**) to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately so they are able to take further action if required. If not on site it should be passed to one of the other named child protection coordinators;
- In the absence of the Designated/Deputy Safeguarding Lead Officers the form should be returned to the most senior member of staff on site.

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

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

Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

During their conversations with the pupils, staff will:

- allow the child to speak freely
- remain calm
- allow silences
- refrain from asking leading questions

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

St Edmund's approach to working with parents/carers is one of transparency and honesty and the school's responsibility is to safeguard and promote the welfare of all the pupils in its care. The school aims to do this in partnership with its parents/carers. In most cases parents and carers will be informed when concerns are raised about the safety and welfare of their child. Parents and carers should be given the opportunity to address any concerns raised. Parents and carers will be informed if a referral is to be made to an external agency as they will be asked to give consent. Parents/carers will not be informed if it is believed that by doing so would put the child at risk. In such cases the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads will seek advice from the Borough's Children's Social Care team before doing so. In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents of all the children involved.

46. CONFIDENTIALITY AND SHARING INFORMATION

Staff should never assume a colleague or another professional will take safeguarding action through the sharing of information that might be critical in keeping children safe. Staff should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. Serious Case Reviews have highlighted failures in safeguarding systems in which people did not share information at the earliest opportunity or did not share at all. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to their Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy.

Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

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

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

The DSL will have due regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to ensure that personal information is processed fairly and lawfully and they will adhere to the seven golden rules for sharing information. Information sharing will take place in a timely and secure manner.

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

We share with consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. Staff should go ahead and

share information without consent if, in their judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest, or where a child is at risk of significant harm. Staff will need to base their judgement on the facts of the case. All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing or on CPOMs. If staff are in any doubt about whether to record something, they should discuss it with the DSL. Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision to share has been taken. Child protection information will be stored securely separate from the pupil's school file. Child protection information is stored and handled in line with the school's Retention and Destruction Policy.

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

47. REFERRING TO CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

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

LBTH Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub:

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

Child Protection Advice Line:

020 7364 3444

The DSL will contact CPAL/MASH in the first instance to seek advice and guidance. When the DSL completes a MASH referral form and sends it securely to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, the referral form will be accurate and sufficiently detailed to enable the MASH Assessment and Intervention Team to make a decision on the level of statutory response required in accordance [with the LBTH Thresholds Guidance](#).

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

48. ESCALATION PROCEDURES

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

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

**Appendix 1: Referral flowchart – St Edmund's
TBC**



Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 020 7364 3444 / 5601 / 5606

If there is a concern about the welfare of a child or young person and you would like to talk it through, then you should contact the Tower Hamlets Children and Culture Directorate's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

The Duty Officer will be able to discuss the concern, assist in deciding whether a formal child protection referral is appropriate and facilitate the reporting of a formal child protection referral in accordance with Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership (THSCP) Procedures and to offer advice.

When there is a specific concern of a child protection nature whereby it is thought that a child has been harmed or at risk of being harmed then the LBTH Inter-Agency Referral Form should be completed in the first instance. The MASH should then be contacted on 0207 364 3444 / 5601 / 5606 to discuss the matter and the completed Inter-Agency Referral Form then emailed/faxed through.

The MASH operates between 9.00am and 5.00pm except at weekends and on public holidays. If the concern arises outside of the hours operated by the MASH and it is believed the child may be at immediate risk the Children's Social Care Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team or the Police should be contacted without delay.

Important Contact Information

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) email Note – information should only be emailed following prior discussion with the Duty Officer.	MASH@towerhamlets.gov.uk
Children's Social Care Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team (5.00pm onwards)	020 7364 5006 – choose Option 3
Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT)	020- 8217 6484 (or use 999 if not available)

Appendix 3: MASH Interagency Referral Form

INTER-AGENCY REFERRAL FORM

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

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

A. CHILD/ YOUNG PERSON

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

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

B. CHILD/YOUNG PERSON'S PRINCIPAL CARERS

FULL NAME	DOB If known	Relationship to child	Ethnicity code	Parental responsibility

First language of carers: Is an interpreter or signer required: Y / N

C. OTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

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

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

FULL NAME	Relationship to child/young person	Address	Tel No

Referrals will be shared with the family and should not be made without their knowledge/agreement unless this would jeopardise the child/young person's safety

	Y / N	If no, state reason
The child/young person knows about the referral		

The parent/carer knows about the referral		
The parent/carer has given consent to the referral.		

F. INFORMATION ON STATUTORY STATUS

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

G. KEY AGENCIES INVOLVED

Insert name of professional if involved	Tel	Insert Name of professional if involved	Tel
H.V.		G.P.	
Nursery		EWO	
School		Police	
YOT		Dentist	
Community mental health		Community Paediatrician	
School Nurse		Midwife	
Hospital Consultant		Other	

H. INFORMATION SUPPORTING THIS REFERRAL

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

REASON FOR REFERRAL/REQUEST FOR SERVICES

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

--

Scale how safe you think the child is:

With 0 being I am certain the abuse will happen again if something is n't done immediately and 10 being the case needs action but I don't think the child is in immediate danger, what rating would you give?

Comments on Score: Please tell us how you reached this score.

What existing safety is there for the child(ren) – are there safe people around the child?

What are you most worried will happen to the child(ren) if the situation doesn't change?

What convinced you to take action now and contact us?

Have you done anything to address this problem (apart from making this referral)? For example has your agency used a CAF or a TAC to focus professional efforts on addressing the concerns? Has the Social Inclusion Panel been consulted for support?

What do you see as the cause of the problem?

What do you expect to happen as a result of this notification?

I. DETAILS OF REFERRER AND SOCIAL WORKER TAKING REFERRAL

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

Name of social worker taking referral			
Team		Date	

Social work context scale (for social worker to complete):

On a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 being this is the worst case that the agency has ever worked with and 10 indicates that this is a case the agency would take no further action with, where would you rate yourself?

Appendix 4: Allegations of abuse made against staff

Appendix 4:

Allegations of abuse made against staff This section of this policy applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children It applies regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place in the school. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching and historical allegations of abuse will be referred to the police. We will deal with any allegation of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation. Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement. Suspension will not be the default position and will

only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative. Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children
- Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted
- Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school or other work for the local authority or diocese. Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations
- Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive
- False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)
- Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

Procedure for dealing with allegations In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the headteacher (or chair of governors where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation) – the ‘case manager’ – will take the following steps:

- Immediately discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children’s social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police before consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence.

In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)

- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children’s social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children’s social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children’s social care services, as appropriate
- If immediate suspension is considered necessary, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be

provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details

- If it is decided that no further action is to be taken in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation
- If it is decided that further action is needed, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate e.g. trade union representatives, or a colleague
- Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing.

Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice

- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case and the outcome, where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process (in confidence)
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child. If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency. Where the police are involved, wherever possible the governing body will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

Timescales

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious will be resolved within 1 week
 - If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, we will institute appropriate action within 3 working days
 - If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, we will hold this within 15 working days
- Specific actions
- Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution
- The case manager will discuss with the local authority's designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.
- Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated
- If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the case manager and the school's personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required. If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the case manager and personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.
- Individuals returning to work after suspension
- If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual

who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this. The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school. Unsubstantiated or malicious allegations If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the headteacher, or other appropriate person in the case of an allegation against the headteacher, will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the pupil(s) who made it, or whether the police should be asked to consider whether action against those who made the allegation might be appropriate, even if they are not a pupil. Confidentiality The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. The case manager will take advice from the local authority's designated officer, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
 - How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality
 - What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
 - How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises
- Record-keeping The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case.

Such records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
 - Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
 - Notes of any action taken and decisions reached (and justification for these, as stated above)
- If an allegation or concern is not found to have been malicious, the school will retain the records of the case on the individual's confidential personnel file, and provide a copy to the individual. Where records contain information about allegations of sexual abuse, we will preserve these for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry. We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer. The records of any allegation that is found to be malicious will be deleted from the individual's personnel file. References When providing employer references, we will not refer to any allegation that has been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any history of allegations where all such allegations have been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious.

Learning lessons After any cases where the allegations are substantiated, we will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future. This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
- The duration of the suspension
- Whether or not the suspension was justified
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual