



# Safeguarding and Child Protection At The Bridge

## Policy for Schools September 2020

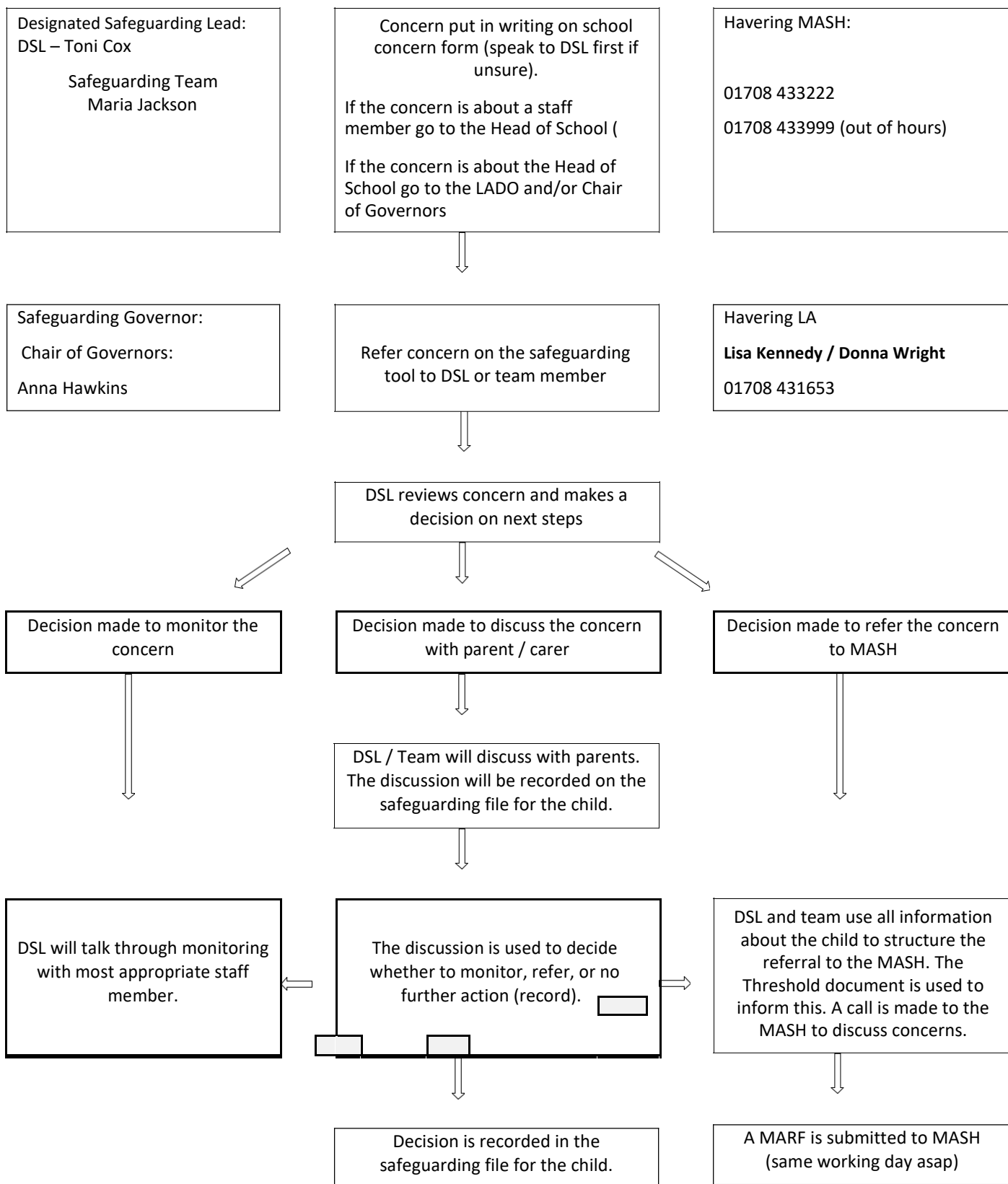
Name of school	The Bridge School
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Who reviewed this policy?	
Date approved by Governing Body	22/9/20
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# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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## 1.0 Raising concerns about a child



If the Designated Safeguarding Lead and team are not available the staff member should, with the support of the most senior member of staff available, make a direct referral to MASH.

## 2.0 Overview

- 2.1 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is:
- protecting children from maltreatment
  - preventing impairment of children's mental or physical 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
- 2.2 The purpose of this document is to assist all staff
- to safeguard and protect children who are at risk of abuse or neglect -
- to promote the well-being of all children.
- 2.3 At The Bridge we are committed to safeguarding children and young people and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment. Adults in our school take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them.
- School must be a safe place for all children attending. Children not attending school during Covid 19 due to school closure must also be safeguarded, including online, staff must identify and the school must action any concerns brought to them.
- 2.4 This policy and procedures should be read in conjunction with
- London Safeguarding Children Procedures 5<sup>th</sup> edition
  - Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (with Dec 2020 update)
  - DfE Keeping children safe in education 2020
  - DfE Teaching Online Safety 2019
  - School online safety policy
  - Schools Code of Conduct
  - Staff Acceptable Use Agreement
- 2.5 The safeguarding of children is everyone's business and schools have a responsibility under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promoting the welfare of children. This includes
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental or physical health or development
  - Protecting children from maltreatment
  - Ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- 2.6 This policy and the following procedures apply to all paid staff, supply staff, volunteers and governors working with or in The Bridge School.

### **3.0 Legal framework**

- 3.1 The Children Act 1989 defines a child as being up to the age of 18 years; it also defines significant harm and the roles and responsibilities of Children's Social Care and the Police.
- 3.2 **Legislation related to safeguarding in schools**
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2020)

### 3.3 Education

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Education Act 2002
- The Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003
- The Further Education (Providers of Education) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Referral Units) (Application of Enactments) (England) Regulations 2007 as amended by SI 2010/1919, SI 2012/1201, SI 2012/1825, SI 2012/3158
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009 as amended by SI 2012/1740 and SI 2013/1940
- The Education (Non-Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 2011 as amended by SI 2015/387
- The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

### 4.0 Significant harm

- 4.1 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 the extent of physical harm, the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect, the extent of premeditation and the presence or degree of threat, coercion, sadism, and bizarre or unusual elements. Each of these elements has been associated with more severe effects on the child and/or relatively greater difficulty in helping the child overcome the adverse impact of the maltreatment. Sometimes, a single traumatic event may constitute significant harm (e.g. a violent assault, suffocation or poisoning). More often, significant harm is a compilation of significant events, both acute and longstanding, which interrupt, change or damage the child's physical and psychological development. Some children live in family and social circumstances where their health and development are neglected. For them, it is the corrosiveness of long-term emotional, physical or sexual abuse that causes impairment to the extent of constituting significant harm. In each case, it is necessary to consider any maltreatment alongside the family's strengths and support.
- 4.2 This policy outlines the action to be taken if it is suspected that a child may be being abused, harmed or neglected.
- There are four categories of abuse:
- Physical Abuse
  - Emotional Abuse
  - Sexual Abuse
  - Neglect
- 4.3 It is acknowledged that a child can be abused, harmed or neglected in a family, institution or community setting or online by someone known to them or, less commonly, by a stranger; this includes someone in a position of trust such as a school staff member or professionals in other services around the child.

- 4.4 All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.
- 4.5 Safeguarding and the promotion of a child's welfare covers all aspects of the child's life and the school is committed to ensuring that all its actions in respect of a child are compatible with this aim. If there are concerns about a child's welfare that do not meet the thresholds of child abuse the school will consider whether the Early Help approach should be considered. Early identification of concerns and the use of Early Help to develop a multi-agency plan for the child can reduce the risk of subsequent abuse.

## **5.0 Context**

- 5.1 The content of this policy is applicable to all paid staff, supply staff, volunteers and Governors.
- 5.2 All adults in school have a full and active part to play in protecting our children from harm.
- 5.3 All adults in school believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.
- 5.4 The aims of this policy are:
- To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
  - To raise the awareness of both teaching and support staff for the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- 5.5 Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff, supply staff and volunteers:
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm.
  - To support pupils who have suffered abuse in accordance with their agreed Child Protection Plan.
  - To emphasise the need for good levels of appropriate communication between all members of staff, and with external agencies.
  - By strictly following safer recruitment requirements, ensuring that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability.
  - To set out a structured procedure within the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
  - By sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents and carers, staff, supply staff and volunteers.
  - To promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police, Social Care and Health. Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.
  - To ensure all staff are aware of the school's code of conduct.

- To ensure all staff have signed the AUP - acceptable use policy
- By providing effective management for staff, supply staff and volunteers through support, supervision and training.

## 5.6 Equality

Some children's circumstances mean they are more vulnerable to abuse and/or less able to easily access services. These children often require a high degree of awareness and co-operation between professionals in different agencies, both in recognising and identifying their needs and in acting to meet those needs: Children in Specific Circumstances, edition 5, London Child Protection Procedures; KCSIE 2018 Para 102 and following.

## 6.0 In school safeguarding and child protection procedures

6.1 Our school procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with the London Borough of Havering and Havering Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures; Edition 5 of the London Child Protection Procedures provides comprehensive guidance. We will ensure that:

- Our Designated Safeguarding Lead – Toni Cox has responsibility for Child Protection and who undertakes regular training for this role.
- We have one designated Safeguarding deputy who will act in the Designated Safeguarding Lead's absence.

*(Throughout this policy 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' refers to the DSL or any team members. All team members are able to act equally. They work as a team.)*

- The Safeguarding and child protection team are:
  - Toni Cox – DSL
  - Maria Jackson – Deputy Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is a member of the Senior Leadership Team of The Bridge School. Those named above have received appropriate training. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputies will attend all whole staff in school training and undertake additional formal training at least every two years. The Safeguarding Team will keep themselves up to date throughout the year.

- All school staff will receive training at least every year, with ongoing updates through the year. Training will always include a reminder of in school referral processes. Topics may include:

- Signs and symptoms of abuse
- Prevent
- CSE
- Online Safety
- FGM
- We have a designated Governor for Child Protection/Safeguarding. This person is Anna Hawkins, Safeguarding Governor

6.2 All staff will have access to and understand the process for logging a concern about a child. At The Bridge we are using the The Bridge Internal reporting system. All staff have attended training on reporting issues and the process the school follows.

6.3 In the event that there are concerns about a child, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will access the London Borough of Havering MASH indicators of need and the London Child

Protection Procedures 5<sup>th</sup> edition to inform their decision-making process with regard to the presenting safeguarding concerns.

6.4 The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of the children, and gives local authorities a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

6.4.1 All members of staff will develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse and of their responsibility for referring any concerns.

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments.

6.4.2 Induction for all new members of staff, governors, supply staff and volunteers will include:

- safeguarding and child protection policy
- staff code of conduct and staff acceptable use policy
- behaviour policy
- procedures for managing children who are missing education.

6.4.3 All members of staff will read Keeping Children safe in Education 2018, part 1 and Annexe A. Senior Leadership will support all staff in understanding this key document and implementing it in their practice.

6.4.4 All members of staff will be expected to know how to access edition 5 of the London Child Protection Procedures at <http://www.londoncp.co.uk/>.

6.4.5 All members of staff will know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse. It is vital that our actions do not abuse the child further or prejudice further enquiries, for example:

- Stay calm, listen to the child and if you are shocked by what is being said try not to show it.
- Do not promise confidentiality; you can however promise privacy, reassure the child they have done the right thing. Explain who you will have to tell and why.
- If a child is making a disclosure the pace should be dictated by the child. Do not ask leading questions, for example 'what did they do next?' It is our role to listen, not to investigate. Use open questions such as 'is there anything else you wish to tell me?'
- Accept what they are telling you; do not make judgements.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you. Do acknowledge how hard it was for them to tell you.
- Do not criticise the perpetrator; this may be someone they love.



- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
- Pass this information on immediately to your Designated Safeguarding Lead.

6.5 All staff, in the absence of a member of the safeguarding team, may raise concerns directly with MASH (MASH includes Children’s Social Care and Police).

6.6 After a child has disclosed abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should take immediate action to contact MASH (MASH includes Children’s Social Care and Police).

6.6.1 All staff must report all information **immediately**, on the same working day, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

6.6.2 The conduct of staff when in a 1:1 situation with a child should be managed in a way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their motives or intentions. All staff must ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place children or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to children. All staff must be aware of the school’s ‘Whistleblowing and Managing Allegations Policy’ and how to access it.

6.6.3 All parents/carers will be made aware of the possibilities of staff members’ actions with regard to child protection procedures.

6.6.4 All parents/carers, as part of the child induction process, will be made aware of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, which is on the school website: <https://bridge-life.co.uk>

6.7 We will review our Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures at least annually and complete a London Borough of Havering section 175 audit. A copy of the audit will be sent to the School Safeguarding Lead in Havering and also shared with the Quality Assurance Inspector.

6.8 Visitors must sign in at Reception using our Visitors Book. Visitors who can not provide proof of DBS will be escorted at all times.

6.9 For External contractors please refer to the Life Trust Recruitment Policy

## **7.0 Covid-19 – additional safeguarding responsibilities**

### **7.1 Keeping in touch with children including children not in school (also see the Safeguarding Covid updated guidance on the school website)**

Contact details for parents and carers, and additional emergency contact numbers should be kept up to date. There is a recognition that there may be changes in details about family circumstances over this time. The school will do everything possible to update contact and welfare information for children and their families.

The school will have regular contact arrangements with families and children when they are learning at home (during lockdown or when a bubble has to self-isolate).

### **7.2 Reporting concerns about children (face to face or via phone, video or similar)**

All staff, in school or working from home must understand how to raise a concern. This should be immediate reporting to the DSL / Team using existing school processes. Staff could (face to face or digitally)

- Talk to a DSL/Team member if they are in school
- If DSL/team are not in school go to the SLT member in school; additionally contact the DSL or team member by phone, video or similar
- Use counselling / pastoral team to support a disclosure in school if the DSL/team are not on site.

All types of risk and harm sadly continue. As children return to school disclosures will rise, it is important that COVID 19 does not overshadow and stop staff from seeing harm and identifying and raising concerns.

Staff should be aware that some risk areas are likely to have increased:

- Domestic violence and domestic abuse
- Child criminal exploitation
- Prevent
- Welfare concerns because of bereavement, poverty or job loss

### 7.3 Mental Health

Appropriate support for children's mental health and well-being should be in place. It may be delivered in school, or from specialist staff or multi agency support services.

The school will work to ensure that the request from Havering Youth Parliament is a key element in supporting all children. *"Please take our range of emotions into account"*.

### 7.4 Learning online

During lockdown or when bubbles are required to self-isolate, the school will continue to provide learning opportunities. This will be a blend of activities to undertake at home, online activities and live virtual opportunities. There will be protocols for participation, for school staff and for the children at home. School staff should be aware that if they observe anything or concern, or if a disclosure is made in a virtual environment, the usual procedures apply and the concern will be taken straight to the DSL.

Links to school policies (school to amend)

- Behaviour policy
- Online safety policy
- Online learning guidance
- Procedures for virtual learning / virtual meetings

## 8.0

### Types of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns

These definitions are from 'Working Together' (2018) and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2020):

**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. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place

wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

- 8.1 **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.
- 8.2 **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. It may involve serious bullying (including online bullying), 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.
- 8.3 **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). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education
- 8.4 **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 mental or physical 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.**
- 8.5 **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**
- Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

CSE and CCE do not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

#### **8.5.1 Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country. forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- 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.

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

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;

It can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity; 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).

The above CCE indicators can also be indicators of CSE, as can:

- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant

#### **8.5.3 County lines**

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] 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 criminal activity in a number of locations including schools, colleges, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, (both from home and school).

Staff must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they have concerns about a child.

- 8.6 **So-called 'honour-based' abuse - which includes FGM, Forced Marriage and Breast Ironing:** encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of honour bases abuse are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Staff need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of honour-based abuse, or already having suffered honour-based abuse.

Staff must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they have concerns about a child.

- 8.7 **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):** FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old; however, it is believed that the majority of cases happen between the ages of 4 and 10.

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 professionals (including teachers) to immediately 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. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils.

Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should take the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and together they would go to the Police.

If there are concerns that a girl is at risk or there is a suspected case, the in-school procedures should be followed, taking the concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- 8.8 **Breast ironing:** is where young pubescent girls' breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely. The custom uses large stones, a hammer or spatulas that have been heated over scorching coals to compress the breast tissue, or an elastic belt to press the breasts so as to prevent them from growing in girls as young as 9 years old. Much like Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), breast-ironing has been

identified by the UN as one of five under-reported crimes relating to female-to-female/gender-based violence.

The practice is performed usually by mothers and female relatives and it is believed that by carrying out this act:

- young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction
- it will prevent early pregnancy that would tarnish the family name
- it will allow the girl to pursue education rather than be forced into early marriage
- it will delay pregnancy by “removing” signs of puberty
- girls may not appear sexually attractive to men

Most at risk: Young pubescent girls usually aged between 9 – 15 years old. It is a well-kept secret between the young girl and her female relatives who are likely to carry out the practice.

**8.9 Forced marriage:** Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

Staff must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they have concerns about a child.

**8.10 Prevent, Radicalisation and Extremism:** As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, schools have a duty to ‘prevent people being drawn into terrorism’. This is the ‘Prevent Duty’. Where staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalized, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Preventing radicalisation: Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. 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) and settings (such as the internet).

As with other safeguarding risks all staff should be alert to changes in children’s behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation taking their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism and is able to support staff with any concerns they may have.

We use the curriculum to ensure that children and young people understand how people with extreme views share these with others, especially using the internet.

We are committed to ensuring that our pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the school’s core values alongside the fundamental British Values, supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.



- 8.11 **Sharing nudes and semi nudes (formerly Sexting):** The guidance relates to the taking, sending or sharing indecent, sexually explicit images or videos of children (under the age of 18). This may be via social networking sites and instant messaging apps and services.

This School is clear that nude images or videos of children are illegal. It may have extremely damaging and long-lasting consequences. The school understands that not all incidents are as a result of grooming by a perpetrator, and that some incidents are initiated by the child, as a demonstration of body confidence, body positivity, or maybe as part of an age appropriate relationship. We have a responsibility to work with children, their parents and carers in ensuring that all pupils are fully aware of the dangers and possible repercussions of sharing nude images and videos.

- 8.12 **Upskirting:** typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

- 8.13 **Missing:** A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff should follow the school's procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions.

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of FGM or risk of forced marriage. Staff should be aware of the school unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

The school holds at least two contact numbers for every child. These will be used as part of the First Day Calling process.

- 8.14 **Children and the court system:** All staff should be aware that any child involved in legal proceedings should be made known to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Children are sometime required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. Where there is a family break up making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families.

- 8.15 **Children with family members in prison:** Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. Staff must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they know a child has a family member in prison.

- 8.16 **Serious Violence:** All staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved in 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 well being 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.

- 8.17 **Domestic abuse and Domestic Violence:** 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; and emotional. 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.

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

Staff must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they have concerns about a child.

#### 8.17.1 Operation Encompass

At The Bridge School we are working in partnership with the Metropolitan Police and Children's Services to identify and provide appropriate support to pupils who have experienced domestic violence in their household; this scheme is called Operation Encompass.

The purpose of Operation Encompass is to safeguard and support children and young people who have been involved in or witness to a domestic abuse incident. Domestic abuse impacts on children in a number of ways. Children are at increased risk of physical injury during an incident, either by accident or because they attempt to intervene. Even when not directly injured, children are greatly distressed by witnessing the physical and emotional suffering of a parent.

Encompass has been created to highlight this situation. It is the implementation of key partnership working between the police and schools. The aim of sharing information with local schools is to allow 'Key Adults' the opportunity of engaging with the child and to provide access to support that allows them to remain in a safe but secure familiar environment.

Police and school work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform (via a secure online system) the DSL before the child or children arrive at school the following day.

On receipt of any information, the DSL will decide on the appropriate support the child requires, this should be covert dependent on the needs and wishes of the child. All information sharing and resulting actions will be undertaken in accordance with the Metropolitan Police and MASH Encompass Protocol Data Sharing Agreement. We will record this information and store this information in accordance with the record keeping procedures outlined in this policy.

The purpose and procedures in Operation Encompass have been shared with all parents and governors, is detailed as part of the school's Safeguarding Policy and published on our school website.

At The Bridge School our key Operation Encompass link is Toni Cox.

- 8.18 **Homelessness:** Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead has contact details and referral routes in to the Havering Housing so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being



asked to leave a property. There should always be a MASH referral if a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

In most cases school staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it is also recognised that in some cases 16- and 17-year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the designated safeguarding lead will ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

Staff must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they have concerns about a child.

- 8.19 **Peer on peer abuse:** Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer on peer abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including online bullying) within intimate partner relationships; sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

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

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap. They can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that **all** victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"; and
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Staff must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they have concerns about a child.

- 8.20 **Online Safety:** The detail of online harm and abuse is in the school's ICT Policy.

The online world develops and changes at great speed. New opportunities, challenges and risks are appearing all the time. The DSL supported by the DSL team and specific staff who have expertise in Online Safety will stay up to date with the latest devices, platforms, apps, trends and related threats.

The school and the governing body keep children safe online when they are in school and when they are learning online at home. This includes ensuring children know how to recognise risk and ask for help.

DfE 'Teaching Online Safety in school' outlines how the curriculum will support children to learn about risk and responsibility.

Online safety concerns will be taken to Katherine Hart- DSL in the same way as any other form of harm, or risk of harm.

The school will help pupils stay online by helping them to recognise:

- online content which tries to make people believe something false is true and/or mislead (misinformation and disinformation),
- techniques that companies use to persuade people to buy something,
- ways in which games and social media companies try to keep users online longer (persuasive/sticky design); and
- criminal activities such as grooming

The school will help pupils recognise acceptable and unacceptable behaviours by:

- looking at why people behave differently online, for example how anonymity (you do not know me) and invisibility (you cannot see me) affect what people do,
- looking at how online emotions can be intensified resulting in mob mentality,
- teaching techniques (relevant on and offline) to defuse or calm arguments, for example a disagreement with friends, and disengage from unwanted contact or content online; and
- considering unacceptable online behaviours often passed off as so-called social norms or just banter. For example, negative language that can be used, and in some cases is often expected, as part of online gaming and the acceptance of misogynistic, homophobic and racist language that would never be tolerated offline.

The school will help pupils identify and manage risk by:

- discussing the ways in which someone may put themselves at risk online,
- discussing risks posed by another person's online behaviour,
- discussing when risk taking can be positive and negative,
- discussing "online reputation" and the positive and negative aspects of an online digital footprint. This could include longer-term considerations, i.e how past online behaviours could impact on their future, when applying for a place at university or a job for example,
- discussing the risks vs, the benefits of sharing information online and how to make a judgement about when and how to share and who to share with; and
- asking questions such as what might happen if I post something online? Who will see it? Who might they send it to?

## **9.0 Possible signs and symptoms of abuse**

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered. This is not an exclusive list and many of the signs and symptoms could fall into more than one category. Guidance on recognising signs and symptoms of abuse can be found in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. Also students with learning difficulties often

exhibit some of these signs (e.g. reluctance to get undressed for PE, constant tiredness) which are not necessarily signs of abuse but symptoms of their condition; however, it must also be remembered that disabled children are 3 times more likely to experience abuse or neglect than non-disabled peers.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- being more prone to peer group isolation than other children;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

### 9.1 **Physical abuse**

- Unexplained injuries, bites, bruises or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Refusal to discuss the causes of injuries
- Untreated injuries
- Disclosure of punishment which appears excessive
- Withdrawal from physical contact/aggressive behaviour
- Arms & legs kept covered in hot weather (excluding for reasons of cultural dress)
- Fear of returning home
- Fear of medical help
- Self-destructive tendency
- Running away

### 9.2 **Emotional abuse**

- Physical, mental, emotional or developmental lag
- Domestic violence
- Disclosure of punishment which appears excessive
- Over-reaction to making mistakes or fear of punishment
- Continual self-deprecation
- Sudden speech disorders
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate responses to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviours
- Self-harm
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug or solvent abuse
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing, scavenging

### 9.3 **Sexual abuse**

- Sudden changes in behaviour
- Displays of affection which are inappropriate
- Alleged promiscuity or sexualised behaviour
- Fear of undressing

- Regression to younger behaviour
- Inappropriate internet use and possible 'grooming' concerns
- Genital itching or other genital/anal pain/injury
- Distrust of familiar adult
- Unexplained gifts of money, mobile phones etc.
- Depression and withdrawal
- Apparent secrecy about social activities or the identity of "special friends"
- Wetting or soiling, day and night
- Sleep disturbances or nightmares
- Chronic illness, especially throat infections and sexually transmitted disease

#### 9.4 **Neglect**

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Untreated medical problems or unmet special needs
- Low self-esteem
- Neurotic behaviour
- Poor social relationships
- Deterioration in school performance
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging

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

- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education or not taking part in education
- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infection
- Mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing
- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour

Staff should also be aware that many children and young people who are victims of sexual exploitation do not recognise themselves as such.

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

The World Health Organisation identify girls between 4 and 10 as being the most at risk. FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out-of-school to visit an 'at-risk' country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM.

Indications that FGM may have already taken place may include:

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable
- spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
- spending long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems

- frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
- prolonged or repeated absences from school or college, especially with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return
- reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations
- confiding in a professional without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear
- talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

## 9.7 Prevent, Radicalisation and Extremism:

9.7.1 **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.

9.7.2 **Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

9.7.3 **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.

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- 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.)

- secretive behaviour
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- advocating violence towards others

## 9.8 Handling sexting and a semi- nude image or video incident:

UKCIS "Sharing nudes and semi-nudes" will always be used to triage concerns.

It is important that school actions do not blame, shame or criminalise the child.

There should always be an initial review meeting, led by the DSL. This should consider the initial evidence and aim to establish:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to a young person or young people  
*When assessing the risks the following should be considered:*
  - Why was the imagery shared?
  - Was the young person coerced or put under pressure to produce the imagery?

Who has shared the imagery?  
Where has the imagery been shared?  
Are there any adults involved in the sharing of imagery?  
Does the child involved have additional vulnerabilities?  
Does the young person understand consent?  
Has the young person taken part in this kind of activity before?

- If a referral should be made to the police and/or children's social care.  
Do not refer automatically, unless there are additional concerns about the pressure applied on the child to take/share the image, or unless there are sexual aspects involved which are not in line with the child's age/stage.
- Imagery should not be viewed, only view if it is essential to keep the child safe.
- What further information is required to decide on the best response
- Whether the imagery has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms. This may be unknown.
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images from devices or online services.
- Any relevant facts about the young person involved which would influence risk assessment
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual
- Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved - in most cases parents/carers should be involved

An immediate referral to police and/or children's social care should be made if at this initial stage:

1. The incident involves an adult
2. There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example owing to special educational needs)
3. What you know about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
4. The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the imagery is under 13
5. You have reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming).

If none of the above apply then the school may decide not to involve police or children's social care (the school can choose to escalate the incident at any time if further information/concerns come to light).

The decision to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care would be made in cases when the DSL is confident that they have enough information to assess the risks to pupils involved and the risks can be managed within the school's pastoral support and disciplinary framework and if appropriate local network of support.

Image taking and sharing includes **Upskirting**: where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence.

Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

9.9 **Private fostering:** A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

9.9.1 Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.

9.9.2 Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases, privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or are involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

9.9.3 Schools have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although schools have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers, to inform the school. However, it should be clear to the school who has parental responsibility.

On admission to the school, we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered

School staff should notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The school itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

9.10 **Home stay / Exchange hosts:** If children are staying with a family as part of an exchange, the parents and over 18s need to have an enhanced DBS check (as a volunteer). The school will also decide whether they will do an enhanced DBS check for 16- and 17-year olds who also live in the house

## 10.0 What to do if you suspect that abuse may have occurred

10.1 You must report the concerns immediately, on the same working day, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputies. You may report verbally, but this must be followed up by a written account, on the same working day.

10.2 **The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and team members is to:**

10.2.1 Obtain information from staff, supply staff, volunteers, children or parents and carers who have child protection concerns and to record this information.

DSL and team members will be supported by nurture and pastoral staff, such as ELSA, Thrive, counsellor etc.

10.2.2 Assess the information quickly and carefully and ask for further information as appropriate.

10.2.3 They should also consult with Havering services in the first instance (e.g. MASH



including Early Help, LADO)

- 10.2.4 The Designated Safeguarding Lead should make a referral to the MASH (social care / police) or the police without delay if it is agreed during the consultation or if there is an immediate risk to the child.
- 10.2.5 The referral should be made to the MASH team in which the child lives, e.g. if a child lives in another borough, the referral needs to be made to the MASH team in that borough / authority.
- 10.2.6 A telephone referral should be made and confirmed in writing using MARF online on the same working day if requested. The MASH team should acknowledge the referral within one working day and should be contacted if no acknowledgement has been received within 3 working days.
- 10.2.7 Following referral, the MASH team should consider the next course of action, record their decision in writing and notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead that they have made a decision.
- 10.2.8 Concerns will not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.
- 10.2.9 It is the right of any individual to make direct referrals to the child protection agencies. If for any reason you believe that the Designated Safeguarding Lead has not responded appropriately to your concerns, it is then your responsibility to contact the MASH and the LADO immediately.

### **10.3 Responsibilities**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and team are responsible for:

- 10.3.1 Adhering to the Havering LSP (Local Safeguarding Partnership), London Borough of Havering and The Bridge School procedures with regard to referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse.
- 10.3.2 Keeping full written chronological records of in-school concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
- 10.3.3 Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records.
- 10.3.4 Ensuring that an indication of further record-keeping is marked on the pupil records.
- 10.3.5 Checking the attendance of children subject to a Child Protection Plan on a daily basis.
- 10.3.6 Ensuring that any child currently who is subject to a Child Protection Plan who is absent without explanation is referred to MASH (Social Care).
- 10.3.7 Ensuring that where any child currently who is subject to a Child Protection Plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed. A digital copy of the child's information will be securely retained / archived by The Bridge School

### **11.0 Safeguarding and Child Protection processes**

#### **11.1 Social Care operating protocol COVID 19 (extract)**

This protocol is regularly reviewed and will be subject to change.



**Core response team:** There is a Social Care core team available each **day** to respond to statutory requests for services – CIN / CP / LAC

**Statutory meetings:** All meetings should be undertaken by video conferencing where possible to avoid physical contact.

**Visits to children:** Where Looked after Children are placed 20 miles or more, social workers and their managers will make the determination whether a video call (or similar) may be more appropriate at the time of the scheduled visit. Social Care will review this regularly to ensure children are appropriately safeguarded and their welfare needs are met.

Children on CP plans / CIN / LAC have been RAG rated according to risk and need. Ongoing frequency of visits and telephone / video call are agreed by the social care team.

#### 11.2 **Child Protection Conferences and Looked after Child reviews (LAC)**

**Conduct of Conferences:** Minimise unnecessary direct contact. Chairs will invite professionals, parents and the Minute taker to join the Conference by telephone call or video call, which will be pre-arranged by the Chair and Business Support Officer (BSO). The Chair will make the decision whether to hold one virtual meeting or several over no more than 3 days to obtain the views of the parent(s) and professionals.

**Conduct of Looked after Reviews:** LAC reviews include paper review, conference calls / video call with professionals, carers, families and child (ren).

This may not take place in one meeting but several over no more than 3 days. Attempts will be made by the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) to speak with the child via video / telephone dependent on their age, maturity and capability.

IROs will schedule the next LAC review in line with statutory expectations and in line with Covid-19 restrictions.

### 12.0 **Supporting children**

- 12.1 We recognise that a child who is abused or witness's violence and/or abuse may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth. We recognise that a child in these circumstances may feel helpless and humiliated. We recognise that a child may feel self blame.
- 12.2 We recognise that the school may provide the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- 12.3 We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.
- 12.4 The Bridge School will support all children through:
  - The curriculum
  - The school ethos
  - Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
  - Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school, giving children a sense of being valued.
  - Ensuring children know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.

- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- Notifying MASH (Social Care) as soon as there is a significant concern.
- Providing continuing support to a child about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the child's new school.

### **13.0 Supporting staff**

We recognise that staff working in The Bridge School who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to discuss the situation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and to seek further support as appropriate.

### **14.0 Safer Recruitment and allegations**

At The Bridge School we will ensure we practise Safe Recruitment by undertaking 3 yearly enhanced DBS checks of staff and volunteers who work with children. Recruitment adverts will highlight the priority that the school places on this and the school's commitment to safeguarding. References and medical checks will be made on all new staff, and all staff will have references on file.

The school will follow the guidance set out in

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020
- Local Safeguarding Partnership procedures
- London Child Protection Procedures 5<sup>th</sup> edition.

#### **14.1 Allegations against pupils – peer on peer abuse**

14.1.1 The school recognises the different forms peer on peer abuse, and is clear that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”.

14.1.2 Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Such abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures. Professionals should not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people and should not develop high thresholds before taking action.

14.1.3 Professionals should be aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.

14.1.4 Professionals should be aware of the added vulnerability of children and young people who have been the victims of violent crime (for example mugging), including the risk that they may respond to this by abusing younger or weaker children.

14.1.5 The alleged perpetrator is likely to have considerable unmet needs as well as posing a significant risk of harm to other children. Evidence suggests that such children may have suffered considerable disruption in their lives, may have witnessed or been subjected to physical or sexual abuse, may have problems in their educational development and may have committed other offences. They may therefore be suffering, or at risk of suffering, Significant Harm and be in need

of protection. Any long-term plan to reduce the risk posed by the alleged perpetrator must address their needs.

14.1.6 If one child or young person causes harm to another, this should not necessarily be dealt with as abuse: bullying, fighting and harassment between children are not generally seen as child protection issues. However, it may be appropriate to regard a young person's behaviour as abusive if:

- There is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the young people concerned; or
- The alleged perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children; or
- There are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

14.1.7 If the evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause severe harm to the victim, this should be regarded as abusive whether or not severe harm was actually caused

14.1.8 Further information is available in our separate Peer on Peer Abuse Policy.

## 14.2 Allegations against staff

14.2.1 At The Bridge School we recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children. Any concerns about the conduct of adults in the school should be taken to the Headteacher without delay or where that is not possible, to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO); any concerns about the Headteacher should go to the Chair of Governors and the LADO.

14.2.2 We understand that a child or 3<sup>rd</sup> party may make an allegation against a member of staff.

14.2.3 We understand that an allegation is wider than just those where it is considered that there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm. Some allegations may indicate that a staff member is unsuitable to work with children.

14.2.4 We will be guided by Working Together 2018 which defines an allegation as when an adult 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; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that they are unsuitable to work with children.

14.2.5 If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation, or having the concern, will immediately inform the Headteacher; this must be done on the same working day.

14.2.6 The Headteacher on all such occasions will discuss immediately, on the same working day, the content of the allegation with LADO, before taking any further action.

14.2.7 If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the member of staff will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult with the LADO; this must be done on the same working day. If the Chair of

Governors is not available, the member of staff must make direct contact with the LADO.

14.2.8 The school will not internally investigate until instructed by the LADO.

14.2.9 The school will follow the LA procedures for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which will be readily available in the school. These are also contained in the London Child Protection Procedures 5<sup>th</sup> edition.

### 14.3 **Whistleblowing**

All staff must be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

Further information is available in our Whistleblowing and Managing Allegations Policy.

## 15.0 **Safeguarding and the school culture**

### 15.1 **Reasonable force**

Our policy on reasonable force by staff is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that staff must only ever use reasonable force as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.

The school will, where appropriate, create individual plans to minimise the likelihood of challenging behaviour, and when it occurs there will be less use of physical restraint and other restrictive methods

We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures. Staff need to be aware that if a child sustains an injury as a result of physical intervention Safeguarding and Child Protection processes must be followed.

### 15.2 **Bullying**

Our policy on bullying, and online bullying, is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

### 15.3 **Incidents motivated by perceived differences**

Bullying and abuse can be motivated by perceived differences e.g. on the grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or other difference. We acknowledge that repeated incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

Safeguarding Policy

ICT Policy

Behaviour Management in Practice Policy

Racial Incidents Policy

Equality & Diversity Policy

SEND and Inclusion Policy

### 15.4 **Health & Safety**

Covid-19 Risk Assessment is in place, available to all staff and updated when needed.

Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from school when undertaking school trips and visits.

### 15.5 **Prevention**

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

The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.

### 15.6 **Other relevant school policies and guidance**

- Whistleblowing and Managing Allegations Policy
- Reasonable Force Policy
- Behaviour Policy, including online behaviour
- Peer on Peer Abuse Policy, including sexual violence and sexual harassment between children
- Anti-Bullying Policy, including online bullying
- Racial Incidents Policy, including online incidents
- Health & Safety Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- First Day Calling Policy
- Transgender Guidance

### 15.7 **Support and training**

We are committed to the provision of safeguarding training for all school staff, supply staff, paid and voluntary, including agency staff, and we recognise that staff must be regularly updated. Safeguarding and Child Protection is always part of our start of year professional development and induction every September.

In addition to the annual basic safeguarding training, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Team undertake training in inter-agency working at least bi-annually to keep their knowledge and skill up to date throughout the year.

All other staff undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, which is kept up to date by annual refresher training – this training cycles round a range of key topics. This will be additionally supported every year with training and updates provided by the Designated Safeguarding Lead through staff meetings, training days, written updates and briefings.

All Staff will be required to sign annually that they have read Part One and Annexe A of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2020).

## **16.0 Managing Child Protection Cases**

### **16.1 Children potentially at greater risk of harm (Child in Need and Child Protection)**

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

Where children need a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding (e.g. responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and promoting welfare (e.g. considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

### **16.2 Management of children subject to Child Protection investigation or subject to a Child Protection Plan**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and team will contribute to the child protection investigation and attend or contribute to the Strategy meetings.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy will attend the Initial Child Protection Conference to share any relevant information and provide a written report for the conference.

If the child is placed on the Child Protection Plan, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy is responsible for ensuring that the school participates appropriately in the Child Protection Plan and attends all Core Group Meetings and Child Protection Conferences.

Information will be shared with staff on a "need to know" basis but key personnel working with child should have sufficient information to support them in their work with that child.

If a child with a Child Protection Plan has an unexplained absence from school, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the Social Worker.

### **16.3 Record keeping**

16.3.1 DfE guidance says that the Designated Safeguarding Lead will keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of referrals and concerns. These should be kept separately from academic records, in a confidential file stored in a secure cabinet, accessible only by appropriate senior staff members. Current cases are exempt from examination by parents or children unless subject to a court order. Subject Access Requests may be made for records of historic, closed issues.

16.3.2 Havering LSCB promotes high quality record keeping in respect of all concerns about children's welfare. The records should be completed in a timely manner and include all relevant information such as dates, times, others involved, witnesses etc. All records should be signed and dated. The child's confidential record should include a front sheet chronology of concerns to support the understanding of the impact of past concerns, patterns and escalation of concerns.

16.3.3 If a child transfers to another school or other educational establishment, the Designated Safeguarding Lead must forward securely the child protection file to a named person at the receiving school/establishment under a separate cover

from the academic records. The file should be marked 'confidential, to be opened by addressee only.'

16.3.4 The Designated Safeguarding Lead should retain a digital copy of the child protection file, which should be stored in a secure area accessible only by appropriate senior staff members. Child Protection records about a student who has ceased to become of compulsory school age should be archived and catalogued. Records must be kept until a child reaches 25 years of age; child protection records must be kept for 35 years after the child leaves the school.

16.3.5 When making a referral, the referrer should keep a written record of:

- Discussions with child
- Discussions with parent/s
- Discussions with staff
- Information provided to the MASH
- Advice given and decisions taken (clearly times, dated and signed)

16.3.6 The referrer should confirm verbal and telephone referrals in writing within 48 hours, using the inter-agency referral form.

16.3.7 The Bridge School will ensure that we keep up-to-date personal data records of all the children by regularly reminding parents to inform us of any change in family circumstances and requesting an annual update.

#### **16.4 Confidentiality and information sharing**

16.4.1 We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

16.4.2 The Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose personal information about a student to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

16.4.3 However, all staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

16.4.4 When considering sharing information the staff will:

- 16.4.4.1 Remember that GDPR is not a barrier to sharing information, it provides the framework
- 16.4.4.2 Be open & honest with the person from the outset about how information may be shared
- 16.4.4.3 Seek advice, do not fail to share information because you are unsure what to do
- 16.4.4.4 Share with consent where appropriate & respect the wishes of those who refuse consent unless you believe that there is a risk of harm to child if the information is not shared
- 16.4.4.5 Consider safety and well-being of the child and base information sharing decisions on this
- 16.4.4.6 Ensure all information shared is Necessary, Proportionate, Relevant, Accurate, Timely & Secure. Ensure any third party or hearsay information is identified and that you have consent to share it



16.4.4.7 Keep a record of your decision and reasons for it. Record what you have shared, with whom and the purpose.

## **17.0 Supervisory arrangements for the management of children in Alternative Provision and in out of school hours' activities.**

- 17.1 We will aim to protect children from abuse and team members from false allegations by adopting the following guidelines:
- 17.2 All alternative provision, clubs and child minders must have appropriate Ofsted registration or London Borough of Havering AP quality Assurance.
- 17.3 All alternative provision and clubs independent of the school must have their own child protection policy & procedure in line with the school's
- 17.4 All alternative provision and clubs will keep a register of all children attending the activities and give a copy to the school.  
Alternative provision registers will be taken promptly and uploaded such that they are visible to the school on the same day/in the same session. All absences without explanation will be notified to the school immediately.
- 17.5 All alternative provision and clubs will keep a register of all team members (both paid staff members, supply staff and volunteers) and ensure they meet the requirements of the DBS.
- 17.6 Registers will include arrival and departure times.
- 17.7 All alternative provision and clubs will keep a record of all sessions including monitoring and evaluation records.
- 17.8 The team members will record any unusual events on an accident/incident form. All safeguarding concerns will be communicated immediately to the school DSL.
- 17.9 Written consent from a parent or guardian will be obtained for every child attending the alternative provision / activities.
- 17.10 Team members should not be alone with a child, although we recognise that there may be times when this may be necessary or helpful; in such circumstances another adult should be told.
- 17.11 Team members may escort children of the same sex to the toilet but are not expected to be involved with toileting, unless the child has a special need that has been brought to our attention by the parent/guardian and a care plan is in place for the child naming them as part of the care plan.
- 17.12 All team members should treat all children with dignity and respect in both attitude, language and actions.

## **18.0 Key contacts**

### **18.1 MASH Team**

01708 433222 (day)

01708 433999 (night)

[tmash@haverling.gov.uk](mailto:tmash@haverling.gov.uk)

<https://my.haverling.gov.uk/Pages/OnlineForms/Multi-Agency-Referral-form.aspx#Information>

### **18.2 LADO**



Lisa Kennedy  
[lado@havering.gov.uk](mailto:lado@havering.gov.uk)  
01708 431653

### 18.3 Senior Inspector Safeguarding

Penny Patterson [Penny.patterson@havering.gov.uk](mailto:Penny.patterson@havering.gov.uk) 01708 433829  
Michelle Wain [michelle.wain@havering.gov.uk](mailto:michelle.wain@havering.gov.uk) 01708 431650  
Carol Rockey [carol.rockey@havering.gov.uk](mailto:carol.rockey@havering.gov.uk) 01708 431651

### 18.4 Online Safety

Amanda Jackson – [Amanda.jackson@havering.gov.uk](mailto:Amanda.jackson@havering.gov.uk)  
Dave Smith – [dave.smith@havering.gov.uk](mailto:dave.smith@havering.gov.uk)

### 18.5 Havering CAD team

Social Care : CAD Duty - [CADDuty@havering.gov.uk](mailto:CADDuty@havering.gov.uk)  
Education: SEN - [Sen@havering.gov.uk](mailto:Sen@havering.gov.uk)

### 18.6 Havering Virtual School -

[vsht@havering.gov.uk](mailto:vsht@havering.gov.uk)

### 18.7 NSPCC whistleblowing helpline

0800 028 0285 and [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)  
[www.nspcc.org.uk/Helpline](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Helpline)

### 18.8 SO15 Counter Terrorism Command

DC Gavin Moore  
07919628083 or 0203 276 1100  
[Gavin.F.moore@met.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Gavin.F.moore@met.pnn.police.uk)  
PC Jag Shina  
07767765808  
[Jag.s.shina@met.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Jag.s.shina@met.pnn.police.uk)

### 18.9 LBH Prevent and Hate Crime Coordinator

Jess Finnin  
01708 433 225  
[jessica.finnin@havering.gov.uk](mailto:jessica.finnin@havering.gov.uk) & [prevent@havering.gov.uk](mailto:prevent@havering.gov.uk)

### 18.10 LBH CSE & Missing lead

Lorraine Bartlett  
[lorraine.Bartlett@havering.gov.uk](mailto:lorraine.Bartlett@havering.gov.uk)  
CME Children Missing Education  
[cme@havering.gov.uk](mailto:cme@havering.gov.uk) 01708 431777

### 18.11 UK Safer Internet Centre

POSH Professionals Online Safety Helpline for schools  
0344 381 4772  
<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/professionals-online-safety-helpline>

### 18.12 NSPCC

Online Safety Helpline for Professionals and Parents  
0808 8005002  
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/services-and-resources/nspcc-helpline/>

#### 18.13 **LBH & East London Gangs & Serious Youth Violence**

Louise Giles, Detective Sergeant  
East Area Gangs Unit  
0203 276 0523  
[GangsUnit@met.pnn.police.uk](mailto:GangsUnit@met.pnn.police.uk)

#### 18.14 **Operation Encompass**

Bekir Bekir, Detective Constable  
East Area BCU - Safeguarding  
MASH Team, Mercury House  
0203 276 2800  
[Bekir.Bekir@met.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Bekir.Bekir@met.pnn.police.uk)  
<https://www.operationencompass.org/>

#### 18.15 **LBH Alternative Provision**

Darren Purdie  
[darren.purdie@haverling.gov.uk](mailto:darren.purdie@haverling.gov.uk)

18.16 Safeguarding Governor Anna Hawkins c/o 01708 764370

18.17 DSL – Toni Cox – 01708 764370

[Info@bridge-life.co.uk](mailto:Info@bridge-life.co.uk)

18.18 Safeguarding Team: Toni Cox Maria Jackson

### 19.0 **Where to go for further information:**

19.1 Ofsted: Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills 2019  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-safeguarding-in-early-years-education-and-skills>

19.2 Havering Local Safeguarding Partnership  
[https://www.haverling.gov.uk/info/20083/safeguarding\\_children](https://www.haverling.gov.uk/info/20083/safeguarding_children)

19.3 Havering: MARF  
[https://www.haverling.gov.uk/downloads/download/306/multi-agency\\_referral\\_form\\_marf](https://www.haverling.gov.uk/downloads/download/306/multi-agency_referral_form_marf)

19.4 Havering: Missing protocol  
[www.haverling.gov.uk/missingchildren](http://www.haverling.gov.uk/missingchildren)

19.5 Havering: Online CSE toolkit  
<https://www.haverling.gov.uk/Pages/Services/Sexual-exploitation.aspx>

19.6 Havering HES Hub COVID 19 guidance  
<http://www.hes.org.uk/Page/16925>

19.7 London Child Protection Procedures, edition 5  
<http://www.londoncp.co.uk/>

19.8 DfE: Statutory guidance: Working together to safeguard children 2018 (with Dec 2020 updates)

- 19.9 DfE Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers May 2020  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>
- 19.10 DfE Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19) May 2020  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>
- 19.11 General COVID 19 guidance for educational settings May 2020  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>
- 20.0 DfE Coronavirus (COVID-19): Supporting vulnerable children and young people May 2020  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>
- 20.1 DfE: Teaching Online Safety in schools 2019  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-online-safety-in-schools>
- 20.2 DfE: Statutory guidance School exclusion, May 2020  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>
- 20.3 DfE: Relationship Education and Relationship and Sex Education, July 2020  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>
- 20.4 DfE: Behaviour and discipline in schools, July 2020  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-and-discipline-in-schools>
- 21.0 DfE – Mental Health and Behaviour in schools  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>
- 21.1 DfE: Mental health and behaviour in schools, November 2018  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>
- 21.2 DfE: Advice what to do if you are worried that a child is being abused 2015  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>
- 21.3 DfE: Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2017  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>
- 21.4 DfE Guidance: Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges 2018  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>
- 21.5 DfE Guidance: Protecting children from radicalisation: the prevent duty  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>
- 21.6 DfE: Searching, screening and confiscation at school  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation>

- 21.7 DfE: Guidance: Safeguarding practitioners: information sharing advice 2018  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>
- 21.8 Home Office: Preventing youth violence and gang involvement  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/418131/Preventing\\_youth\\_violence\\_and\\_gang\\_involvement\\_v3\\_March2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418131/Preventing_youth_violence_and_gang_involvement_v3_March2015.pdf)
- 21.9 Home Office: Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>
- 21.10 UKCIS: Sharing nudes and semi nudes  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>
- 21.11 UKCIS: Tackling race and faith targeted bullying face to face and online  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-race-and-faith-targeted-bullying-face-to-face-and-online-a-guide-for-schools>
- 21.12 UKCIS: Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-protecting-professionals-in-early-years-settings-online-safety-considerations>
- 21.13 UKCIS: Online safety in schools and colleges: Questions from the Governing Board 2020  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/online-safety-in-schools-and-colleges-questions-from-the-governing-board>
- 21.14 UKCIS: Education for a connected world 2020  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-a-connected-world>
- 21.15 LGfL: online safety policies  
<http://os.lgfl.net>
- 21.16 Gov.UK: Safeguarding children, latest documents <https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/safeguarding-children/latest>
- 21.17 NPCC- When to call the police  
<https://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/Children%20and%20Young%20people/When%20to%20call%20police%20guidance%20for%20schools%20and%20colleges.pdf>
- 21.18 NSPCC, Undertaking remote teaching and learning safely  
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/news/2020/march/undertaking-remote-teaching-safely/>