

# Safeguarding Policy

## Introduction

The policy has been developed in accordance with the principles outlined in the Children Act 1989; the Children Act 2004; and in line with the following government legislation.

- 'Keeping Children Safe in Education: information for all school and college staff', July 2015, Department of Education with updates 2016
- 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2013 and 2015 with updates 2017

This policy is to be read in conjunction with:

- London Child Protection Procedures (5<sup>th</sup> edition, 2013) <http://www.londoncp.co.uk>
- Tower Hamlets Local Safeguarding Children Board: Child Protection Procedures for Staff Working in Children's, Schools and Family Settings
- Tower Hamlets Local Safeguarding Children Board: Procedures for Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff working in Children's, Schools and Family settings
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

Please refer to the school website for up to date emergency contacts and contact details for relevant professionals and agencies.

Stephen Hawking School follows the procedures outlined by the Tower Hamlets Local Safeguarding Children's Board – a guide to procedure and practice for all professional staff in Tower Hamlets who work with children.

## Legal Requirements

The Governing Body takes seriously its responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard<sup>1</sup> and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm.

The school will provide a safe, caring, positive and stimulating environment that promotes the educational, social, physical, psychological and moral development of the individual child.

Legal requirements will be referenced throughout this document.

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<sup>1</sup> Safeguarding is taken to mean " All agencies working with children, young people and their families take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risk of harm to children's welfare are minimised" and "where there are concerns about children and young people's welfare, all agencies take all appropriate actions to address those concerns, working to agree local policies and procedures in full partnership with other agencies"

## **Aims and Objectives**

- To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and resilience.
- To ensure all teaching, non-teaching staff and volunteers understand and put into practice the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities and duty in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm.
- To acknowledge the need for effective and appropriate communication between members of staff in relation to safeguarding pupils.
- To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- To develop effective working relationships with other agencies, involved in safeguarding children.
- To ensure that all adults within the school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability. This includes other community users of the school facilities.

## **Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead**

- Ensure that Tower Hamlets Local Safeguarding Children's Board's procedures are followed in the school.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of these procedures.
- Ensure that the headteacher is kept informed of any concerns.
- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with other agencies and services.
- Decide whether to take further action about specific concerns (e.g. refer to social services).
- Liaise with children's social care over suspected cases of child abuse.
- Ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept in a secure place and marked 'Strictly Confidential'.
- Submit reports to (and attend as necessary) Child Protection Conferences.
- Ensure that the school identifies children and families in need of 'Early Help'.

- Ensure that the school effectively monitors children who have been identified as 'at risk'.
- Provide guidance to parents/carers, children and staff on obtaining suitable support.
- Ensure that any pupil currently on the child protection register who is absent without explanation is referred to Social Services.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks**

- All staff working in school that have unsupervised access to children and young people must be subject to DBS checks. All volunteers who have unsupervised access with other people's children must also be subject to a DBS. Checks can be arranged via the school's Business Manager.
- The school must obtain a certificate for an enhanced DBS check with a barred list of information for all staff and volunteers engaging in regulated activity.
- The school must obtain a separate barred list check of an individual who will start work in a regulated activity before the DBS is available.
- The school must check that a candidate to be employed as a teacher is not subject to a prohibition order.
- All staff and volunteers must be checked before having unsupervised access with children.

### **Single Central Register**

The school will keep a central record, referred to as the register, which will cover:

- All staff (including supply staff) that work at the school.
- All others, who work in regular contact with children and the school, including volunteers.

The register will record if the following checks have been carried out and certificates obtained and the date on which the checks were completed.

- An identity check
- A barred list check (also known as list 99)
- An enhanced DBS check
- A prohibition from teaching check
- Further checks on people living or working outside the UK

- A check of professional qualifications, and
- A check to establish the person's right to work in the UK

### **Adopting Safe Recruitment Procedures**

All staff and volunteers at Stephen Hawking School are subject to the full range of pre-employment checks.

Safe recruitment procedures apply to all staff and volunteers who have regular contact with children in the course of their duties. All applicants will complete a written application form, which asks for information on past convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings as well as any pending cases and if they have a prohibition order, or an interim prohibition order.

As part of the recruitment procedures all staff will be:

- Interviewed
- Asked for a full employment history
- Asked to provide two references
- Asked to provide proof of identification from current photographic ID
- Asked to provide evidence of qualifications
- Asked to provide proof of address
- Asked to verify their physical and mental fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Asked to verify their right to work in the UK

Failure to provide any of the above will result in an offer of employment being withdrawn.

### **Induction and Training for Staff and Volunteers**

All staff and volunteers are given a copy of the Safeguarding Children Policy and are given details of the school's induction procedures and training plans for the coming academic year. All staff are required to participate in training courses on Safeguarding Children.

Staff are provided with a briefing on health and safety procedures as part of their induction. Staff should, based on their induction training, be able to recognise signs of abuse and know the appropriate reporting system for this.

## **Code of Behaviour**

The school has a written code of conduct for staff. This code, agreed by all staff, is in the staff handbook, induction packs and in appendix 1. It is also displayed in classrooms and is issued to all visitors, volunteers and new members of staff.

## **Boundaries and Touch**

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

## **Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras**

The use of mobile phones for taking pictures or video footage of children is not permitted within school or on school/educational visits. School devices such as cameras and iPads can be used to take photographs for school use but must not be removed from the school premises without the express permission of a member of the senior management team.

## **General Supervision**

General supervision needs to take into account the nature of the activity and the needs of the children involved:

- Always ensure that there is an adequate child/staff ratio, for instance there are enough adults to run activities safely.
- Health and Safety procedures must be adhered to and equipment checked on a regular basis.
- Children's medical needs must be met at all times, for instance children with airway maintenance needs.
- It is important to keep a check on visitors and guests whether their visit is by invitation or unsolicited.
- Written consent is given by parents/carers to take children offsite as part of all children's admission arrangements.

## What To Do If You Have A Concern

Children who attend Stephen Hawking School may not always be able to tell a trusted adult if they are harmed, therefore, staff need to be vigilant in noticing changes in behaviour, marks and injuries. The staff at Stephen Hawking School, with their depth of knowledge of the children in their care, are at the front line of detecting harm or the likelihood of harm to children. Pupils attending Stephen Hawking School and some other children with disabilities are at an increased risk of sexual abuse due to the many people involved in their care and their inability to disclose their abuse. Paedophiles know that children with learning difficulties are less able to verbally disclose and are less likely to be able to give evidence, so they may, therefore, be targeted for abuse. Neglect of a child with learning difficulties and disabilities may have more severe consequences than for a non-disabled child due to their dependency and complex needs. Staff at the school can interpret what is normal and abnormal behaviour, which may be an indication of the child's distress or abuse suffered.

All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from 'early help'.

Staff should discuss 'early help' requirements with the designated safeguarding lead who will set up an inter-agency assessment, sometimes acting as lead professional. 'Early help' should always be kept under review and may be referred to Social Care if no improvement is evident. 'Early help' should be offered to families where there is concern that children are at risk of harm, but have not yet reached the threshold for child protection.

All staff and volunteers have a legal duty to inform the designated safeguarding lead of any concerns. If at any point there is a risk of immediate harm to a child, a referral should be made, in the presence of the designated safeguarding lead or deputy, to children's social care and/or the police. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the staff member with concerns should press for reconsideration.

It is not the responsibility of school staff to investigate suspected harm.

The school has, in common with many other schools, purchased CPOMS, a leading online safeguarding and child protection system, to further improve the school's procedures and make it easier for staff to raise concerns.

A member of staff should use CPOMS to provide full details of their concern. The designated safeguarding lead will be automatically informed of the concern.

The designated safeguarding lead will take one or more of the following courses of action:

- contact the duty social worker.
- where there is one, contact the social worker allocated to the child.

- following discussion with a social worker the member of staff should contact the parents/carers. Support and advice from the social worker will need to be sought before contacting parents/carers.
- share the concern/information with the school nurse.

These matters are confidential. They will only be shared with others on a 'need to know' basis. Staff directly involved will be updated on progress and action as and when necessary.

The school must act in line with current procedures, referring matters to Social Care for investigation and working co-operatively with all agencies to protect the child concerned.

Copies of Working Together and the Local Authority policy and guidelines are kept in the staff library and the offices of the headteacher and the school nurse.

### **Guidance on how to respond to a child or adult disclosing abuse**

Do:

- treat any allegations extremely seriously and act at all times towards the child/adult as if you believe what they are saying.
- tell the child/adult they are right to tell you.
- reassure them that they are not to blame.
- be honest about your own position, who you have to tell and why.
- tell the child/adult what you are doing and when, and keep them up to date with what is happening.
- take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse – tell your nominated person immediately.
- write down everything said and what was done.

Don't:

- make promises you can't keep.
- interrogate the child/adult – it is not your job to carry out an investigation – this is for the police and social services.
- cast doubt on what the child/adult has told you, don't interrupt or change the subject.
- say anything that makes the child/adult feel responsible for the abuse.

- discuss with other staff other than the designated safeguarding lead, to ensure confidentiality and if staff are suspected, not to ruin any subsequent investigation.
- do nothing – make sure you tell the designated safeguarding lead immediately – they will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advice.

## **Reporting Procedures**

If at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child or children, a referral should be made to children's social care, social services and the police immediately. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the concerned person must press for reconsideration.

It is vitally important that any disclosure made in confidence is recorded factually as soon as possible; this is whether or not the matter is taken to another authority.

An accurate account should be made of:

- the date and time of what has occurred and the time the disclosure was made.
- The names of people who were involved.
- What was said or done by whom.
- Any action taken to gather information.
- Any further action, for instance, the suspension of a worker or volunteer.
- the reasons (where relevant) why there is no referral to a statutory agency.
- The names of the person reporting and to whom the matter was reported.

When the information above has been gathered, the designated safeguarding lead, will then use the appropriate reporting systems for the situation. These may be reporting the matter to Children's Social Care or the police. Recording all information impartially and accurately is vital as it could be used as evidence.

## **Allegations against staff**

See Whistle Blowing Procedure (Appendix 2).

## **Safe Environment**

The school has a responsibility to ensure that children and staff are in a safe and suitable environment. This is established via the school's health and safety policy, which can be found on the school's website.



## **Designated Safeguarding Lead**

The deputy headteacher is the school's designated safeguarding lead. The designated safeguarding lead and the headteacher are responsible for overseeing Safeguarding Children issues. They will undertake training to keep updated on Safeguarding Children issues and be the first point of contact for advice and support if a Safeguarding Children issue is to arise. They have knowledge of reporting procedures for incidents should they occur. In addition, they will provide the training, via the school's training schedule for all school staff.

## **Bullying and challenging behaviour**

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time. Whilst it may be argued that few children with profound and multiple learning difficulties could be able to take part in bullying, it is important that all staff provide a clear example of respectful and appropriate behaviour. Children should be encouraged to develop positive social skills, addressing any unkindness between pupils clearly and sensitively.

It is more likely in the school that a pupil's communication difficulties and related challenging behaviour may impact on the day-to-day safety of his/her classmates.

In these circumstances it is essential that the guidelines provided in the school's Behaviour Policy are followed and there is thorough recording and monitoring of all incidents involving other pupils.

In extreme circumstances where all support systems have failed, a pupil's placement at our school may no longer be viable due to risks their behaviour poses to others.

## **Key Issues in Identifying Child Abuse**

Child abuse can take place in a number of different settings, of which the following are examples.

- Child abuse is likely to occur most commonly where the young person knows the individual/s and trusts them. This can be a parent, carer, babysitter, sibling, relative, or friend of the child or of the family.
- The abuser is sometimes someone in authority such as a teacher, teaching assistant, youth leaders, children's worker or community faith worker/leader.
- The abuser is sometimes a paedophile or other person who sets out to join organisations to obtain access to children.
- The abuser may also be a child who abuses another child.

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

## **Detecting Signs of Abuse**

Extreme care should be taken as misreading signs of abuse can result in significant harm or trauma to the child and their family. In general staff will not have the expertise to diagnose child abuse but do have a responsibility to be alert and aware of the signs.

Just because a child exhibits one of the signs detailed in Appendix 5, this does not mean that they have been abused. Nevertheless, the presence of one or more of the signs, or their repeated presence, might raise concern and should be used as a prompt for discussion with the designated safeguarding lead. In their absence the matter should be brought to the attention of a member of the senior management team without delay. Where a child has made a direct allegation or there is clear evidence of a child suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, however, the matter should be referred immediately to the police and or Social Services duty officer.

## **Staff Training and Awareness**

Stephen Hawking School recognises that whilst the majority of our pupils are less likely to make a disclosure about abuse, owing to the severity of their learning difficulties, it could be likely that members of staff will have contact with other family members, including siblings, who could make a verbal disclosure. With this in mind, the school will provide additional training about how to respond to a disclosure for those members of staff who have greater contact with other family members. Identified likely groups of staff include staff involved with Whoosh! (The Stephen Hawking School Trust) events and activities, front of house staff and the home-school liaison officer.

## **Internet Security**

The school enforces an Acceptable Use Policy. Please refer to the e-Safety policy.

## **Visitors and Use of School Premises/Facilities**

The school monitors the activities of any clubs or groups operating under the name of the school or using its premises or facilities.

The school business manager and the admin team in conjunction with the Senior Management Team have responsibility for:

- vetting all visitors, volunteers and longer term interns/ trainees.
- vetting access for groups using school facilities.
- ensuring that all visitors are approved in advance, signed in and accompanied at all times.

## **School Governors**

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

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

### **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually.

## APPENDICES

**Appendix 1:** Summary code of conduct for everyone working with the pupils at Stephen Hawking School

**Appendix 2:** Whistle Blowing Policy

**Appendix 3:** Action when a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer significant harm

**Appendix 4:** The National Network of Investigation and Referral Support Co-ordinators: definitions and thresholds for managing allegations against education staff.

**Appendix 5:** Working Together' definitions of abuse

**Appendix 6:** Allegations against staff

**Appendix 7:** Flow chart for managing allegations

**Appendix 8:** Definitions and Signs of Abuse

**Appendix 9:** Children at risk from extremism and radicalisation

## Appendix 1

### Summary code of conduct for everyone working with the pupils at Stephen Hawking School

#### The need for consistency

- All people working with pupils must be fully aware of the school's Behaviour Policy and give an active commitment to its broad aims and requirements as well as to the practicalities of implementing individual behaviour programmes. This is essential for a positive ethos that enables all pupils to be successful and active learners.

#### Respect all pupils as individuals, with individual strengths and needs

- Always
  - Give pupils the time and opportunity to respond to you.
  - When helping a pupil, always hold their hand or put your hand on their shoulder.
- Never
  - Pull or push.
  - Help a pupil along by their wrist.
  - Make threats you don't mean or can't keep.
  - Label a pupil's behaviour as 'bad' or 'naughty'.

#### Be an active communicator

- Always
  - Give a pupil eye contact even if it means bending down or going the floor
  - Sign or/and give a tactile cue as well as saying
  - Allow plenty of time for a response
- Never
  - Shout, unless it is an emergency or absolutely necessary
  - Conduct a personal conversation with another adult over the heads of the pupils
  - Chase after a child unless there is a health and safety issue

## **Be aware of your responsibility as a role model**

- Always
  - Dress 'appropriately'.
- Never
  - Chew gum.
  - Disturb a class, unless it is an emergency or you have made an arrangement with the teacher.
  - Walk round while you are eating or drinking.
  - Sit on tables or other work surfaces.
  - Use a mobile phone when working with, or supervising, children.

## **Actively look to promote positive behaviour**

- Always
  - Encourage play between pupils.
  - Get involved in activities.
  - Be clear in your praise.
  - Acknowledge a pupil's behaviour, however challenging, as their way of communicating.

## **Respect and be aware of the need for confidentiality**

- Always
  - Chose a suitable place and time to discuss sensitive matters.
  - Deal with a child's personal needs discretely.
  - Respect parents/carers, they didn't choose their role as carer, you did.
- Never
  - Talk about pupils in front of them.
  - Enter the toilets or changing rooms unless you are caring for a pupil.

## Appendix 2

### Whistle Blowing Policy

All staff must acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management.

Although this can be difficult this is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express your concerns out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues or you may fear harassment or victimisation; these feelings, however natural, must never result in a child or young person continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Remember it is often the most vulnerable children or young person who are targeted. These children need someone like you to safeguard their welfare: *don't think what if I'm wrong - think what if I'm right.*

### Reasons for whistle blowing

- Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour.
- To prevent the problem worsening or widening.
- To protect or reduce risks to others.
- To prevent becoming implicated yourself.

### What stops people from whistle blowing?

- Starting a chain of events which spirals.
- Disrupting the work or project.
- Fear of getting it wrong.
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers.
- Fear of not being believed.

### What happens next?

- You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries.
- Your line manager has a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation.
- No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith.

- Malicious allegations may be considered a disciplinary offence

### **Self-reporting**

There may be occasions when an employee has a personal difficulty, maybe a physical or mental problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line manager so professional and personal support can be offered to the member of staff concerned. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare of safety of children.

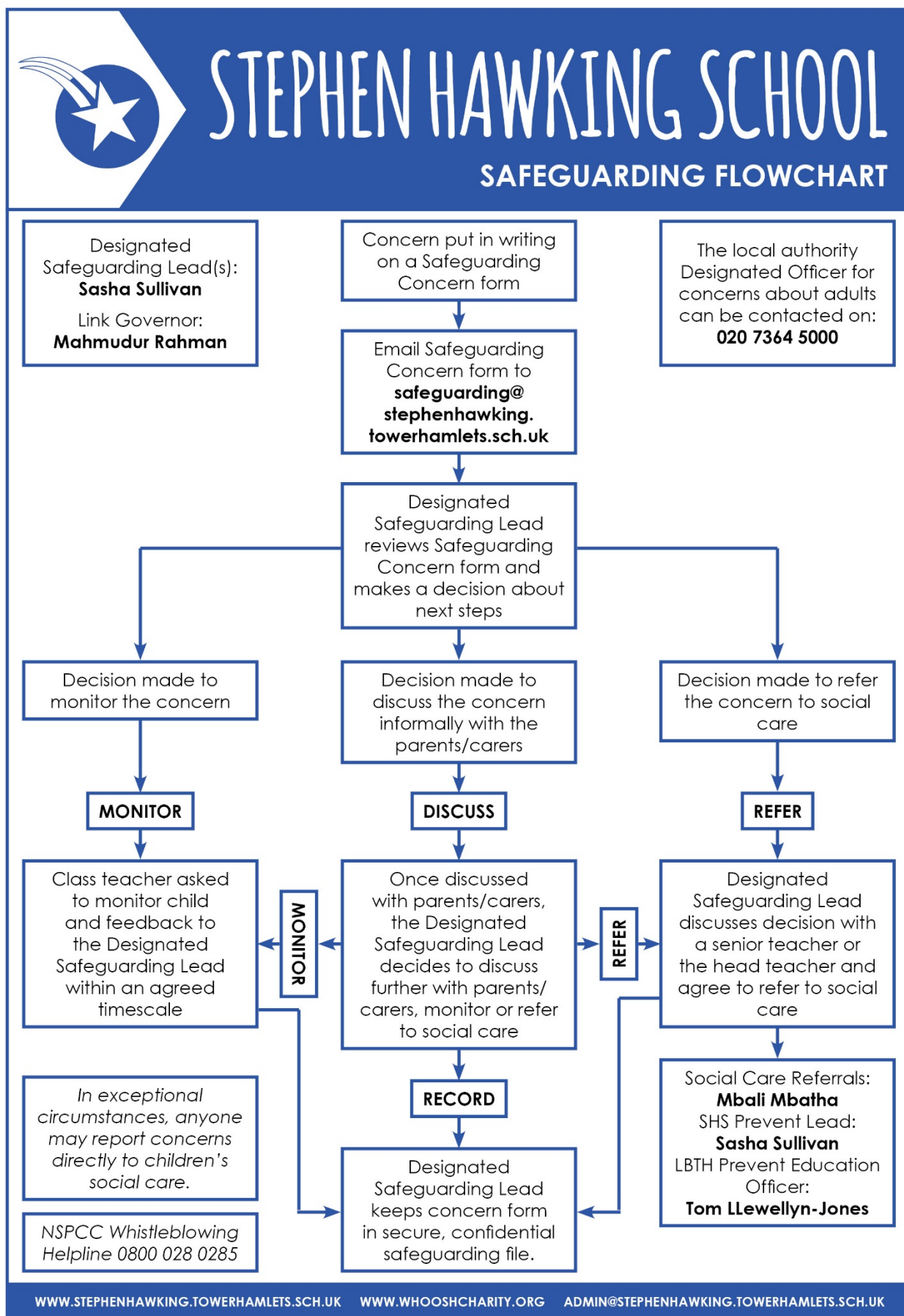
### **Further advice and support**

It is recognised that whistle blowing can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support is available from your line manager, the HR department and/or your professional body or trade union. You can also seek advice from the designated safeguarding lead or the headteacher.

### **Acknowledgement**

This document is based on the Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire strategic health authority guidance.





## Appendix 4:

### **The National Network of Investigation and Referral Support Co-ordinators: definitions and thresholds for managing allegations against education staff.**

#### **Purpose of this document**

To assist LA Lead Officers, Head teachers, Governors and Service Managers, interpret the current law and guidance and help ensure that all complaints and allegations against staff, where there is a child welfare concern, are dealt with appropriately. In particular, this guidance seeks to help differentiate between those allegations and concerns that require referral to social services and/or police, and those more properly dealt with through disciplinary or capability procedures.

This document is intended to complement the following National Employers Organisation for School Teachers (NEOST) guidance documents:

- NEOST Guidance on Conduct for Teachers, Education Staff and Volunteers
- Joint NEOST/Teacher Union Guidance on Preventing Abuse of Trust for Teachers Education Staff and Volunteers
- Joint NEOST/Teacher Union Guidance on Education Staff and Child Protection: Staff Facing an Allegation of Abuse: Guidelines on Practice and Procedure

#### **General principles**

The welfare principle (*The Welfare of the Child is Paramount...- Children Act 1989 S1 (1)*) must be upheld in all cases. The child must be listened to and any concerns taken seriously. Head teachers/Managers also have a continuing duty of care to any member of staff who becomes the subject of an allegation. They should ensure that staff in this position are treated fairly and offered appropriate professional support.

#### **Definitions**

The relevant legislation and guidance, such as the Children Act 1989 and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (DOH, et al, 1999), provide a number of the definitions that are used to describe child abuse in its different forms. These include the four categories of abuse i.e. physical, sexual, emotional and neglect; the definition of harm, health, development and ill treatment; and also significant harm. A list of these definitions, together with the definition of assault, can be found at appendix A.

#### **How concerns may come to notice**

Concerns about the behaviour of a member of staff toward a pupil may be made in the form of a complaint or allegation. These terms are often used interchangeably and it is important, therefore, to consider the details of the alleged incident and not the label attached to it. Any complaint with a child protection element should be responded to as a child protection allegation in the first instance.

Concerns may be raised in a number of ways e.g.:

- Direct disclosure by the child or young person
- Indirect disclosure e.g. through written/art work or through friends
- Complaint from a parent/carer to:
  - Head teacher/Manager/LA
  - Social Services
  - Police
- Reports by other colleagues or agencies
- Anonymously

(See also Paragraph 6 of NEOST/Union “Staff Facing an Allegation of Abuse”)

## **Context**

Where it is decided that a child protection or disciplinary investigation should take place, the context in which an incident is alleged to have occurred, may provide important information for those conducting the investigation. The collation of such information however, should not delay a child protection referral being made, nor jeopardise any subsequent investigation. Advice can be sought from the LA Lead Officer on these matters.

The context of an alleged incident might include:

- normal duties (e.g. pupil or teacher away from expected location)
- environment (e.g. special needs school, field trip)
- standards applied to the member of staff, with regard to the activity and circumstances in which the alleged incident occurred (e.g. job description, code of conduct, local practice guidance etc)
- conduct of the member of staff (e.g. previous concerns, present conduct, disciplinary action)
- conduct of the child or young person (e.g. both characteristic and uncharacteristic behaviour, previous allegations made)
- child and/or parents view of the incident

Where previous allegations have been made, serious caution must be applied. This may indicate an ongoing concern about that particular child or member of staff that needs to be addressed.

## Type of allegation

### Physical Abuse

Evidence shows that allegations of physical abuse are more common than those of a sexual nature. They often arise from incidents involving physical intervention or classroom management, when the actions of members of staff are perceived as an excessive use of force, an assault, or both.

All schools and educational establishments should ensure that they have robust recording systems to log any incidents that have resulted in the use of restraint. All schools should have physical intervention policies, which should be in line with LA and DfES guidance.

### Sexual Abuse

Allegations of sexual abuse can be extremely emotive and therefore difficult to deal with. They can range from sexual assault to allegations of inappropriate touching, language or behaviour, which are perceived to have a sexual motive. All members of staff have a responsibility toward the children in their establishment and a majority of staff are placed in a position of trust. They should be aware of any safe practice guidelines that are in place and be clear as to what constitutes inappropriate contact with pupils. Clear codes of conduct should be adhered to.

### Emotional Abuse and Neglect<sup>2</sup>

Issues of emotional abuse and neglect are much more complex and are more likely to come to light via a school's complaint procedures. They do occur in schools, both in acts of commission and omission e.g. bullying comments, racist remarks (emotional abuse) or failing to address this in others (neglect). Where the alleged behaviour is deemed to cause significant harm on the health or emotional well-being of the child, a child protection referral should be made.

### Examples of actions that may be interpreted as abusive

Ill-treatment is an implicit element in all forms of abuse. It provides a measure, within the context of significant harm and alleged crime, for establishing a threshold for referral. Ill-treatment by a professional might include:

#### Physical Abuse

- Any form of physical assault (including attempts) e.g.:
  - Punching
  - Kicking
  - Pushing

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<sup>2</sup> See Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings - IRSC 2005

- Smacking
- Slapping
- Shaking
- Throwing a missile at a pupil (e.g. chalk, board rubber etc)

### **Sexual Abuse**

- Any form of sexual assault (includes attempts)
- Abuse of a position of trust
- Possession of indecent and pseudo indecent photographs of children (includes computer images)
- Showing indecent or pornographic material to children
- Inappropriate touching, language, or behaviour toward any child or pupil for sexual purposes
- Inappropriate use of text messaging, e-mail or other IT toward any child or pupil for sexual purposes

### **Emotional Abuse and Neglect**

- Racial comments or behaviour, or failing to address these in others
- Homophobic comments or behaviour, or failing to address these in others
- Bullying pupils, or failing to address this in others
- Persistent sarcasm
- Belittling pupils e.g. persistently placing a child in a corner or corridor
- Creating a climate of fear in the classroom
- Damaging a pupil's self-esteem through persistent lack of warmth and positive regard
- Inappropriate punishment e.g. placing a child in a cupboard
- Failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger (e.g. school trips)
- Failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment (e.g. where a pupil sustains an injury)

The above examples are not exhaustive and only serve as a guide. Many of these behaviours do constitute a criminal offence some do not and some may not reach a threshold of significant harm, but they all constitute professional misconduct.

### **Examples of actions that are non-abusive<sup>3</sup>**

- Applying restraint consistent with legislation and guidance (S.550A Education Act 1996 and Circular 10/98)
- Removing, with reasonable force, potentially dangerous items from a pupil's possession, or a pupil from a dangerous location
- Shepherding pupils (e.g. hand on back/shoulder)
- Comforting (e.g. hand on arm/shoulder/back)
- Securing attention by tapping pupil's shoulder

Staff should be aware, however, that any physical contact with pupils could be open to misinterpretation. Perceptions and language can present very different views of the same incident. Tapping a child could be interpreted as an assault, particularly where there has been earlier disagreement between the child and the member of staff concerned. Some methods of comforting a child could be viewed as an unwanted sexual advance. Other than circumstances that are in accordance with an agreed physical intervention policy, physical contact should be age appropriate, with the child's permission, and limited to the needs of the child at the time.

### **Examples of actions that are both abusive and non-abusive**

The following are examples of actions, albeit not overtly abusive, that could be interpreted as a member of staff 'grooming' a child for sexual purposes:

- Inviting pupils to their homes
- Giving pupils gifts
- Offering pupils lifts outside normal duties
- Singling individual pupils out for special attention
- Seeing pupils socially

The frequency, nature and degree etc of such behaviour may justify the need for further investigation under child protection or discipline procedures.

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<sup>3</sup> Further advice is set out in the NEOST Guidance on Conduct 2002.

## **Thresholds for referral**

This advice builds upon the guidance contained in paragraph 7 of Joint NEOST/Teacher Union Guidance "Staff facing Allegations of Abuse".

### **Significant Harm**

Where a complaint or allegation has been made against a member of staff and the child is considered to be suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm referral must be made to Social Services.

The definition of significant harm is not prescriptive. Its interpretation will depend largely on professional judgement, based on the known facts. It can include inappropriate touching, an assault, or a series of compounding events e.g. bullying. Other factors to be considered include the age and vulnerability of the child, the degree of force used, the frequency of the harm, the nature of the harm in terms of ill treatment and the impact on the child's health and development.

In simple terms, if the harm or risk of harm attributable to a member of staff falls within the category of either physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect, a referral should be made to Social Services. It is important that advice is sought where there is any doubt as to whether the threshold of significant harm has been reached. Working Together states 'Often, it is only when information from a number of sources has been shared and is then put together that it becomes clear that a child is at risk of or is suffering harm'. Whilst in some cases the threshold for significant harm may not be met, the concern can still be addressed through internal investigation and if appropriate disciplinary or competency routes.

### **Initial category of allegation**

It is not necessary to make a referral to Social Services where an allegation can be shown beyond doubt to be demonstrably false. Consideration should, however, be given to the reasons for the allegation and whether a child in need referral may be appropriate. (See 11 below)

In their initial consultation, Head teachers and LA Lead Officers will obviously give thought to the likelihood of whether an alleged incident actually took place. Decisions on referral, however, should not be based on assumptions/prejudgements about the truth of the allegation and no attempt should be made to investigate an allegation in order to determine the truth. The chart at Appendix B provides guidance to assist Head teachers and LA Lead Officers in this early process.

### **Trivial**

Guidance states that allegations of a trivial nature do not have to result in a child protection referral and common sense would support this. What makes an allegation trivial, however, can be one of individual interpretation and care should therefore be taken in this respect. What may seem trivial to a Head teacher or LA Lead Officer may be significant to the child involved or the person making the allegation. For example, an alleged push may seem trivial but may have frightened

the child on the receiving end. An allegation of a push, however trivial, may also constitute an allegation of assault (see Appendix A).

## **Criminal Offence<sup>4</sup>**

Complaints against staff may constitute an allegation of a criminal offence. For example, complaints about excessive force used in restraint incidents and the use of force to maintain discipline, may contain the elements that could give rise to an allegation of assault (see Appendix A).

Where a complaint or allegation against a member of staff indicates that a criminal offence has been committed or is suspected of having been committed, a referral should be made to Social Services and/or Police. It is not necessary to consider whether the threshold of significant harm has been reached. It is important for advice to be sought if there is any doubt.

## **Human Rights**

Schools and other educational establishments have a duty under the Education Act 2002<sup>5</sup> to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils in their care. A failure to refer a significant concern about a child could be a breach of that duty and also the child's human rights as defined in Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights i.e. protection from inhuman or degrading treatment.

## **Dealing with demonstrably false, displaced or potentially malicious allegations**

Complaints and allegations against members of staff should always be viewed objectively. The circumstances leading up to the complaint can often be complicated and the outcome far from certain.

Words such as false, unfounded, unsubstantiated and malicious are often used in the same context when describing an allegation. The meanings are very different and it is important for staff to understand the distinction between them and use them correctly.

The term false can be broken down into two categories:

- Malicious This implies a deliberate act to deceive. A malicious allegation may be made by a pupil following an altercation with a teacher or a parent who is in dispute with a school. For an allegation to be classified as malicious, it will be necessary to have evidence, which proves this intention.
- Unfounded This indicates that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw. Alternatively, they may not have been aware of all the circumstances. For an allegation to be classified as unfounded, it will be necessary to have evidence to disprove the allegation.

Children and young people may make false allegations in an attempt to draw attention to abuse emanating from another source within their family or community. This is known as

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<sup>4</sup> See also paragraph 7 of Joint NEOST/Teacher Union Guidance "Staff Facing an Allegation of Abuse"

<sup>5</sup> Ss 157 & 175 Education Act 2002

Agreed by Governors March 2018



displacement. A parent may make a false allegation in an attempt to evade responsibility for an injury or incident in which they were involved. A colleague may make a false allegation in an attempt to discredit a member of staff.

An unsubstantiated allegation is not the same as a false allegation. It simply means that there is insufficient identifiable evidence to prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.

The perception that an allegation is false should not prevent a child protection referral being made. It should be clear from the outset that an allegation is demonstrably false before a decision is made not to refer the allegation (see Appendix B). Even then, consideration should be given to making a referral to social services, with the parent's permission, if it is thought that the reason for the allegation points to a 'child in need'.

The justification for any decision about referring, or not referring an allegation, must be recorded.

## Process

### Initial Action

When an allegation is received it is important to be clear about what is being said. It must be noted, however, that the headteacher/manager **should not** investigate the incident by interviewing either those directly involved or any witnesses. Interviews undertaken by untrained staff are likely to jeopardise any subsequent criminal/discipline investigation and may lead to unjust outcomes for the child or the accused member of staff.

The headteacher/manager should simply establish:

- That an allegation has been made
- The general nature of the allegation
- When and where the incident is alleged to have occurred
- Who was involved
- Any other persons' present

### Referral<sup>6</sup>

Allegations against education staff should be managed in accordance with DfES guidance. This advises Head teachers/Managers to consult the LA Lead Officer. The involvement of the LA Lead Officer should ensure that such cases are dealt with impartially and help avoid any possible accusation of collusion.

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<sup>6</sup> See also paragraph 8 of Joint NEOST/Teacher Union Guidance "Staff Facing an Allegation of Abuse"

Consultation between the Head teacher, LA Lead Officer and the relevant Human Resources Advisor should take place at the earliest opportunity. The headteacher/manager and the LA Lead Officer should then decide whether the alleged incident should be referred to:

- o Social Services/Police for potential child protection and/or criminal investigation.
- o Human Resources – The Lead Officer will need to take advice regarding the employee elements inherent in any allegation.

The decisions with their reasoning should be clearly recorded. Those involved in the related discussions must also be identified in this documentation.

Where the allegation is against a Head teacher, the Chair of Governors or Vice Chair in the Chair's absence, becomes the person responsible for ensuring the matter is taken forward as above. In the case of a Service Manager, the responsibility resides with the relevant Assistant Director or other Senior Officer.

### **Multi-agency involvement**

In most cases, particularly where the complaint is made directly to Police or Social Services, it is likely that the investigation process will commence with a multi-agency strategy discussion. It is important that the LA Lead Officer, Human Resources and a representative of the school/establishment are involved in this discussion. Agreement will be reached at that stage as to whether a full child protection investigation is necessary.

### **Training**

All staff working with children should have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of the indicators and categories of abuse and child protection procedures. Those involved with managing or advising others regarding child protection allegations against staff should also have regard to the concept of significant harm and a basic understanding of what may constitute a criminal offence.

### **Support**

The process of dealing with an allegation against staff can be daunting for the child involved. Where the allegation is unfounded or even false there may also be underlying reasons for the allegation being made. It is important that the child's needs are identified and the appropriate support is obtained.

An allegation can be traumatic for the accused member of staff too, particularly when the allegation is false. Employers have a duty of care to their employees and should ensure that appropriate support is offered. The member of staff should also be advised to seek the advice of their union or professional association. Concerns are sometimes raised by colleagues who have witnessed behaviour that they consider in good faith to be abusive or inappropriate. It is important to enable

staff to disclose their views without fear of retribution, even if the concerns are subsequently unsubstantiated. Such staff should be supported in accordance with the LA or school Whistle Blowing support policy.

## **Further Guidance**

Further guidance on dealing with allegations against staff can be found in:

- Safeguarding Children in Education DfES/0027/2004
- Joint NEOST/Teacher Union Guidance on Education Staff and Child Protection: Staff Facing an Allegation of Abuse Sept 2002
- Procedures for Managing Allegations of Abuse - DfES/NEOST/Teacher Union Guidance 2002
- What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused DoH 2003
- Thresholds for and Alternatives to Suspension - IRSC Guidance 2004
- Managing the Aftermath of False and Unsubstantiated Allegations - IRSC Guidance 2004
- Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings – IRSC 2005

## **Additional References and Bibliography**

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DOH et al) 1999
- The Children Act 1989
- The Education Act 1996
- The School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- The use of force to Control or Restrain Pupils – DFEE Circular 10/98
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Guidance on Conduct for Teachers, Education Staff and Volunteers: NEOST 2002
- Preventing Abuse of Trust for Teachers Education Staff and Volunteers: Joint NEOST/Teacher Union Guidance on 2002
- Education Act 2002

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## Appendix 5

**“Working Together” provides clear definitions of the four categories of abuse:**

- Physical Abuse - May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
- Emotional Abuse - The persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development.
- Sexual Abuse - Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts.
- Neglect - The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development.

**Under the Children Act 1989 s31 (9):**

- Harm - means ill treatment or the impairment of health or development, including for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Development - means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development
- Health - means physical or mental health
- Ill treatment - includes sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment which are not physical

### **Significant Harm**

“There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill treatment may include the degree and extent of physical harm, the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect and the extent of premeditation, degree of threat and coercion, ...” (*Working together to Safeguard Children, DOH 1999*)

### **Assault**

Apart from trivial allegations (see para 10.3), any allegation of assault on a pupil made against a member of staff should result in a child protection referral, even though it may not meet the threshold of significant harm. It is therefore important to understand what constitutes an assault in criminal law.

Assault and battery have distinct legal meanings and both are offences. They are often referred to simply as “assault” or “common assault”.

For a person to be guilty of assault, it is not necessary for any physical contact to be made. The person must, however:

- Commit an act (both oral or written) which causes fear of immediate unlawful

violence (guilty act); and

- Intend to cause fear of immediate unlawful violence, or be reckless as to that consequence (guilty mind)

A person is guilty of battery if he/she intentionally or recklessly applies unlawful force (a small degree of physical contact will be enough) to another person. The force can be applied directly or indirectly e.g. a punch aimed at a woman that doesn't hit her but causes her to drop and injure the child she is carrying, is an assault against the woman and a battery against the child.

It is lawful for any person to use reasonable force in self-defence, or to protect a pupil who is at immediate risk of injury or about to inflict injury on someone else (DFEE Circular 10/98). It is also lawful for teachers and other authorised staff, to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property or engaging in behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline (S.550A Education Act 1996). Corporal punishment is however, outlawed by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

### **Indecent Assault**

An indecent assault is simply an assault committed in circumstances of indecency.

## Appendix 6

### Allegations against staff - school threshold for child protection referral

#### Introductory notes:

- The following table has been produced to assist decision-making when considering whether to make a child protection referral. This should be used in conjunction with DfES standards, ACPC procedures and the attached guidance. Its purpose is to ensure that wherever possible, the initial category of the allegation is ascribed on the basis of the evidence presented, rather than upon assumption or preconception.
- The decision-making process should not preclude a 'child in need' referral at any stage.
- All concerns raised about staff should include consideration of their conduct, whether in relation to any necessary disciplinary action and/or with regard to reducing their vulnerability to further allegations. This may involve an action plan for other staff too.

CATEGORY	DEFINITION	EXAMPLES	ACTION	SAFEGUARDS
<b>Apparent Corroboration</b>	Where an allegation or concern is accompanied by actual or circumstantial evidence.	<p>A child may have a visible injury.</p> <p>The incident may have been witnessed.</p> <p>The member of staff may behave in a way that is consistent with the allegation.</p>	<p>A Child Protection referral <b>must</b> be made to Social Services or the Police. Local ACPC Procedures <b>must</b> be followed.</p> <p>The LA Lead Officer should make a referral in accordance with local LA/ACPC child protection procedures.</p>	<p>The referral should be confirmed in writing.</p> <p>The LA Lead Officer should keep a copy of the referral.</p>

CATEGORY	DEFINITION	EXAMPLES	ACTION	SAFEGUARDS
<b>Possible</b>	Where there are indications that an abusive incident might have taken place, or little evidence to disprove a child's allegations.	Where a child's allegations might be supported by other information, or where it is a matter of one word against another.	A Child Protection referral <b>must</b> be made to Social Services or the Police. Local ACPC procedures <b>must</b> be followed.  The LA Lead Officer <b>must</b> also be informed of the case and the action taken.	The referral to Social Services or Police must be followed in writing.  A copy of the referral must be sent to the LA Lead Officer.
<b>Unlikely</b>	The alleged incident most probably did not take place.	Where circumstantial evidence <b>appears</b> incompatible with the allegation.	Only clarification of the specific allegation or concern should be sought. No attempt should be made to investigate the matter at this stage.	The school's knowledge of both the child and member of staff concerned will be invaluable, <b>however</b> , the Lead Officer's view will contribute further objectivity and help to secure consistency and appropriateness of response.



<p><b>Demonstrably False</b></p>	<p>It is known without a doubt that an allegation is untrue.</p> <p>This position requires strong evidence and must not be based on preconceptions about the child or member of staff concerned.</p>	<p>The alleged perpetrator was <b>known</b> not to be anywhere in the vicinity and the child is not confused in terms of time, place or person.</p>	<p>The school can undertake internal enquiries.</p> <p>The child's motives or misunderstandings should be addressed – involving those with parental responsibility.</p>	<p>The LA Lead Officer for Child Protection <b>must</b> receive written notification of the allegation, the evidence and how the matter was resolved.</p> <p>This allows for external monitoring and further intervention if appropriate.</p> <p>Consideration should always be given to the possibility that the child may be displacing abuse experienced elsewhere.</p>
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## Appendix 7

### The Role of the Local Authority Designated Officer

The Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (LADO) provides advice and guidance to headteachers/managers, Governing Bodies and the LA in relation to allegations involving professionals and other carers working with children. The LADO coordinates the progress of such cases and is responsible for liaising with the other agencies.

Schools/Centres/Settings/Services should always contact the LADO in the first instance to discuss any allegation or concern of a child protection nature relating to a member of staff. These allegations do not fall within the remit of HR Advisors employed by the School/Centre/Setting/Service. The LADO will inform and involve the Local Authority's Human Resources Section as is necessary.

If the allegation is such that it is clear that an investigation by the Police and Children's Social Care is not necessary or the strategy meeting decides so, the LADO will discuss what action should be taken with the School/Centre/Setting/Service. It may be decided to take no action, issue an informal warning and/or professional advice to the member of staff, or institute an investigation under disciplinary procedures.

In any case where the complaint warrants investigation, the LADO will also discuss with the representative of the School/Centre/Service whether the member of staff needs to be suspended. In addition, there will be discussion about what the person can be told about the allegation, taking account of any views expressed by the Police and Children's Social Care in the strategy meeting.

Where there is particular concern about the progress of cases involving allegations against members of staff then the headteacher or Chair of Governors of the School or the Manager or LA Officer with responsibility for the Centre/Service should contact the LADO in the first instance. Should the concern continue then there is the facility to contact the LA Named Senior Officer.

The LADO will maintain a confidential record of the progress and outcomes of each allegation in accordance with DfE requirements on the LA Children's Social Care Management Information System for monitoring and reporting purposes.

## Appendix 8

### Definitions and Signs of Abuse

#### Abuse

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. An adult or adults or another child or children may abuse them. Some children may be left disabled as a result of experiencing abuse, for instance being physically attacked as a baby or severely neglected. The effects of disability may be compounded as a result of a disabled child being abused, for instance a child may regress, become uncommunicative, be unable to concentrate, become incontinent, as a result of fear or experience of abuse. A disabled child within a family may suffer more than their siblings in an abusive environment, for instance, non-disabled siblings may be able to fend for themselves, as they get older in a neglectful family, non-disabled siblings may be able to disclose abuse and leave when older. Disabled children may be scapegoated within a family because they are disabled, for instance, not wanted, seen as a burden.

#### Physical abuse

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

#### Emotional abuse:

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 participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another, for instance witnessing domestic violence. 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.

## **Sexual abuse**

involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of 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 (including via the internet). Adult males do not solely perpetrate sexual abuse. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

## **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 as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## **Physical signs**

- Any injuries, bruises, bites, burns, fractures, etc, which are not consistent with the explanation given for them.
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries which appear to have been caused by a weapon e.g. cuts, welts, etc.
- Injuries which have not received medical attention.
- Instances where children are kept away from school inappropriately or without explanation.
- Self-mutilation or self-harm e.g. cutting, slashing, drug abuse.

## **Emotional signs**

- Changes or regression in mood and behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes "clingy". Also depression/aggression.
- Nervousness/inappropriate fear of particular adults e.g. frozen watchfulness.
- Sudden changes in behaviour e.g. under-achievement or lack of concentration.
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults e.g. excessive dependence.
- Attention-seeking behaviour.
- Persistent tiredness.
- Wetting or soiling of bed or clothes by an older child, where this is not consistent with their usual behaviour.

## **Neglect signs**

- Regular poor hygiene.
- Persistent tiredness.
- Failure to provide equipment for physical well-being (i.e. inhalers, hearing aid, glasses, walking supports).
- Inadequate clothing.
- Excessive appetite.
- Failure to thrive e.g. poor weight gain.
- Consistently being left alone and unsupervised.

## **Sexual signs**

- Any direct disclosure made by a child concerning sexual abuse.
- A child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play.
- A preoccupation with sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- A child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home.

- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations.

### **Other signs in related areas of child protection**

According to the latest guidance on safeguarding 'Keeping Children Safe in Schools: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges' ([https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/372753/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/372753/Keeping_children_safe_in_education.pdf)) there are number of additional areas that staff should have an awareness of in relation to keeping children safe. These are listed below with brief guidance. For more detailed guidance please follow the links provided.

**Any concerns related to the areas below should be reported to the designated safeguarding lead immediately.**

#### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

Some girls are at risk from FGM from parents/carers who believe this will be in the best interests of the child. Therefore, vulnerable girls may well be coached that this will be a normal part of their upbringing. Staff should be aware of the following signs that may indicate a girl is at risk of being taken for FGM.

- Disclosure from a girl stating she is going to have a 'special operation'.
- Planned withdrawal from school to a country where FGM is prevalent.
- Withdrawal from sessions where FGM is discussed.
- Staff should also be aware of signs that a girl may have already suffered FGM.
- Prolonged absence from school.
- Signs that a girl may be suffering from increased bladder infections, urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
- Disclosure from a girl that she has been subject to FGM.

Staff should be aware that FGM is illegal.

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

## **Child Trafficking and Exploitation**

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

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

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

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

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

- has new possessions or unexplained gifts.
- talks about having older boyfriends or girlfriends.
- has mood swings or changes in emotional well-being.
- displays inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

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

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

## **Domestic Violence**

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial

- emotional

Staff should be aware that any disclosures made by children may have a background in domestic violence.

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

### **e-Safety**

Staff are encouraged to report where they believe children are using the internet, mobile technology e.g. sexting or social media inappropriately. In these instances, the designated safeguarding lead will take advice from the Duty Advice Line on how to proceed with regards to talking to parents/carers about e-Safety.

In some extreme cases the police may become involved if a child is at risk of exploitation due to their use of the internet or social media.

For more guidance please follow the link to Child Exploitation and Online Protection Agency (CEOP) <http://ceop.police.uk/>

### **Forced Marriage**

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

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

Whilst it is unlikely that primary aged pupils will be victims of forced marriage they may disclose that older siblings may be at risk of suffering a forced marriage.

For more information please see: 'Forced marriage' <https://www.gov.uk/forced-marriage>

### **Involvement in Gangs**

Involvement in gangs can lead to children and young people to become involved in crime and can mean they become subject to exploitation in a range of ways. Consequently, it is important that schools teach children how to



be assertive and recognise the dangers of becoming involved in gangs. Identifying children with issues related to negative behaviour and providing mentoring support is highly effective in preventing problems in the future.

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

## **Drugs**

Staff should report any drug-related incident via CPOMS.

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

## **Faith Abuse**

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

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

## **Mental Health**

There are some children who experience mental health issues or have parents/carers who may have mental health issues. At times these issues may not have been shared explicitly and a child may be vulnerable if the appropriate support is not in place to ensure his/her safety. Once issues are reported, the school can work with appropriate services so that plans can be implemented to support all involved through Early Help Assessment.

## Appendix 9

### Children at risk from extremism and radicalisation

Issues in this area are covered within the 'Prevent' Strategy and specific guidance is given in 'Channel: Protecting young people from being drawn into terrorism'.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/118194/channel-guidance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118194/channel-guidance.pdf)

Since 2012, it has been required by law for teachers "not to undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs." At Stephen Hawking School we have identified five strands that support the prevention of violent extremism:

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

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

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

The overall role of schools in safeguarding children is set out in the Government's statutory guidance: 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' published in July 2015 with amendments made in 2016 and 2017.

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

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

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

## Recognising Extremism

Early indicators may include:

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

## Reporting

If you have concerns about a child or group of children being violent, or being drawn into violent extremism, or being vulnerable to this, you should respond as we would to all vulnerable children and follow the procedures below.

- Talk to the designated safeguarding or prevent lead person who will advise on the next course of action, this action may include: talking to the family and other professionals working with the young person about the concerns and get their views. (If the family is implicated in potential extremism contact the Social Inclusion Panel (SIP) first)
- Documentation including: the child's EHCP, most recent annual review, TAC minutes, CIN plan may be shared with involved professionals to ensure efficient information

sharing. Seek consent to do this. Determine if there are additional needs and if so how these could be met.

- Contact other relevant agencies and engage them in a Team Around the Child (TAC) approach to supporting the young person and their family with a diversionary programme of support.
- If the concerns persist and the TAC approach does not seem to be having a positive impact, or if it appears the young person is already exposed to or involved with extremist organisations, refer the case to the SIP. If in doubt, refer to the SIP.

## **Interventions with Individuals**

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

- increased adult support, supervision and encouragement
- positive buddying programmes
- positive activities in and out of school
- behaviour support/anger management programmes
- attendance support
- 1 to 1 or group counselling
- parenting programmes with a Preventing Violent Extremism element
- links with relevant voluntary or religious organisations
- advice on cyber safety (for pupils and parents)
- referrals (usually through SIP) for:
  - Family Therapy/CAMHS programmes
  - Targeted Youth Support
  - Youth Inclusion Support Panel (YISP) crime prevention programmes
  - Police Prevent team support
  - Specialised theological/educational programmes
  - Intensive Family Support Programmes

## **Prevention**

The school addresses this issue of prevention, through the curriculum and other activities. These may include:

- work on community cohesion, tolerance and anti-violence addressed throughout curriculum: promoting alternative positive narratives to counteract extremist ideologies.
- open discussion and debate of issues and the law in a supportive environment.
- critical appraisal of sources/internet resilience/identifying propaganda – relevant for all subjects but especially when using the internet for research.
- citizenship programmes – British Values.
- social and emotional aspects of learning.
- anti-bullying work including homophobia and violence against women.
- rewarding positive behaviour.
- pastoral and induction support.
- work on safety, risk and crime prevention.
- opportunities for channelling positive engagement e.g. charity work/fund-raising.
- positive in and out of school hours' programmes.
- access to youth clubs and holiday programmes.
- parenting programmes to ensure consistent messages between home and school.

## **e-Safety**

The school enforces an Acceptable Use Policy. Please refer to the e-Safety policy.