

Leytonstone School Safeguarding Policy



Waltham Forest
LADO & Safeguarding in Education Team

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Ratified by	Leytonstone School Governing Body
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Leytonstone School Safeguarding Policy

	Leytonstone School												
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<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Safeguarding Level 3 training completion</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Marta Hotez</td><td>06.06.2023</td></tr> <tr> <td>Innes Weir</td><td>06.06.2023</td></tr> <tr> <td>Paul Hunt</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Mallainee Martin</td><td>03.06.2023</td></tr> <tr> <td>Tess Reedy</td><td>05.10.22</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Safeguarding Level 3 training completion		Marta Hotez	06.06.2023	Innes Weir	06.06.2023	Paul Hunt		Mallainee Martin	03.06.2023	Tess Reedy	05.10.22	
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Purpose & Scope

Our Commitment to Safeguarding

We believe that all children have a right to be safe and should be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect.

Although reporting concerns can be uncomfortable for staff, and be unpleasant for families, at Leytonstone School, we recognise that it is better to help children, young people and their families early, before issues escalate and become more damaging.

Because safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, all staff are committed to recognising and reporting all concerns relating to child safety, wellbeing and in particular are vigilant to spot signs of abuse and maltreatment.

As such, we promise to:

- Be observant and alert to signs of abuse
- Be curious and question explanations given by parents / children / staff
- Be compassionate, honest and clear
- Ask for support when we feel at the limit of our experience / patience / skills
- Understand and follow school policies and procedures

Children and young people learn and thrive best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.

Leytonstone School aims to offer an environment where children feel welcome, safe, stimulated and where children are free to enjoy learning and develop in confidence.

The **purpose of this policy** is to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at our school.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's 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.

In order to take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well, **Leytonstone School** will:

- Safeguard children both preventatively and responsively
- Ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with children
- Promote good health, effective management of medical conditions, and the development of self-care in children & young people
- Have clear standards of behaviour for staff / volunteers and children / young people
- Manage behaviour by anticipating possible concerns, prevention strategies, and clear, fair responses to challenging behaviour
- Maintain records that document safeguarding concerns over time, including low-level worries about a child or young people that together may paint a picture of concern, as well as the details of how concerns were followed up and resolved
- Ensure that all policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and wellbeing are updated annually in collaboration with the board of governors (or similar).

Who is responsible for Safeguarding?

No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's business. Staff should at all times consider what is in the best interest of the child. This policy applies to **all staff**, including paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, organisations contracted to deliver services within **Leytonstone School**, one-off visitors, students or anyone working on behalf of **the school**.

This policy relates to all children (anyone up to their 18th birthday) with whom **Leytonstone School** works.

This policy will be readily available via our website for practitioners, parents and partners.

The policy will be given to parents prior to children commencing, and following each update. Support and consideration will be given to those parents for whom English is not a first language.

The voice of the child

All staff will endeavour to ensure that their approach is child- and family-centred. This means that they will consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child, and how to approach families with compassion and respect.

Staff will always seek to understand and give voice to the lived experience of a given child and young person within **Leytonstone School**, at home and within their wider community, even if children and young people are unable / unwilling to express their experience themselves.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is a member of the Senior Leadership Team, who takes ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. With the support of the Head Teacher, Senior Leadership Team and Safeguarding Team, she provides leadership and vision in respect of safeguarding and child protection, ensuring a 'whole school safeguarding culture'. She also provides oversight for and supports the management of safeguarding cases within Leytonstone School. The DDSLs are trained to the same level as the DSL and are able to take over seamlessly in the event of the DSL being absent.

The DSL role includes, but is not limited by, the following:

Provides Advice & Support

- Acts as a source of advice, support, expertise and liaison to the school community.
- Is available; the DSL or Deputy will be on site at all times to provide cover during school hours and available to support staff with concerns.

- A duty rota will be organized to provide staff with advice, information and signposting out of hours and over weekends / school holidays in the event of an emergency. If, for some reason, the DSL is inaccessible, staff and volunteers must make a referral without delay.
- Helps promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school leadership staff.
- Supports teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children and maintain high aspirations for this cohort.
- Takes lead responsibility for training pupils and parents on online safety and oversees how issues, when arisen, are followed up (KCSIE 2023, Annex C)
- Takes a lead role in understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place in school

Provides Expertise

- Understands the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and procedures, including Early Help,
- Has a working knowledge of relevant national guidance in respect of all specific safeguarding issues highlighted in Parts 1 & 5, and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, ensuring that all staff receive necessary training, information and guidance,
- Understands how to identify and respond to specific needs that can increase the vulnerability of children; has an understanding of specific harms that put children at risk,
- Has a good understanding of the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have on education, behaviour, mental health and wellbeing and what is needed in responding to this.

Maintains & Manages Records

- Keeps detailed records in confidential files, ideally via an online safeguarding recording system, that are separate from the main pupil file and stored securely.
- Ensures that, when a pupil under the age of 18 years leaves Leytonstone School, all child protection records are passed to the new setting (separately from the main pupil file and ensuring secure transit). If the child is the subject of an open case to Children's Social Care, the pupil's social worker is also informed.

Champions Children's Wellbeing

- Encourages a culture of listening to and taking account of children's wishes and feelings.
 - Is alert to the specific needs of children with special educational needs, children in need, children subject to child protection or care proceedings, children in care, young carers, children with particular vulnerabilities (see below) in order to provide effective pastoral support and liaison with other agencies.
 - Works closely with the Mental Health Lead (Innes Weir) on cases where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health; oversees mental health provision in school.
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- Ensures that children and young people are supported to be able to identify risk in their lives or those of their peers in an age-appropriate way, and that they know how they can report it.
- Is Designated Teacher for children who are looked after by the local authority and those who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders, or who were adopted from state care outside of England.

Refers to external agencies and is the primary point of contact for safeguarding

- Attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences, strategy meetings and multi-agency sexual exploitation (MASE) meetings.
- Co-ordinates Leytonstone School's contribution to child protection plans as part of core groups, attending and actively participating in core group meetings.
- Develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies, including the local safeguarding partnership.
- Refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care and police as appropriate.
- Works in partnership with social workers and with safeguarding partnership to support the child.
- Works alongside SENDCo and Pastoral teams.
- Liaises with the link governor for safeguarding and the Head Teacher.

Supports and Liaises with Parents, Carers & Families

- Ensures parents are aware of the school's role in safeguarding and that referrals about suspected abuse and neglect may be made.
- Promotes supportive engagement with parents.
- Ensures that the safeguarding policies are made publicly available (e.g., on the website) and are easily accessible to all (staff, parents, children, those for whom English is not a first language).

Sets and Communicates Policy

- Updates safeguarding policies (safeguarding, child protection, online safety, safer recruitment, code of conduct, etc) annually in line with the Local Safeguarding Partnership and statutory requirements.
- Ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood:
 - [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2023 (Part 1 and Annex A for all classroom-based staff and Part 1 or Annex A for staff do not work regularly directly with children)
 - The Safeguarding Policy
 - The Staff Code of Conduct policy (code of conduct)
- Ensures that all staff complete a test to demonstrate understanding of KCSIE 2023 (Part 1)
- Ensures that the child safeguarding policy and procedures are reviewed and updated at least annually, working with the whole school/college community of pupils, parents, staff, volunteers and governors and/or proprietors regarding this.
- Keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training.

Coordinates Training & Induction

- Develops a training strategy to ensure that all staff obtain the appropriate training / updates, skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively within the Local Safer Partnership requirements.

- Undertakes appropriate training themselves and is given appropriate time and resources to carry out the role.
- Ensures that all staff understand that if they have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately, either by speaking to the DSL (or a deputy) or, in exceptional circumstances, taking responsibility to make a referral to Children's Social Care.
- Ensures that all staff know how to make a referral to children's social care.

Ensures Safer Recruitment / Management of Allegations against Staff, Supply Teachers, Volunteers and Contractors

- Ensures Safer Recruitment as per the Safer Recruitment policy; develops safeguarding induction strategy for all new / temporary staff.
- Ensures all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, have read the School's Safeguarding Policy, KCSIE Part 1, 2023 and that they know the protocol of raising concerns around pupils in the school.
- Ensures that the Head Teacher is aware of the responsibility under [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) 2018 to refer all allegations that a child has been harmed by or that children may be at risk of harm from a member of staff or volunteer to the Designated Officer (DO) in the Local Authority within one working day prior to any internal investigation; and to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) as appropriate.

It is important that DSLs obtain a full and rich picture of children's experience. As soon as staff identify indicators of concern, they should record all concerns (including lower-level/pastoral concerns about a child's wellbeing – be it expressed in behaviour, presentation, relationships) on **CPOMs**, and if the concerns are serious, they should speak to the DSL without delay.

The Head Teacher

Although the DSL takes responsibility for Safeguarding in Leytonstone School, the Head Teacher, Ms Jessica McQuaid is ultimately responsible for all the young people in school.

The Head Teacher should be contacted immediately in the event that possible harm (emotional, physical, sexual, neglect) to a child or young person has been caused by a member of staff or volunteer.

Leads by Setting Safeguarding Ethos

- With the DSL, the SLT and the Safeguarding Team, ensures a 'whole school safeguarding culture'
 - Ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are understood and implemented by all staff.
 - Ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistleblowing procedures.
 - Ensures that the culture of the school/college supports the provision of effective pastoral care and early help, and that staff do everything they can to support social workers when Children's Social Care become involved.
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- Ensures that pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding and how to keep themselves safe at all times, including when online, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

Prioritises Safeguarding

- Allocates sufficient time, training, support and resources, including cover arrangements when necessary, to enable the DSL and deputy/s to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings.
- Supports the designated teacher for looked after children to promote the educational achievement of any pupils who are looked after by the Local Authority and who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.

Ensures Safer Recruitment and Allegations against Staff & Volunteers (ASV)

- Refers all allegations that a child has been harmed by or that children may be at risk of harm from a member of staff or volunteer to the Designated Officer in the Local Authority within one working day prior to any internal investigation.
- Ensures that anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk of harm to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service, as advised by the Designated Officer.
- Appoints a case officer who will be a member of the senior leadership team to investigate allegations concerning members of staff and volunteers and/or act as a point of contact for the member of staff/volunteer against whom the allegation is made.

Governing Board

Ensures that Leytonstone School:

- Appoints a Designated Safeguarding Lead who is a member of the Senior Leadership Team and who has undertaken training in multi-agency working, in addition to child protection training.
 - Ensures that the DSL role is explicit in the role holder's job description (and also the job description of any Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads) and that safeguarding responsibilities are identified explicitly in the job/role descriptions of every member of staff and volunteer.
 - Ensures that a member of the Safeguarding Team is always available during school or college hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
 - Ensures that a member of the Safeguarding Team is always available at least via telephone or other media as above during any out of hours/out of term school activities.
 - Has a Safeguarding Policy and procedures, including a Staff Code of Conduct, that are consistent with Local Safeguarding Partnership and statutory requirements, reviewed annually and made available publicly on the school's website or by other means.
 - Has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff and volunteers including allegations made against the Head Teacher and allegations against other children.
 - Follows safer recruitment procedures that include statutory checks on the suitability of staff to work with children and disqualification from providing childcare regulations.
 - Develops an induction strategy that ensures all staff, including the Head Teacher, and volunteers receive information about the school's safeguarding arrangements, Staff Code of Conduct and the role of the DSL on induction.
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- Facilitates the whole-school approach to Safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
 - Develops a training strategy that ensures all staff, including the Head Teacher, and volunteers receive appropriate and regularly updated safeguarding and child protection training and updates as required (at least annually) to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. The training strategy will also ensure that the DSL receives refresher training and regular updates as defined under the DSL's duties above.
 - Ensures that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, have read and understood the school's child protection and safeguarding policy and Staff Code of Conduct Policy before they start work at the school.
 - Ensures that the governing body undergo regular, relevant safeguarding training to equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in the school are effective.
 - Appoints a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after by the Local Authority and who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales; and ensures that the designated teacher has appropriate training.
 - Contributes to multi-agency working and plans.
 - Ensures an effective pastoral care offer and Early Help offer.
 - Ensures that children are taught preventative curriculum, such as healthy relationships, consent, laws related to abuse, grooming, coercion and honour-based violence as well as that they are taught about how to identify risks, including online, and how to access support and help. Ensures this teaching is adapted for vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND pupils where necessary.
 - Ensures that monitoring and filtering processes are compliant with the DfE guidance and practical in ensuring the pupils online safety when in school.
 - Incorporate awareness of external legislation in their practice in line with KCSIE , 2023 changes:
 - a) **Human Rights Act 1998:** being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to schools under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)
 - b) **Equality Act 2010:** governing body should carefully consider how they're supporting pupils and students regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race) under the Equality Act)
 - c) **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED):** governing body can take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils. This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. Under the PSED, the governing board must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
 - Ensures that the voice and lived experiences of children are heard and reflected in the life of Leytonstone School.
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Chair of Governors

- The governing board nominates a member (normally the chair) to be responsible for liaising with the Local Authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the Head Teacher.

Link Governor for Safeguarding

- The governing board also identifies a named governor to take leadership responsibility for the schools safeguarding arrangements (Link Governor for Safeguarding). That governor will maintain regular contact with the DSL, meeting each half term, and will ensure that the governing board receives regular reports about safeguarding activity **at Leytonstone School**.
- It is the responsibility of the governing board to ensure that the school's safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations procedures take into account the procedures and practice of the Local Authority, Local Safeguarding Partnership and national guidance.
- The governing board is also responsible for overseeing Safeguarding Audits completed and returned to the Local Authority under s175 of the [Education Act 2002](#).

Safeguarding legislation and guidance

- Section 175 of the [Education Act](#) 2002 requires local education authorities and the governors of maintained schools and further education (FE) colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- The [Teachers' Standards](#) state that teachers, including Head Teachers, must have regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions; and uphold public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
- The statutory guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) 2018 covers the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services (including schools and colleges) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It also provides the framework for the three local safeguarding partners (the local authority; a clinical commissioning group for an area, any part of which falls within the local authority; and the chief officer of Police for a Police area, any part of which falls within the local authority area) to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children including identifying and responding to their needs. The guidance confirms that it applies, in its entirety, to all schools.
- The statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2023 is issued under Section 175 of the [Education Act](#) 2002.
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) 2015 - Advice for practitioners is non- statutory advice which helps practitioners (everyone who works with children) to identify abuse and neglect and take appropriate action.

All staff who work directly with children must read Part One of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2023.
Staff who are not in regular and direct contact with children must read **Annex A**.

In line with KCSIE, '23, all staff should:

- Provide a safe environment in which children can learn
- Know and feel confident to use school safeguarding systems, including the Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy and the Staff Code of Conduct
- Be aware of the safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeated occasions and/or prolonged periods

- Be able to identify children who may benefit from Early Help, what the LA process is and their role in it
- Understand how to make referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral

Prevention

Safer Recruitment

Leytonstone School will ensure that their Safer Recruitment policy is in place and updated annually, and that it is followed meticulously for the recruitment of all permanent and temporary staff and volunteers. Safer recruitment means that the school will ensure the following:

Planning and Advertising

- Every job description and person specification includes responsibility for safeguarding

Interview

- At least one interview question about attitude to safeguarding, examples of working with children and motivation behind the application.
- Verify the preferred candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training

Vetting

- Obtain references for all shortlisted candidates via reference proforma, including internal candidates, prior to interview and follow up by phone where necessary
- Carry out additional or alternative checks for applicants who have lived or worked outside the UK
- Ensure that applicants for teaching posts are not subject to a prohibition order
- Check that governors are not the subject of a s128 direction prohibiting or restricting them from taking part in the management of an independent school, academy or free school because a person subject to one is disqualified from being a governor.
- Applicants only begin work after providing DBS certificates. Exceptionally, if an individual starts work in the regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available, the individual must be appropriately supervised, and the employment remains conditional on suitably clear checks.
- Barred List checks will always be taken prior to the individual starting to work in a school or college.
- Online search is carried out on shortlisted candidates to help identify any issues that are publicly available online. These candidates are informed of this vetting step.

Appointment

- Offers of employment are fully conditional on unblemished DBS certificate (or a risk-assessed blemished DBS certificate that meets a high standard of safeguarding) and full references, using a references proforma (that requests whether candidates would be re-employed for the same post and whether there have ever been any safeguarding concerns), followed up by phone.
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Induction

- Once appointed, a full safeguarding induction process must be put in place for all new staff, that includes rigorous monitoring in order to pick up any concerns early.
- All staff are required to sign to confirm they have received a copy of the safeguarding policy and Staff Code of Conduct, and that they have read [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2023, Part 1. In addition, all staff will complete a test to demonstrate they have understood KCSIE 2023, Part 1.
- All relevant staff (teachers, teaching assistants, other classroom-based staff, lunchtime supervisors and members of the senior leadership team) and all those who work in before or after school care are made aware of the disqualification legislation.

Third Party Organisations

- Leytonstone School obtains written confirmation from supply agencies and third party organisations that they have satisfactorily undertaken all appropriate checks in respect of individuals they provide to work in the school that the school would have undertaken if they were employing the individual directly; and that those individuals are suitable to work with children. When the agency or organisation obtained an enhanced DBS check and it disclosed 'any matter or information, or any information was provided to the employment business', the school must obtain a copy of the certificate from the agency (KCSIE, '22, Part 3).
- Leytonstone School will ensure that any staff from third party organisations have appropriate DBS checks and have suitable and up-to-date training in safeguarding.
- Trainees and Students on placements should be subject to the same checks as other members of staff. However, fee-funded trainee teachers' checks should be carried out by the training provider and should be judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children. The school is not required to record details of fee-funded trainees on the Single Central Record.

Recording

- The school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken and ensures that the record is maintained in accordance with section 3 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2023 and guidance.
- All staff, regardless of the length of their employment and including agency staff, are added to Single Central Record.

Ongoing training & management of concerns and allegations

- The school will make a referral to DBS if the school removed someone from a regulated activity and believe that the person engaged in a relevant activity with children, satisfied the harm test in relation to children and/or has been cautioned or convicted of a relevant offence.
- For training, see p.16.

Safer recruitment means that all **job applicants** will:

- **Complete an application form** which includes their employment history and explains any gaps.
- **Provide two referees**, including the current employer, and at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children. References should be requested by using a proforma that asks directly about whether there have ever been any safeguarding concerns raised and whether the applicant would be hired again for the same position; references should be followed up by phone.

- **Provide evidence** of identity and qualifications.
- **Be checked in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)** regulations as appropriate to their role if offered employment. This will include:
 - an enhanced DBS check and a barred list check for those including unsupervised volunteers engaged in Regulated Activity;
 - an enhanced DBS check without a barred list check for all volunteers not involved in Regulated Activity but who have the opportunity of regular contact with children;
 - an enhanced DBS check for all governors (not including associate members), which will only include a barred list check for governors involved in Regulated Activity
- Provide evidence of their right to work in the UK, if offered employment.
- Be interviewed by a panel of at least two school leaders/governors with at least one member of the panel trained in Safer Recruitment in the past three years, if shortlisted.
- Shortlisted candidates, will be informed of an online search preceding their employment.

Leytonstone School endeavours to only employ suitable staff and allow suitable volunteers to work with children by complying with the requirements of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2023 together with the school's *Safer Recruitment* policy.

Schools & Colleges are 'specified places' which means that the majority of staff and volunteers will be engaged in Regulated Activity.

Volunteers

- Volunteers will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school and contact with pupils. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised or be allowed to engage in regulated activity.
- Volunteers who work only in a supervised capacity and are not in regulated activity will undergo the safer recruitment checks appropriate to their role, in accordance with the school's risk assessment process and statutory guidance.

Contractors

- The school checks the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school and requests DBS checks where appropriate. As required by statutory guidance, where contractors and/or their staff are engaged in regulated activity, barred list checks are also requested.
- Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or in regulated activity.

Practitioners' Code of Conduct

This policy should be read alongside the Leytonstone School's Code of Conduct. Practitioners are in a position of trust and authority and have a duty of care towards the children and young people we work with.

All practitioners are likely to be seen as a **role model** and are expected to act appropriately; this includes:

- Prioritising the welfare of children and young people
 - Providing a safe environment for children and young people
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- Following principles, policies and procedures and staying within the law
- Challenging all unacceptable behaviour & reporting any breaches of the Code of Conduct immediately

All practitioners must ensure that the **rights of the child** are upheld throughout their practice, including:

- Treating children and young people fairly and without prejudice or discrimination
- Understanding that children and young people are individuals with individual needs
- Respecting differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability and religious belief systems, and appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different
- Challenging discrimination and prejudice
- Encouraging young people & adults to speak out about attitudes / behaviour that makes them uncomfortable.

In forming **appropriate relationships** with children, all practitioners should endeavour to:

- Promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect
- Avoid favouritism or forming exclusive relationships with children
- Be patient and considerate of any individual child's developmental capacity
- Exercise caution when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people
- Ensure all contact with children and young people is appropriate and relevant to the work
- Ensure that whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people, or that the practitioner is in sight of others (e.g., class room doors open, glass walls, etc)
- Only provide personal care in an emergency and make sure there is more than one adult present if possible, unless personal care is explicitly part of your role and you have been trained to do this safely.

Practitioners should demonstrate **respect** towards children at all times, including:

- Listening to and respecting children at all times
- Valuing and taking children's contributions seriously, actively involving them in planning activities
- Respecting a young person's right to personal privacy as far as possible
- If breaking confidentiality in order to follow child protection procedures, it is important to explain this to the child or young person at the earliest opportunity, and to keep them updated as to what is happening.

Inappropriate / unacceptable behaviour in practitioners, that must always be reported, includes:

- Allowing concerns or allegations to go unreported
- Taking unnecessary risks
- Smoking, consuming alcohol or use illegal substances
- Developing inappropriate relationships with children and young people, including any private communications
- Making inappropriate promises to children and young people
- Engaging in behaviour that is in any way abusive, including having any form of sexual contact with a child or young person.
- Letting children and young people have your personal contact details (mobile number, email or postal address) or have contact with them via a personal social media account
- Acting in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive

- Patronising, belittling children and young people or making sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to, or in front of, children and young people, including sexual gazes.

If practitioners fail to act within the above guidelines, or fail to report breaches, they will be subject to disciplinary procedures. Depending on the seriousness of the situation:

- Practitioners may be asked to leave the school, temporarily or permanently
- School may make a report to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority child protection services or LADO.

All reports should be made in confidentiality to the Head Teacher.

Helping children to recognise risk and access support

A key mechanism for keeping children safe in education is ensuring that they are given an understanding of how to recognize risk and where to go for help when they need it. Giving children and young people an understanding of what is and isn't appropriate in professional conduct and in their home care can improve identification of concerns and reporting about themselves and their peers.

Leytonstone School encourages a range of ways for children and young people to report concerns [e.g. including online, via email (reportit@leytonstoneschool.org) and face to face. Using peer support is another way to give children permission to discuss difficult topics and get the help needed.]

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2023 requires governing boards to ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of providing a 'broad and balanced curriculum.'

Children are taught to understand and manage risk through our personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and sex and relationships lessons and through all aspects of school life. Our approach is designed to help children to think about risks they may encounter and with the support of staff work out how those risks might be reduced or managed. Children are also reminded regularly about online safety, the risks of sharing content and images online and tackling bullying, including cyber bullying procedures. The school continually promotes an ethos of respect for children and pupils are encouraged to speak to a member of staff of their choosing about any worries they may have.

[Making sense of relationships](#) is an NSPCC resource to support children and young people's development of healthy relationships through comprehensive PSHE lesson plans for KS2-KS4.

Staff training

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation and radicalisation and to know what to do if they have a concern.

New staff, volunteers and governors, including supply staff, will receive a safeguarding induction:

- the school's child protection and safeguarding policy
- the Staff Code of Conduct
- the identity and role of the DSL and all Deputy DSLs
- the School's Behaviour Policy
- the school's safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.

All staff, including the Head Teacher, volunteers and governors will receive appropriate and regularly updated safeguarding and child protection training and thematic updates as required (at least annually)

during inset days and regular discussions at staff meetings, to provide them with the requisite skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively in line with statutory guidance and any requirements of the local safeguarding partnership.

The DSL will attend training for newly appointed DSLs and refresher training within a two-year period. In addition, the DSL will update their knowledge and skills at least annually to keep up with any developments relevant to their role and will be supported to access inter-agency training as part of their continuing professional development. This includes attendance at the DSL Forums.

All staff will be made aware of the increased risk of abuse to certain groups, including children with special educational needs and disabilities, looked after children, previously looked after children, young carers and risks associated with specific safeguarding issues including child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, child on child abuse, sexual harassment and sexual violence in school, extremism, female genital mutilation and forced marriage; and will receive training in relation to keeping children safe online.

In addition, the Head Teacher (and/or other school leaders as appropriate) and at least one governor (usually the chair) will attend safer recruitment training and the school will ensure that there are at least two school leaders and/or governors that have attended safer recruitment training within the past three years.

Identifying Abuse

Being alert to abuse and to the fact that 'it could happen here' is crucial to safeguarding:

- An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties.
- Abuse reduces resilience in children and puts them at further risk of abuse throughout their lives.
- Abuse and neglect can happen over a period of time, but can also be a one-off event.
- Child abuse and neglect can have major long-term impacts on all aspects of a child's health, development and well-being.
- The term 'victim' is a widely understood and recognised term, but not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim, or would want to be described that way. The school will be prepared to use any term the child feels most comfortable with when managing an incident
- 'Alleged alleged perpetrator(s)' and 'alleged perpetrator(s)' are widely used and recognised terms, but staff should think carefully about what terminology they use when managing incidents involving children (especially in front of children), as in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the alleged perpetrator too.

Indicators

- The warning signs of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. All staff, including sessional staff, should log even minor concerns about incidents and behaviour changes, and any other worries about children and young people.
- Abuse is 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. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.
- There are four main categories of abuse and neglect:
 - physical abuse
 - emotional abuse
 - sexual abuse
 - neglect.

Physical Abuse

- Physical abuse is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.
 - Physical abuse can happen in any family, but children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens.
 - Babies and disabled children also have a higher risk of suffering physical abuse, and physical abuse in young children is more likely to lead to permanent injury or fatality.
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- Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. Physical abuse can also occur outside of the family environment.

Emotional Abuse

- Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development.
- Although the effects of emotional abuse might take a long time to be recognisable, practitioners will be in a position to observe it, for example, in the way that a parent interacts with their child.
- Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction.
- It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, which includes coercive control and domestic abuse.
- It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse & Exploitation

- Sexual abuse is any sexual activity with a child. You should be aware that many children and young people who are victims of sexual abuse do not recognise themselves as such. A child may not understand what is happening and may not even understand that it is wrong.
- Sexual abuse can have a long-term impact on mental health. Sexual abuse 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 clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males; women and children are also alleged perpetrators.
- Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.

Neglect

- Neglect is a pattern of failing to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter. It is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.
- Neglect usually indicates a relationship issue between the parent and child.
- A key task for staff and volunteers is to record all instances of neglect, however minor. This builds up a picture of the child's lived experience and provides the crucial evidence required at point of referral.
- There are many different aspects in which neglect can manifest:
 - Physical Neglect or Deprivation of Needs
 - Medical Neglect
 - Supervisory Neglect
 - Environmental Neglect
 - Educational Neglect
 - Emotional Neglect

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse, normally extra-familial one, 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 alleged 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 such as county lines or serious youth violence. 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. Children involved in CCE will be treated as victims even if they commit crimes themselves.

Serious violence

All staff should be aware of indicators which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs. All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Child & Young People's Disclosures to Staff

Children and young people may disclose concerns to staff, and may do so knowing that what they are disclosing is a concern, and sometimes they will be unaware that their disclosure will signal concerns. Wherever possible, staff should make the time and space to listen and understand what the child / young person is disclosing.

Staff should not be afraid to respond to children naturally, as they would for any other disclosure, and should respond with compassion and empathy.

If disclosures are concerning but vague, the DSL or other staff may need to speak to the child further in order to obtain sufficient information to meet threshold. In these circumstances, DSL and staff should agree how this will take place and the practitioner should use open questions (including, questions starting with 'when', 'where', 'why', 'how', etc).

Leytonstone School recognises that children may feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers. None of this should stop staff from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and reporting their concerns and observations on the safeguarding platform- CPOMS.

The staff recognises that the below group of children are more at risk of both off-line and online harms.

Especially vulnerable pupils

To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection we will give special consideration to children who are particularly vulnerable.

Children & Young People Especially Vulnerable

- Young carers
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- Has a mental health need
- Is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.
- Transgender children / young people
- Affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs
- Asylum seekers
- Living away from home
- Vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- Living in temporary accommodation
- Has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending;
- Living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- Vulnerable to discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or identification as LGBTQ+
- At risk of sexual exploitation
- Do not have English as a first language
- At risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)

This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive.

Specific Safeguarding Concerns

Domestic Abuse

- WF has adopted the Safe & Together model of working with children affected by domestic abuse. This includes working in partnership with the abused parent and holding the perpetrating parent to account.
 - The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. Domestic abuse is defined as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:
 - psychological
 - physical
 - sexual
 - financial
 - emotional abuse
 - extra-familial.
 - 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 including [teenage relationship abuse](#), as well as in the context of their home life.
 - All concerns about children being affected by domestic abuse will be reported to the DSL as with any other safeguarding concern. The DSL will respond to the report by consulting Children's Social Care in order to establish whether a referral is required or the situation should be managed by discussion with parents/carers and possibly the offer of early help.
 - The school works in partnership with Police and Children's Services to support pupils who are affected by incidents of domestic violence and abuse. This scheme is called [Operation Encompass](#).
 - When the Police attend any incident of domestic violence or abuse in any household in which a pupil of the school lives, the Head Teacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will receive a confidential and secure Email on the morning of the next school day, notifying them simply that there has been an incident and that the child may need support. On receipt of any such notification, the Head Teacher and/or DSL will ensure that teachers and other staff directly in contact with affected children support them with due care and sensitivity.
 - This information is managed and stored with the utmost sensitivity and discretion consistent with all other confidential safeguarding records.
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Care leavers

Local authorities have ongoing responsibilities to young people who cease to be looked after and become care leavers. That includes keeping in touch with them, preparing an assessment of their needs and appointing a Personal Advisor who develops a pathway plan with the young person. This plan describes how the local authority will support the care leaver to participate in education or training. The DSL will have details of the local authority Personal Advisor appointed to guide and support all care leavers; and should liaise with them as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting a care leaver.

Mental Health

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. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. They should be aware that different forms of abuse, childhood adverse experiences can lead to poor mental health. Poor attendance can be often a result of a mental health concern. The school's Mental Health policy outlines the clarity of systems dealing with the concerns and escalation routes regarding different risks of impact which range from a mild impact on thriving addressed by formal counselling to moderate and severe impact which lead to GP and/or Child Adolescent Mental Health Services.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the Safeguarding Policy and speaking to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy/ Mental Health Lead – Innes Weir.

Children with SEND & mental health needs

- Children with special educational needs (SEN), disabilities or who have mental health needs can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children, which can include:
 - Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability or mental health issues without further exploration;
 - 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.
- Staff are trained to manage these additional barriers to ensure this group of children are appropriately safeguarded, including mental health first aid training for key staff.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and child criminal exploitation (CCE) and county lines

- WF has taken a public health approach to children and young people's criminal exploitation by organized criminal groups (OCGs) and gangs.
- Both CSE and CCE occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual and/or criminal activity:
 - in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or
 - for the financial advantage or increased status of the alleged perpetrator or facilitator.
- The victim may have been sexually and/or criminally exploited even if child does not view themselves as a victim. CSE and CCE do not always involve physical contact; they can also occur through the use of technology.

- Victims of CSE and CCE can be of any gender. Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual and/or criminal exploitation through the offer of friendship, relationships and care, gifts, drugs, alcohol, money and accommodation.
 - Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to other criminal activity including trafficking and illegal drugs. Drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns.
 - Criminal exploitation of children can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence. It can be perpetrated by individuals or groups; males or females; and young people or adults. It is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. As well as age, the power imbalance can also be due to other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources.
 - Child criminal exploitation may include activities such as:
 - a child travelling outside the area in which she/he lives in order to transport, distribute or sell drugs for others by whom they are being exploited. This form of criminal activity and exploitation is referred to as [county lines](#)
 - a child committing crimes on behalf of or at the behest of others because they, their friends or relatives have been threatened, deceived or manipulated
 - a child being forced to commit crime in order to settle actual or fabricated debts
 - gang membership, which may lead to the child being exploited to do something illegal or dangerous in return for kudos/status in the gang
 - a child being encouraged or manipulated to commit crime via social media
 - a child receiving food, money, kudos or status in return for storing a weapon or drugs for others.
 - All staff are trained to be vigilant about and report indicators of CSE and CCE including:
 - acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation
 - gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks
 - children being exposed to or perpetrating serious levels of violence; and/or being manipulated or forced into excessive violence towards others by somebody who is exploiting them
 - exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work
 - leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late
 - excessive receipt of texts/phone calls
 - returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol
 - inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections
 - evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault
 - relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups
 - multiple callers (unknown adults or peers)
 - frequenting areas known for sex work
 - concerning use of internet or other social media
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- increasing secretiveness around behaviours
 - self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.
- Although the pre-existing vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual and/or criminal exploitation, not all children with these indicators will be exploited and child sexual and criminal exploitation can occur without any of these issues.
- A common feature of sexual and criminal exploitation is that the child often does not recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and does not see her/himself as a victim. The child may initially resent what she/he perceives as interference by staff but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.
- The Home Office has released guidance: [County lines: criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults](#)

Children with a family member in prison

- Children and young people who have a family member in prison should be supported appropriately.
- 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. Leytonstone School will seek to support pupils/students in this position through pastoral care, early help and discussions with parents/carers and other family members as appropriate.
- For more information, see: **Action for Prisoners' Families**. The Prisoners' Families Helpline is 0808 808 2003.

Children who are looked after or were previously looked after

- Children who were previously looked after, such as those adopted or under Special Guardianship Orders, potentially remain vulnerable. The school ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after safe and ensures that appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child.
- The designated teacher for children who are looked after and previously looked after is the DSL – M. Hotez. The DSL holds details of the social workers for all children who are looked after or were previously looked after; and the name and contact details of the Local Authority's virtual head for children who are looked after.

Children Missing or Absent from Education

- Full attendance at Leytonstone School is important to the wellbeing of all pupils and enables them to access the opportunities made available to them at school. Non-attendance is also an indicator in all forms of abuse.
- The school operates in accordance with statutory guidance [Children Missing Education \(DfE 2016\)](#). All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.
- A child going missing from education **and/or with a record of regular absences** is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation, child criminal exploitation,

radicalisation or mental health problems. Staff will also be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

- Absence from education on repeated and/or prolonged basis can be an indicator of the child's poor mental health. Early intervention is essential to help prevent the risk of child going missing in future.
- Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education.
- Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored and same day checks are undertaken on the first morning of absences.
- The Attendance Officer in conjunction with the Safeguarding Team will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing repeatedly and/or are missing for periods during the school day.
- A conversation should take place with the Home Education Lead in the local authority BACME service if DSL has concerns about children whose parents wish to elect to home educate.
- See the Attendance / Children Missing from Education policy.

Children who run away or go missing from home or care

- Leytonstone School recognises that children who run away or go missing (particularly repeatedly) and are thus absent from their normal residence are potentially vulnerable to abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It could also indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage.
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2023 highlights that [Statutory Guidance on Children who Run Away or go Missing from Home or Care](#) 2014 requires that every child or young person who runs away or goes missing must be offered a Return Home Interview (RHI) within a period of 72 hours of their return. RHIs are intended to ascertain the factors that triggered the young person's absence. Those factors may include difficulties at home, in school and in the community. The short timescale of 72 hours is imposed in order to ensure that the RHI remains relevant to the young person and enables any required action to be initiated at the earliest opportunity. RHIs are undertaken by practitioners who are independent in order to facilitate a discussion with the young person that is as open as possible. As soon as the Local Authority receives notification that a young person has gone missing from home or care, a letter will be sent to parents/carers seeking their consent to a RHI with their son/daughter. Direct contact will then be made with parents/carers and the young person to make arrangements for the interview. In order to fulfil the timescale of within 72 hours, it is essential that all opportunities to interview young people including times during the school/college day are utilised.

Contextual safeguarding

- Contextual safeguarding means that assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors which are present in a child's life are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.
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- Staff will listen to children and be vigilant about any signs or indicators that would suggest children may be at risk in the community and will share intelligence with the Police in order to prevent the risk of children suffering harm.
- Leytonstone School will provide as much information as possible when asked to do so as part of a police investigation and/or when making referrals to Children's Social Care.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

- Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons or other injury to the female genital organs. It has no health benefits and harms girls and women in many ways. The practice, which is most commonly carried out without anaesthetic, can cause intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth and risks to the unborn child.
- FGM is carried out on girls of any age, from newborns to older teenagers and adult women, so school staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators. Many such procedures are carried out abroad and staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female pupils about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period.
- The practice is illegal under the [Female Genital Mutilation Act](#) 2003. Any person found guilty of an offence under the [Female Genital Mutilation Act](#) 2003 is liable to a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment or a fine, or both.
- Teachers are subject to a statutory duty defined by Section 5B of the [Female Genital Mutilation Act](#) 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act](#) 2015) to report to the Police personally where they discover (e.g., by means of a disclosure) that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18. This is known as **mandatory reporting**.
- Teachers in that situation will record their concerns and inform the DSL, who will support the teacher in making a direct report to the Police.

Forced Marriage

- A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse.
- A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage. In an arranged marriage, which is common in several cultures, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.
- Children may be married at a very young age, and well below the age of consent in England. School staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a pupil about being taken abroad and not being allowed to return to England.
- Forcing someone to marry (even if violence, threats or other forms of coercion are not used) has become a criminal offence. This includes non-binding and unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

Homelessness

- Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL (and any deputies) refer any concerns to the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.
- Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, this does not replace a referral into Children's Social Care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

Prevent: Protecting Children from Radicalisation & Extremism

- All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act](#) 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This duty is known as the [Prevent duty](#).
 - Some children are susceptible to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of the school's wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. As such, the Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for the school's strategy for protecting children from those risks.
 - Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to fundamental values, including 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. Even very young children have been exposed, in rare circumstances, to extremism at home and elsewhere including online.
 - As children get older, they look for adventure and excitement and they may start to ask questions about their identity and belonging. During that stage of their development they are susceptible to extremist groups that may claim to offer answers, identity and a social network apparently providing a sense of belonging. Many of those extremist groups make sophisticated use of the internet and social media to target and groom young people.
 - Young people who feel isolated or disaffected in some way are particularly at risk of radicalisation as they are other forms of abuse and exploitation.
 - During the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent people at risk being radicalised. The school is committed to preventing pupils from being radicalised and drawn into any form of extremism or terrorism. Leytonstone School promotes the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs by providing pupils with opportunities through the curriculum to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and learn how to discuss and debate points of view; and by ensuring that all pupils are valued and listened to within school.
 - The school recognises the importance of providing a safe space for children to discuss controversial issues; and building their resilience and the critical thinking skills they need in order to challenge extremist perspectives. However, the Safeguarding Team will make appropriate
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referrals to the Police PREVENT team and Channel programme in respect of any pupil whose behaviour or comments suggest that they are at risk of being radicalised and drawn into extremism and terrorism in order to ensure that children receive appropriate support. However, someone referred to Channel is required to give consent before any support through the programme is provided.

Private fostering

- A [private fostering](#) arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16, or under 18 if the child is disabled. Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children may be privately fostered at any age.
- Most privately fostered children remain safe and well but safeguarding concerns have been raised in some cases so it is important that schools are alert to possible safeguarding issues, including the possibility that a child has been trafficked into the country
- By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify Children's Social Care as soon as possible. When the school becomes aware of a private fostering arrangement for a pupil that has not been notified to Children's Social Care, the school will encourage parents and private foster carers to notify Children's Social Care and will share information with Children's Social Care as appropriate.

Serious violence

- All staff are made aware of indicators that children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime; and are trained to record and report any concern about children at risk of or involved in perpetrating serious violence as with any other safeguarding concern.
- Indicators may include increased absence, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts could also indicate that children have been approached by or are involved with individuals associated with criminal gangs.

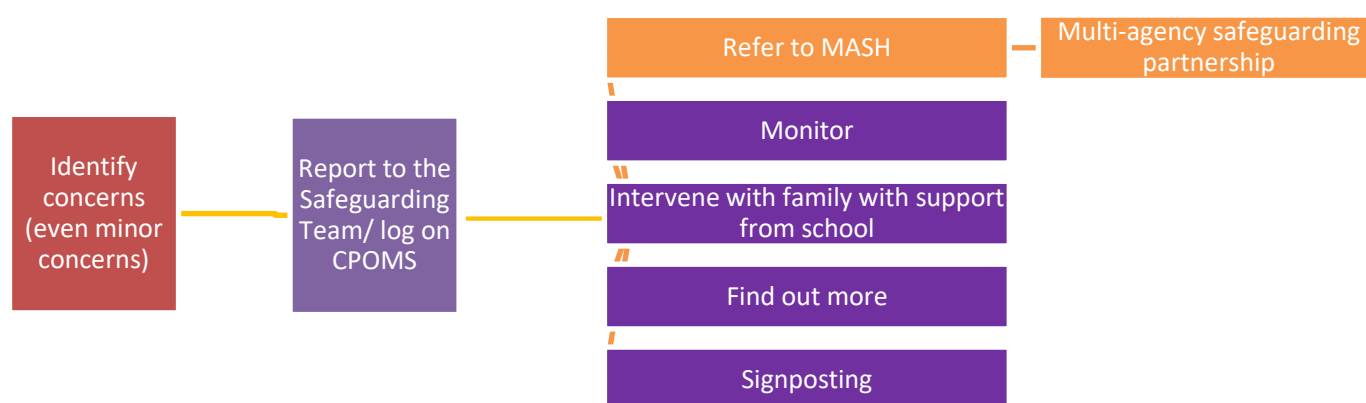
So-called 'honour based' abuse

- So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of a family and/or community. Such crimes include 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 alleged perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take.
- Staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV or already having suffered HBV.
- All forms of so-called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and staff will record and report any concerns about a child who might be at risk of HBV to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as with any other safeguarding concern. The DSL will consider the need to make a referral to the Police, and/or Children's Social Care as with any other child protection concern; and may also contact the Forced Marriage Unit for advice as necessary.

Youth produced sexual imagery (YPSI) - previously referred to as 'sexting'

- The school will act in accordance with advice endorsed by DfE [Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people](#) (UK Council for Child Internet Safety 2017). All incidents of youth produced sexual imagery (YPSI) will be dealt with as safeguarding concerns. The primary concern at all times will be the welfare and protection of the young people involved.
 - Young people (under 18) who share sexual imagery of themselves or their peers are breaking the law. Still, authorities will avoid criminalising young people unnecessarily.
 - All incidents of YPSI should be reported to the DSL. If there is a YPSI issue in relation to a device (e.g., mobile phone, tablet, digital camera), the member of staff will secure the device (i.e., it should be confiscated). This is consistent with DfE advice [Searching, Screening and Confiscation - Advice for Head Teachers, school staff and governing bodies](#) 2018. Staff will not look at (unless directed to do so by police), copy or print any indecent images as this would be a criminal offence. The confiscated device will be passed immediately to the DSL.
 - The DSL will discuss the concerns with appropriate staff and speak to young people involved as appropriate. Parents/carers will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm.
 - If, at any point in the process, there is concern that a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral will be made to Children's Social Care and/or the Police via the MASH immediately.
 - The Police will always be informed when there is reason to believe that indecent images involve sexual acts and any child in the imagery is under 13 years of age.
 - The DSL will make a judgement about whether a reported YPSI incident is experimental (e.g., a child sending an image to a child with whom they are romantically involved) or aggravated.
 - Aggravated incidents involve criminal or abusive elements beyond the creation, sending or possession of sexual images created by young people. These include possible adult involvement or criminal or abusive behaviour by young people such as sexual abuse, extortion, threats, malicious conduct arising from personal conflicts, or creation or sending or showing of images without the knowledge or against the will of a young person who is pictured. Aggravated incidents of sexting will be referred to MASH.
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Safeguarding Procedure in School



Information sharing

The [Data Protection Act 2018](#) and [General Data Protection Regulations \(GDPR\) 2016](#) **do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information where that information may help protect a child, or for the purposes of keeping children safe**. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. See [Information Sharing for Safeguarding Practitioners 2015](#) for full guidance.

When deciding whether information needs to be shared with practitioners within the setting or with other agencies, practitioners should take account of the following principles, bearing in mind that the most important consideration is whether sharing information is likely to support the safeguarding and protection of a child:

- Necessary & Proportionate
- Relevant
- Adequate
- Accurate
- Timely
- Secure
- Recorded
- Practitioners should consider when they share information, how & how much they share, and where possible they should be transparent about the fact that they're sharing.
- Although the process for deciding whether to share information is the same within and outside the setting, in terms of proportionality and the need to know, sharing information with practitioners from other agencies (even if based in school) needs to be documented.
- The school should be confident of the processing conditions which allow them to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal, and should be treated as 'special category personal data'.

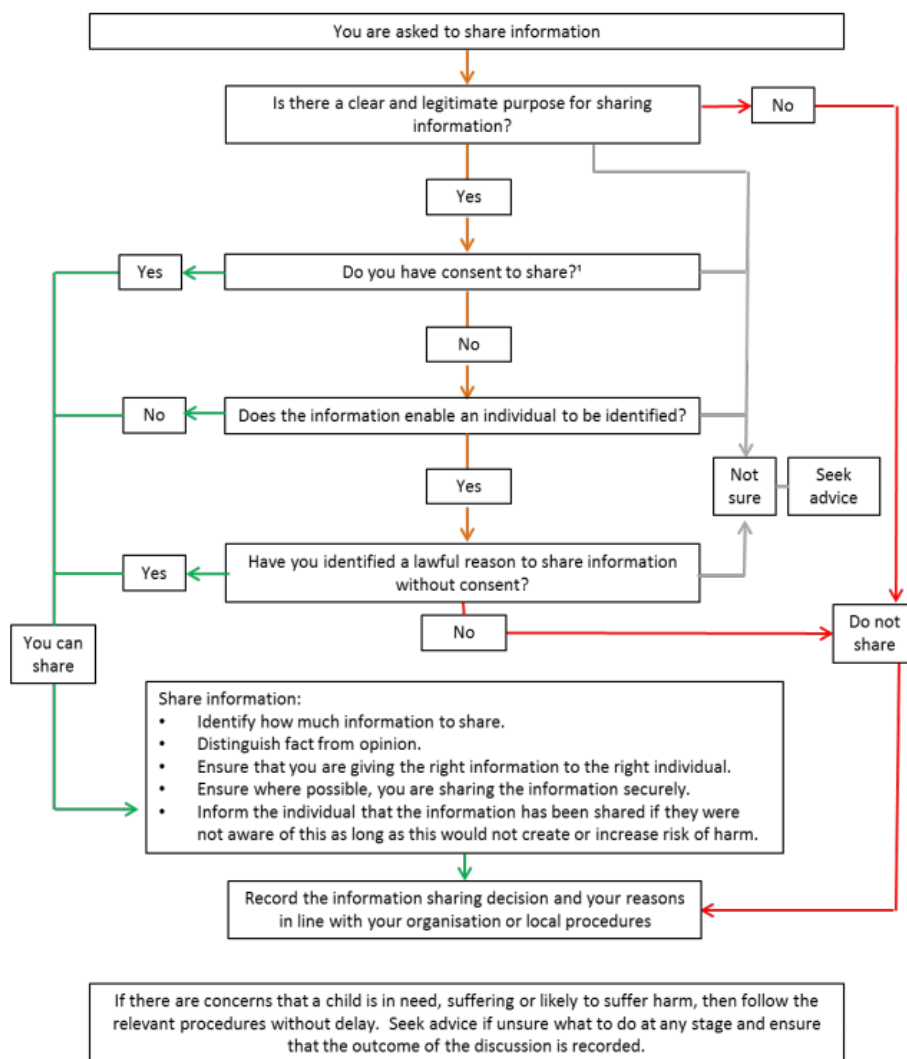
'Safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data. This includes allowing practitioners to share information

without consent where there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner but it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

- It is reasonable for staff to discuss day-to-day concerns about pupils with colleagues in order to ensure that children's general needs are met in school. However, staff should report all child protection and safeguarding concerns to the DSL or Head Teacher or – in the case of concerns about the Head Teacher – to the Chair of Governors. The person receiving the referral will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.
 - The DSL will normally obtain consent from the pupil and/or parents to share sensitive information within the school or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL may share information *without* consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.
 - If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the Safeguarding Team.
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- Every effort will be made to prevent unauthorised access to sensitive information.

Flowchart of when and how to share information



If in doubt about sharing, see: [Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers](#) 2018.

Transitions

- All schools are responsible for ensuring appropriate transitions from one setting to another. This includes preparing children and welcoming them appropriately, and sharing the full pastoral and safeguarding context of a child, required for the new setting to understand behaviours within a full context of experiences by the child – this would also include tried and tested strategies.
- Where possible, school transitions teams must endeavor to meet every new child within their primary setting, prior to secondary transfer. The school liaises with primary and post-16 settings to receive and safely send safeguarding information about children in transition stages. The child's safeguarding file should be transmitted electronically via the online safeguarding system. Otherwise, PDF versions can be sent by secure email or by recorded delivery to the named DSL in the new setting.

Recording

- Recording of concerns should take place as close in time to the incident as reasonably possible, by using CPOMs via unique log-ons.
- Where concerns are serious, in addition to logging concerns, staff should seek to speak to a DSL immediately either in person or by phone.

DSL Decision-Making

- Once concerns are identified and shared with the Safeguarding Team, DSLs and involved staff will decide together how best to proceed to support the child and to mitigate the risk. DSLs can consult with MASH at any point. Options for action are:

1) Pastoral care

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2023 acknowledges the casework that schools undertake on a pastoral level. This includes managing any support for the child internally via the school's own pastoral support processes. If pastoral staff are engaged, they must work alongside safeguarding staff, and DSLs would take the lead on decisions about progressing a case.

2) Early Help (MASH)

Schools can refer children and families for early help assessment and support, with the informed consent of parents.

3) Referral to statutory services (MASH)

A referral must be made to MASH/children's social care (and if appropriate the police) immediately if the child is:

- a. A child in need; defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled
- b. Suffering, or likely suffering, harm.

4) Allegation of harm to a child by a practitioner

If the alleged harm to a child is caused by a practitioner or a volunteer, the Head Teacher should be notified immediately and LADO should be consulted.

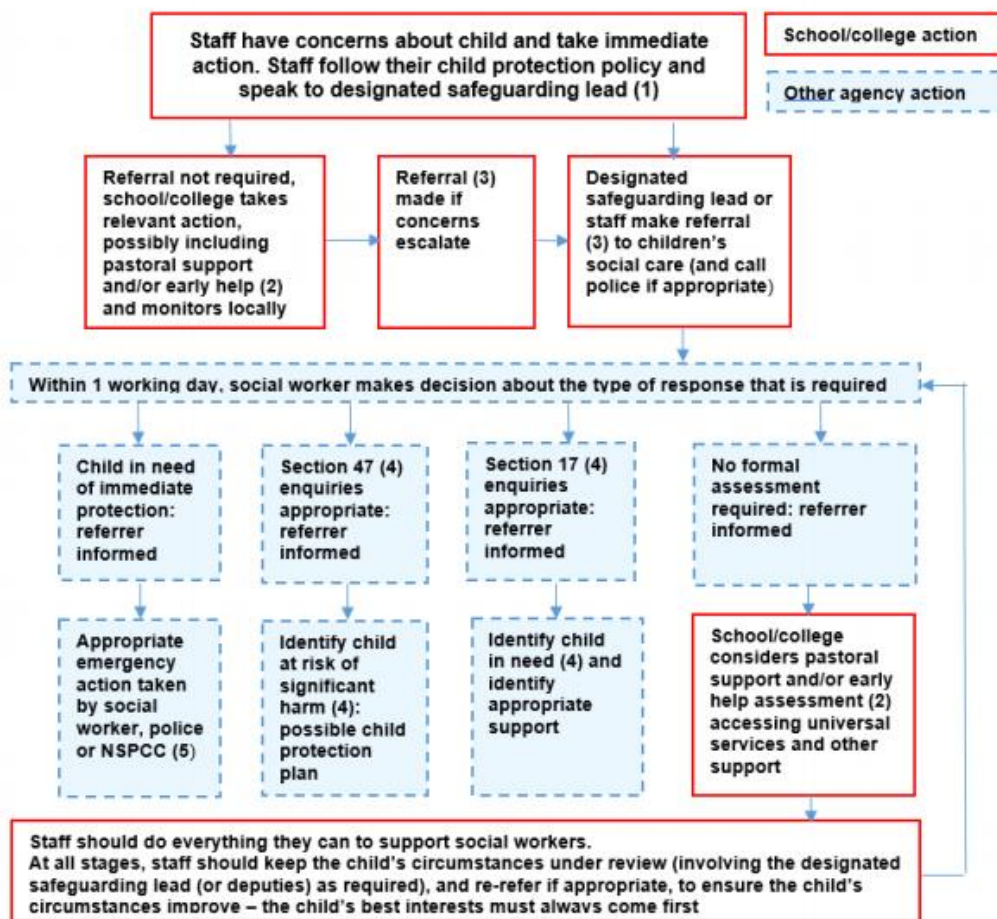
Contacting police Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately. With accordance to the NPCC guidance, the school will consider involving the police in case of the following crimes are suspected or occurred:

- Assault
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- Criminal damage
- Cyber crime
- Drugs
- Harassment
- Sexual offences
- Theft
- Weapons

*Following a number of cases nationally where senior leaders in schools failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2023 emphasises that any member of staff must contact and/or make a referral to Children's Social Care if they are concerned about a child, if their DSL does not share their views.

Actions where there are concerns about a child



- (1) In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member.
- (2) Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children provides detailed guidance on the early help process.
- (3) Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

(4) Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

(5) This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

Referrals

- Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is Waltham Forest's single point of referral to social care for concerns regarding children, young people and vulnerable adults:
 - Early Help (parental consent needed)
 - Child in Need
 - Child Protection
 - Adult Safeguarding
- Referrals to the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) should be made immediately when there is a concern that the child is suffering significant harm or is likely to do so.
- It is good practice to notify MASH by phone and/or email to discuss the case prior to sending a written referral. This will help determine the level of intervention and will also give children's social care and the police time to make arrangements to come and see the child that same day in school, if deemed necessary.
- In Leytonstone School, the Safeguarding Team ordinarily takes responsibility for the referral process, in consultation with staff who know the child. Still, there are circumstances where another member of staff must refer without delay:
 - If for some reason (e.g., during the summer break), the members of Safeguarding Team are not available, the referral should be made without delay by any other member of school staff
 - If you disagree with your DSL's decision not to refer a case to MASH, it is your responsibility to refer the case, and to respectfully inform the DSL that you are doing so.
- Should another member of staff refer instead, the Safeguarding Team and the DSL must be consulted and updated as soon as possible.

Holding children in school after a referral to MASH

- Sometimes MASH social workers and police will want to see a child on the day of referral to ensure that they are safe to go home. In such cases, they will ask you to keep the child in school until the visit has taken place.
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- Because it can take time to organize the visit with an available social worker and police officer, sometimes families will be asked to wait at school before a child is released to them, and they may be asked not to see their child during this time.
- This can be stressful and uncomfortable for both schools and families and sometimes all are kept at school until late in the evening. School should prepare families for the length of time this process can take and treat them with compassion and understanding, and make every attempt to facilitate this difficult process.
- Although Schools do not have legal powers to remove or detain children, both police and social workers do have such powers, and it is at their request that schools are holding the child. For this reason, families are strongly advised to cooperate in order to ensure the best chances that children will be able to go home that evening.

Support for pupils, families and staff

Child abuse is devastating and traumatic for children. Even those parents who hurt their children will be devastated. It can also result in secondary trauma in those staff who are involved in these cases.

We will support pupils, their families, and staff by:

- Taking all concerns and disclosures seriously
- Nominating a Safeguarding Team link person who will keep all parties informed
- Appointing a separate link person where the DSL is the subject of an allegation
- Prioritising mental health and resilience, and accepting that everyone can have a bad day
- Responding sympathetically to any request from pupils or staff for time out to deal with distress
- Maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- Storing records securely
- Signposting to helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- Following procedures in safeguarding, whistleblowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- Co-operating fully with relevant statutory agencies.

Allegations against staff, supply staff, volunteers and contactors

If there are any concerns that a practitioner or volunteer has caused harm (emotional, physical, sexual, neglect) to a child, this represents an allegation against staff, supply staff and volunteers.

All allegations against staff and volunteers must be reported to the Head Teacher in the first instance. The person against whom the allegation is made should not be notified at this point. The school will conduct basic enquiries before contacting the Local Authority Designated Officer. The case manager should discuss any welfare concerns about the children involved or other children in the community or member of staff's family with the DSL who may need to make a referral to children's social services.

The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in Part 4 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2023, and Part 7 of the [London Child Protection Procedures](#) 2017.

There is also a system managing low level concerns which involves a Cpoms software sister – Staff Safe –which all staff have access to in order to report allegations and concern to be followed up by the DSL and the Headteacher. This system is beneficial in creating logs of low –level issues which may be subject to the LADO consultation.

Allegations against Supply Teachers

Supply teachers, whilst not employed by the school or college, are under the supervision, direction and control of the governing board when working in the school, and allegations against them are dealt with

and investigated in accordance with the school's Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers Policy. The governing board should discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out their investigation. Agencies should be fully involved and co-operate in any enquiries from the LADO, police and/or children's social services. Supply teachers in this case should be advised to contact their trade union representative if they have one, or a colleague for support. The allegations management meeting which is often arranged by the LADO should address issues such as information sharing, to ensure that any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account by the school during the investigation.

Allegations against Organisations and Individuals using School premises

If the school receives an allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organization was using the premises for running an activity for children, the school will follow the Safeguarding Policy and procedures and inform the Local Authority Designated Safeguarding Lead as with any safeguarding allegation against staff.

Initial action by person receiving or identifying an allegation or concern

- Whilst allegations may be false, malicious or misplaced, they may also be founded in truth; all staff must report allegations even if they reasonably believe them to be false.
- All allegations must be investigated properly, in line with agreed procedures and outcomes recorded.
- Staff must treat all allegations seriously and keep an open mind.
- Make a written record of the information, including the time, date and place of incident/s, persons present and what was said and sign and date this.
- Immediately report the matter to the Head Teacher.
- Do not share allegations with any other member of staff, including the subject of the allegation.
- If the allegation is against the Head Teacher, staff must report to chair of governors.
- If there is a lack of faith in the safeguarding governance, all staff can contact the local authority's Designated Officers (also known as LADOs) directly, without delay: 020 8496 3646 / lado@walthamforest.gov.uk.

Threshold for statutory LADO involvement

As required by [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) 2018, all allegations in respect of an individual who works at the school that fulfil any of the following criteria will be reported to the Designated Officer in the Local Authority (LADO) within one working day:

- **Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child**
 - **Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child**
 - **Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children**
 - **Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children**
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Child / children (victims)

- If children are identified as victims of harm, they must be protected from harm.
- If children are believed to have suffered / likely to suffer significant harm, they must be referred to MASH.
- Concerns must be discussed with children's parents at the earliest opportunity; they must maintain confidentiality during the investigation phase of the LADO process.

Subject of allegations

- Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress.
- Leytonstone School will appoint a named contact person for the subject of the allegation, they will be advised to seek advice / support from a union rep; the employee assistance programme information will be shared.

Suspension

- Suspension is not the default option and alternatives to suspension will always be considered.
- It is usually preferable if the child/ren involved in allegation and the practitioner in question are not in contact.
- In some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that allegations are investigated fairly, quickly and consistently and that all parties are protected. In the event of suspension the school will provide support and a named contact for the member of staff, who will be in touch periodically as agreed upon suspension.

Confidentiality

- No information about the staff member involved may be shared with other staff or parents not directly involved.
- Staff, parents and governors are reminded that **publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law**. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing, including content placed on social media sites.
- In accordance with [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2023, the school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

Non-recent / historical allegations

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

False Allegations

- It is relatively rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen. If, following investigation, it transpires that a child has made a false allegation, there may be other concerns regarding their welfare that may need to be unpicked or assessed.
- If an adult makes a false allegation and they are employed, this will result in disciplinary procedures. If an individual makes a false allegation and police are involved, they may charge them with 'wasting police time' or 'perverting the course of justice'.

Behaviour in Personal Life

- As well as concerns related to conduct towards children, practitioners must be alert to their behaviour and events occurring in their private life. For example, if practitioners' own children become subject to child protection investigations, or if they exhibit worrying violent or sexual behaviour that could impact on their suitability to work with children.

Disqualification

All Staff:

- All practitioners must be alert to the amended guidance on disqualification which is no longer only in relation to staff working with children under 8 years. Their relationships and associations (including online) may have an implication for the safeguarding of pupils, and if there are concerns about that, practitioners must inform school.
- All staff should be alert to the fact that they are responsible for alerting school if their circumstances change.
- School will retain records of self-declarations on the Single Central Record.

Abuse of position of trust

- All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach.
- In addition, staff should understand that, under the [Sexual Offences Act](#) 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that pupil is over the age of consent.
- Such a relationship will nonetheless always be viewed as a significant safeguarding concern and would constitute a reason for dismissal and referral to DBS for safeguarding reasons.

LADO Outcomes

The following definitions should be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

- **Substantiated allegations**

There is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation that a child has been harmed or there is a risk of harm.

If the facts of the incident are found to be true but it is not found that a child has been harmed or there is a risk of harm, then consideration should be given to deciding that the outcome is 'unsubstantiated' or 'unfounded'.

- **Malicious**

There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive. The police should be asked to consider what action may be appropriate in these circumstances. In a case where the allegation is deliberately fabricated by the child, the school will consider possible disciplinary action in line with the behaviour policy.

- **False allegations**

There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation, however, there is no evidence to suggest that there was a deliberate intention to deceive.

False allegations may be an indicator of abuse elsewhere which requires further exploration. If an allegation is demonstrably false, the employer, in consultation with the LADO, should refer the matter to LA children's social care to determine whether the child is in need of services, or might have been abused by someone else.

- ***Unsubstantiated allegations***

There is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.

- ***Unfounded***

The additional definition of 'unfounded' can be used to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made. It might also indicate that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw.

Alternatively they may not have been aware of all the circumstances.

The Chair of the meeting / discussion should make a record of the agreed outcome and forward this to the employer.

- References in cases where the allegation is false, unsubstantiated or malicious
 - Cases in which an allegation was proven to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious should not be included in employer references.
 - For reports to be unsubstantiated, false or malicious, it is the DSL who considers the next steps.
 - A history of repeated concerns or allegations which have all been found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious should also not be included in any reference unless specifically asked for in a reference proforma. Please seek HR advice in this instance.
 - Cases which do not meet the harm's threshold may be followed up through disciplinary policy.

Record keeping in relation to the outcome of an investigation

- Details of allegations that are found to have been malicious should be removed from personnel records..
- For all other allegations, it is important that a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken and decisions reached, is kept on the confidential personnel file of the accused, and a copy provided to the person concerned. This will be the case also with allegations which do not meet the harm's threshold – 'low level concerns'.
- The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference, where appropriate.
- It will provide clarification in cases where future DBS checks reveal information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction and it will help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time.
- The record should be retained at least until the **accused has reached normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.**
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DBS Referrals

- Leytonstone School has a legal duty to refer any person engaged to work in regulated activity in Leytonstone School where the allegation has been substantiated, or where harm test has been met, irrespective of whether another body has made a referral to the DBS in relation to the same person; failure to do so is an offence.
- DBS referral can take place at any time during the Allegations / Disciplinary process – it should take place at the earliest stage possible. There could be times when you consider that you should make a referral in the interests of safeguarding children or vulnerable adults even if you have not removed the person from working in regulated activity; this could include acting on advice of the police or a safeguarding professional, or in situations where you don't have enough evidence to dismiss or remove a person from working with vulnerable groups. Making DBS referrals where the referral conditions are not met, will be done in consideration of relevant employment and data protection laws.
- DBS are required by law to consider any and all information sent to us from any source. This includes information sent to us where the legal referral conditions are not met. DBS will use legal powers and barring processes to determine whether the person should be barred from working in regulated activity with children and / or vulnerable adults.
- Harm, in this case, is not defined in legislation. DBS view harm as its common understanding, or the definition you may find in a dictionary. Harm is considered in its widest context and may include (This is not a fully comprehensive list, harm can take many different forms):
 - sexual harm
 - physical harm
 - financial harm
 - neglect
 - emotional harm
 - psychological harm
 - verbal harm
- As an employer of practitioners and volunteers in a regulated activity, Leytonstone School must make a referral when both of the following conditions have been met:

Condition 1

- Permission is withdrawn for a person to engage in regulated activity with children and/or vulnerable adults, including moving the person to another area of work that isn't regulated activity.
- This includes situations when you would have taken the above action, but the person was re-deployed, resigned, retired, or left. For example, a teacher resigns when an allegation of harm to a student is first made.

Condition 2

- You think the person has carried out one (1) of the following:
 - engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children and/or adults. An action or inaction has harmed a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk or harm, or;

- satisfied the harm test in relation to children and / or vulnerable adults. e.g., there has been no relevant conduct but a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable still exists, or;
 - been cautioned or convicted of a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence
- When employing agency staff, both Leytonstone School and agency have a responsibility to refer as above.
- Relevant conduct in relation to a child (a person under 18 years of age) includes:
 - endangers a child or is likely to endanger a child
 - if repeated against or in relation to a child would endanger the child or be likely to endanger the child
 - involves sexual material relating to children (including possession of such material)
 - involves sexually explicit images depicting violence against human beings (including possession of such images)
 - is of a sexual nature involving a child
- A person's conduct endangers a child if they:
 - harm a child
 - cause a child to be harmed
 - put a child at risk of harm
 - attempt to harm a child
 - incite another to harm a child
- The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2023.

Low – level concerns (not meeting the LADO threshold)

- Low –level concerns can arise in several ways and in various sources, e.g.: suspicion, complaint, or a disclosure.
- These must be reported directly to the Head Teacher who will keep a confidential record of low level-concerns including actions.
- The Head Teacher is the ultimate decision-maker in respect to low level concerns, although the Head Teacher may consult the DSL for a more collaborative approach.
- If in any doubt whether the concern meets the harm threshold, the LADO will be consulted

Whistleblowing

- The school's whistleblowing policy enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence, and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. [Whistleblowing](#) is 'making a disclosure in the public interest' and occurs when a worker (or member of the wider school community) raises a concern about danger or illegality that affects others.
- All staff are made aware of the duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of staff in line with the school's Code of Conduct / Whistleblowing policy.
- Staff are expected to report all concerns about poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues - including what may seem minor contraventions of the school's Staff Code of Conduct) – to the Head Teacher; to facilitate proactive and early intervention in order to maintain appropriate boundaries and a safe culture that protect children and reduce the risk of serious abuse in school.
- Concerns or complaints about the Head Teacher should be reported to the chair of governors / trustees.

- For those who feel unable to raise these concerns internally, for whatever reason, they can contact the local authority designated officers (LADOs) who have oversight of allegations against practitioners and volunteers in the borough: lado@walthamforest.gov.uk or 0208 496 3646. Alternatively, staff can call the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on: 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk.
- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is also available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 between 8.00a.m. and 8.00p.m., Monday to Friday or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

Complaints procedure

- Leytonstone School's complaints procedure will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a pupil that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection / LADO action.
 - Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a pupil or attempting to humiliate them, bullying or belittling a pupil or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by the Head Teacher, or an allocated member of the senior leadership team and governors.
 - An explanation of the complaints procedure is included in the safeguarding information for parents and pupils.
 - Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures.
 - Complaints which escalate into a child protection concern / LADO referral will automatically be managed under these procedures in school.
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Maintaining a Safe Site

Visitors & Site security

- Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given an identity badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site.
- Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in.
- All visitors are expected to observe the schools safeguarding and health and safety regulations to ensure children in school are kept safe.
- The Head Teacher will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.
- Social workers attending school to carry out statutory work with children must be allowed to do so, provided that they supply appropriate identification. Should the school have concerns about their identity, they should speak to the social worker's manager and request an email confirmation.
- If schools require other visitors to show DBS certificates as a condition to entry, they must give visitors adequate notice of this requirement.
- Having sight of DBS certificate is not a sufficient reason for allowing a visitor full, unsupervised access to the school and pupils – this must be done in conjunction with other reasonable checks and vetting.

Behaviour Management

- Our behaviour policy is set out in a separate document and is reviewed regularly by the governing body. It is shared with all staff before they start working with children as part of their induction.
- The policy is transparent to staff, parents and pupils.

Use of reasonable force

- All staff should be familiar with the statutory guidance for schools on [The Use of Force in Schools](#) 2015. When working with children with SEND, staff should have a full working knowledge of [Reducing the Need for Restraint and Physical Intervention with Children with SEND](#) 2019.
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2023 highlights that there are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools and colleges to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom.
- staff should deploy every possible strategy to prevent the need for physical intervention. Those strategies would include de-escalation whenever there is a threat of violence or aggression towards an individual or property; communicating calmly with children; using non-threatening verbal and body language; helping children to recognise their own 'triggers' and 'early warning signs', and distracting or helping children to see a positive way out of a difficult situation.
- However, the school supports staff to intervene physically and to use reasonable force when all of those strategies are unsuccessful in calming a situation and a risk of violence, serious damage

to property or disruption to the school remains. Staff should always be able to demonstrate that any such intervention is reasonable, proportionate and necessary in the circumstances, is used for the shortest possible period of time, deploys the minimum force that is necessary and is never used as a sanction.

Searching Children

- In accordance with DfE guidance [Searching, screening and confiscation - Advice for Head Teachers, school staff and governing bodies](#), school staff can search a pupil for any item if the pupil agrees.
 - The Head Teacher, the Safeguarding Team and any member of staff authorised by the Head Teacher also has a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil may have one or more of the following prohibited items in their possession:
 - knives or weapons;
 - alcohol;
 - illegal drugs;
 - stolen items;
 - tobacco and cigarette papers;
 - fireworks;
 - pornographic images;
 - indecent images of children;
 - any article that a member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil).
 - The Head Teacher and authorised staff can also search for any item banned by the school rules which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for.
 - When designating a member of staff to undertake searches under these powers, the Head Teacher should consider whether the member of staff requires any additional training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities.
 - School staff can confiscate any prohibited item found as a result of a search. They can also confiscate any item they consider harmful or detrimental to school discipline.
 - Searching staff must be the same gender as the pupil being searched; and there must be a witness (also a staff member) and, if possible, they should be the same sex as the pupil being searched.
 - There is a limited exception to this rule. You can carry out a search of a pupil of the opposite sex to you and / or without a witness present, but only where you reasonably believe that there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if you do not conduct the search immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff.
 - What the law says:
 - The person conducting the search may not require the pupil to remove any clothing other than outer clothing.
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- 'Outer clothing' means clothing that is not worn next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear but 'outer clothing' includes hats; shoes; boots; gloves and scarves.
- 'Possessions' means any goods over which the pupil has or appears to have control – this includes desks, lockers and bags.
- A pupil's possessions can only be searched in the presence of the pupil and another member of staff, except where there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if the search is not conducted immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff.
- The power to search without consent enables a personal search, involving removal of outer clothing and searching of pockets; but not an intimate search going further than that, which only a person with more extensive powers (e.g. a police officer) can do.

Extended school and off-site arrangements

- All extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements.
- When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related activities, we will check that effective child protection, Health & safety, and whistleblowing arrangements are in place.
- Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, the Leytonstone School's safeguarding and procedures apply.
- If other organisations provide services or activities on the school site, the school will check that those organisations have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

Photography and images

To protect pupils we will:

- Seek their consent for photographs or video images to be taken, including consent for the reasons for which photos will be used and how long they will be kept as per Data Protection legislation.
- Seek parental consent for the same.
- Ensure pupils are appropriately dressed
- Encourage pupils to tell us if they are worried about any photographs/images that are taken of them.

Furthermore, when using images for publicity purposes (e.g. on our website or in newspapers or publications), we will:

- Avoid naming children when possible
- If it is necessary to name children, use first names rather than surnames
- If children are named, avoid using their image
- Ensure that images are stored securely and used only by those authorised to do so.

- For the protection of pupils and staff, only school owned equipment will be used to record and store images taken by staff or volunteers on the school site or during offsite school activities including residential visits.
 - There may be occasions when parents are requested not to take photographs where a child is subject to social care procedures or who requires protection of their identity and whereabouts. They will not be singled out; in this instance, a blanket ban will be imposed.
 - Visiting practitioners who work directly with children are subject to the same restrictions as school staff and volunteers in respect of recording and storing images of children.
 - However, some visiting professionals are permitted to record images of the premises only specifically for professional purposes only and in order to support the school, e.g. professionals providing advice or preparing quotations for work such as maintenance, health and safety and building.

Online Safety

- Children and young people commonly use electronic equipment including mobile phones, tablets and computers on a daily basis to access the internet and share content and images via social networking sites such as Twitter, Tumblr, Snapchat and Instagram.
 - Those technologies and the internet are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. Unfortunately, however, some adults and young people will use those technologies to harm children and the use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm.
 - The breadth of issues within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:
 - content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views; being exposed to risk of commerce, such as gambling.
 - contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults; and
 - conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images or online bullying.
 - Chatrooms and social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour and pupils are not allowed to access those sites in school. Many pupils own or have access to hand held devices and parents are encouraged to consider measures to keep their children safe when using the internet and social media at home and in the community.
 - The school's online safety policy explains how we try to keep pupils safe in school and protect and educate pupils in the safe use of technology. The school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to protect children from potentially harmful online material.
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- Cyberbullying and sharing nude/semi-nude images and/or videos by pupils will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures (see 'Youth Produced Sexual Imagery' ' below). Serious incidents may be managed in line with our sexual exploitation policy or child protection procedures.

Additionally to educating pupils, the school implements a programme for parental education and engagement on online risks awareness, their recognition, safety measures parents and carers should set.

Online Filtering and Monitoring

The school uses LGFL – managed filtering service to monitor and filter the pupils' and staff's online use. It is in line with the [cyber security standards for schools and colleges](#).

Additionally Impero is installed on computers used by pupils. This service provides real-time monitoring of student activities and searches as well as reports for the safeguarding team on their computer use over time.

The GB Board ensure that the filtering and monitoring systems and process are in place.

Staff will understand the expectations, roles, and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring.

The Governing Board will review the DfE's Filtering and monitoring standards termly and discuss them with the DSL and the SLT members to evaluate what needs to be done to support the school in meeting the standards.

The DSL will take the lead role in ensuring the processes around monitoring and filtering are robust.

Online communication between staff and pupils

- Staff must be aware of the acceptable use policy and this should give advice regarding personal online activity, use of social networking and electronic communication.
- Under no circumstances is it acceptable for staff to communicate via personal devices / social media with pupils.
- Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be the subject of a referral to the Designated Officer in the Local Authority and/or may be subject to disciplinary action.

Notifying parents

- The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents.
- This must be handled sensitively and the Safeguarding or the Pastoral Team will make usually contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.
- Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil. Therefore, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will be sought first from Children's Social Care.
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Bullying, child on child abuse and harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)

- This school believes that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm, both from adults and other students in the school. There is a separate Anti-Bullying Policy which regulates the whole-school actions and preventative approach to the issues of bullying, harassment and discriminatory conduct : <https://www.leytonstoneschool.org/page/?title=Policies+%26amp%3B+Documents&pid=14>
- Children may be harmed by other children or young people;

- All staff recognise that children can abuse their peers and are trained to understand and implement the school's policy and procedures regarding child on child abuse. Staff are aware that child on child abuse may be taking place even if not reported and that there might be additional barriers recognising abuse in some groups of pupils, eg: children with SEND. Staff are also aware that technology is a significant component as far as child on child abuse is concerned.
 - All child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.
 - It is most likely to include, but is not limited to:
 - bullying (including cyberbullying);
 - prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying or misogynistic messages;
 - physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; threats and encouraging violence online;
 - sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault and any online threat or encouragement of sexual violence;
 - sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
 - sharing nude or semi-nude images and/or videos, consensual or non-consensual, including pressuring another person to send a sexual image or video content (also known as youth produced sexual imagery);
 - upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without consent, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm (upskirting is a criminal offence and may constitute sexual harassment);
 - causing someone to engage in a sexual activity without consent;
 - teenage relationship abuse - defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, perpetrated against a current or former partner;
 - initiation/hazing - used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as sports team or school groups by subjecting them to a series of potentially humiliating, embarrassing or abusing trials which promote a bond between them; and
 - prejudiced behaviour - a range of behaviours which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless or excluded and which relates to prejudices around belonging, identity and equality, in particular prejudices linked to disabilities, special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender and sexual identity.
 - Bullying is a very serious issue that can cause children considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying can have a disastrous effect on a child's well-being and in very rare cases has been a feature in the suicide of some young people.
 - All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through the school's anti-bullying procedures.
 - All pupils and parents receive a copy of the procedures on joining the school and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in PSHE education.
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- Young people are regularly reminded of different channels to report harassment and bullying experienced or witnessed (including reportit@leytonstoneschool.org available on the school website).
- All members of staff receive a copy of the school's behaviour policy, which contains the anti-bullying procedures, as part of their induction and are trained to be aware of the harm caused by bullying and to respond to all incidents of bullying and child on child abuse proactively.
- Abuse is abuse and will not be tolerated, minimised or dismissed as 'banter'; 'just having a laugh'; 'part of growing up'; 'boys being boys'; or 'girls being girls'.
- It is important for the school to consider the wider environmental factors and context within which child on child abuse occurs.
- The school will also consider the potential for the impact of the incident to extend further than the school's local community (e.g. for images or content to be shared around neighbouring schools/colleges) and for a victim (or alleged perpetrator) to become marginalised and excluded by both online and offline communities.
- There is also the strong potential for repeat victimisation in the future if abusive content continues to exist somewhere online.
- Online concerns can be especially complicated. Support is available from The UK Safer Internet Centre at 0344 381 4772 and helpline@saferinternet.org.uk and the Internet Watch Foundation at <https://www.iwf.org.uk/>.

Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. Harmful Sexual Behaviour can occur online or/and face-to-face and between two children of any age and gender and between children of the opposite or the same gender. They can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. All staff retain 'it can happen here' attitude and remember that children may have difficulty in approaching staff with their circumstances. To facilitate communication, staff continually build trusted relationships with our young people. The School recognises that even if there are no reports, it does not mean it is not happening.

Sexual harassment creates an atmosphere that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence. Leytonstone School therefore recognises the importance of recognising the nature of, identifying and challenging sexual violence and sexual harassment in its wider approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children; through policies; and through the curriculum which covers:

- Healthy and respectful relationships
- Boundaries and consent
- Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
- Body confidence and self-esteem
- How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour)
- The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM), and how to access support
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they're always unacceptable

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- All HSB and sexual violence disclosures will be taken seriously. Pupils harmed will be reassured that they will be taken seriously, offered appropriate support and kept safe. No victim will ever be made to feel ashamed of making a report.
 - Staff are trained to be aware that it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys.
 - When referring to sexual violence, this policy uses the definitions of sexual offences in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as follows:
 - Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
 - Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
 - Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
 - Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.
 - A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity
 - A child under 18 cannot consent to any sexual activity with a person in a position of trust
 - The age of consent is 16.
 - Sexual intercourse without consent is rape.
 - Sexual harassment in the context of child on child behaviour is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur online and offline. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.
 - Online sexual harassment may happen on its own or as part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.
 - The school will respond to reports in accordance with Part 5 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#).
 - All responses to reports of sexual violence will be subject to an immediate risk and needs assessment undertaken by the AIM assessment trained team, using their professional judgement and supported by other agencies, such as children's social care and the Police. The need for a risk and needs assessment in relation to reports of sexual harassment will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
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Risk assessment

- The risk and needs assessment (AIM) will consider:
 - the victim, especially their protection and support;
 - the alleged perpetrator/s (if she/he/they attend the same school); and
 - all the other children (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at the school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them.
- The Safeguarding Team should ensure they are engaging with children's social care and specialist services, such as the WF Harmful Sexual Behaviour Lead as required.
- Police are notified when a crime may have occurred.
- Where there has been a report of sexual violence, it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers and or sexual violence specialists will be required.

Management of sexual violence, HSB and sexual harassment incidents and disclosures – what to consider

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and therefore is the most appropriate person to lead the school initial response. Important considerations will include:

- Conclusive outcomes of the school-level investigations where it has been proved or the balance of probability is that a child harmed another child will be reported on CPOMs and the local authority response and support offer discussed with the children's social services and, where appropriate, with the police.
 - If a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care,
 - Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police.
- If a child harmed asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment, there's no definitive answer. This is because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies. The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children.
- The wishes of the child harmed in terms of how they want to proceed will be prioritised. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims will be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered.
- Children displaying HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma, and it is important that they are also offered appropriate support
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including: whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour via investigation and the AIM assessment of the child who harmed. The assessment considers the following factors:
 - the ages of the children involved;
 - the developmental stages of the children involved;
 - any power imbalance between the children is considered by the Risk Assessment. For example, is the alleged perpetrator significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim and/or alleged perpetrator have a disability or learning difficulty?
 - if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse;

- whether there are ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school/college staff;
- Parents or carers should normally be informed and worked with (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
- The Safeguarding Team will only share information with those staff who need to know in order to support the children involved and/or be involved in any investigation. For instance, vocational staff may be asked to monitor the victim's welfare without needing to know that they are a victim of sexual violence or harassment. The school will also make efforts to limit the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities
- In cases where a pupil harmed another pupil, the school should take disciplinary action and still provide support at the same time where appropriate. The school can take a disciplinary action despite other ongoing investigations, e.g. by the police.
- Victims or pupils harmed will be assured that the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them.
- Considerations will be made for intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment

Children sharing a classroom - initial considerations following a report of sexual violence

- The Safeguarding Team are aware that victims of abuse find the experience distressing, which can affect their progress in school, this can be made worse if the alleged alleged perpetrator attends the same school. Measures will be put in place to minimise the adverse impact on the victim;
 - Any report of sexual violence is likely to be traumatic for the victim. However, reports of rape and assault by penetration are likely to be especially difficult with regard to the victim and close proximity with the alleged alleged perpetrator is likely to be especially distressing.
 - Whilst the school establishes the facts of the case and starts the process of liaising with Children's Social Care and the Police, the alleged alleged perpetrator will usually be removed from any classes they share with the victim. Consideration will also be given to how best to keep the victim and alleged alleged perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on school premises and on transport to and from the school, where appropriate. These actions are in the best interests of both children and should not be perceived to be a judgment on the guilt of the alleged alleged perpetrator.
 - For other reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, the proximity of the victim and alleged alleged perpetrator and considerations regarding shared classes, sharing school premises and transport, will be considered immediately.
 - In all cases, the wishes of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the protection of all children in the school will be especially important when considering any immediate actions.
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Appendix 1. Thresholds for social care intervention

Level 1 – Universal



Universal services are key partners in the delivery of a preventative approach to improving outcomes for children and young people. Services delivered at the universal level meet the needs of the majority of children and young people. These 'universal services' are those services (sometimes also referred to as mainstream services) that are provided to or are routinely available to, all children and their families. Universal services are designed to meet the sorts of needs that should enhance the lives and wellbeing of all our children.

Most children will not require intervention beyond the universal level of support within the borough available to all children – these will not require social care intervention.

Level 2 – Vulnerable

Vulnerable needs requiring targeted support, when the needs of the child can no longer be fully met within Universal provision. These children and their families may have low level additional needs that are likely to be short term and that are sometimes known but unmet. In this context, a Common Assessment should be completed with the family and child or young person. At this point the Team around the Child and Family processes should commence if support is required from more than one professional service. The team is coordinated by a Lead Professional to provide a consistent link for the family.

WF [Early Help and Threshold Criteria for Intervention](#) lays out the agreed thresholds for intervention at different levels of risk to children and young people within Waltham Forest. Early Help intervention requires parental consent and engagement. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. The aim is to prevent further issues arising and current issues escalating.

In cases where consent is not given for an early help assessment, practitioners should consider how the needs of the child might be met. If at any time it is considered that the child may be a child in need, or that the child has suffered significant harm or is likely to do so, a referral should be made immediately to [MASH](#).

Level 3 – Complex

For children and young people whose needs are complex, the lead professional will be a social worker who will work closely with the child and family to ensure a single assessment and deliver the right support

and intervention. These children will be eligible for social care services, outlined in a Children in Need plan, because they are at risk of moving to a higher threshold for intervention from specialist services. In most cases the social worker will act as the lead professional to coordinate the work of all agencies with the child and family. "Asset" is the risk assessment tool used to assess the likelihood of a Young Person going on to commit an offence and to identify what areas of work need to be undertaken to reduce this risk.

Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 places a general duty on every Local Authority to safeguard and promote the welfare of children living within their area who are in need and to promote the upbringing of such children, wherever possible by their families, through providing an appropriate range of services. A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Level 4 – Acute

Acute Specialist Services are required where the needs of the child or young person are so great that statutory and /or specialist help and intervention is required to keep them safe or to ensure their continued development. These span the multi-agency partnership including; Children's Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and Level 3 and 4 Youth Offending Services.

By effective integrated working in Waltham Forest, we aim to reduce the escalation of those children and families requiring targeted support to prevent more children requiring specialist and statutory interventions. To ensure the right support, in the right place at the right time.

In Waltham Forest we are developing a confident integrated workforce with a common core of knowledge and understanding to support and intervene effectively to safeguard children young people and families.

A very small number of children for whom targeted support will not be sufficient will have more significant and acute needs which meet the threshold for Stage 4 intervention. This includes children who are experiencing significant harm or where there is a likelihood of significant harm and children at risk of removal from home.

s47 or Child Protection intervention is the process for children where there is reasonable cause to suspect that the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm (this includes immediate protection for children at serious risk of harm).

Appendix 2. Useful Contacts in Waltham Forest

<p>Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)</p> <p>Single point of referral for Early Help, Child Protection and Adults' Safeguarding in Waltham Forest</p>	<p>Phone: 020 8496 2310 Mon-Thurs, 9am-5.15pm and Fri, 9am-5pm Out of Hours: 020 8496 3000 Email: MASHrequests@walthamforest.gov.uk</p> <p>N.B.: If you cannot get through by phone, send an email with your contact details, and you will get a same-day phone response during normal business hours</p>
<p>LADO Team</p> <p>Allegations against staff and volunteers (ASV)</p>	<p>Phone: 020 8496 3646 Email: lado@walthamforest.gov.uk</p> <p>N.B.: If you cannot get through by phone, send an email with your contact details, and you will get a same-day phone response during normal business hours</p>
<p>Safeguarding in Education Team</p> <p>Consultations / Training / Support (traded service)</p>	<p>Phone: 020 8496 3646 Email: lado@walthamforest.gov.uk</p> <p>N.B.: If you cannot get through by phone, send an email with your contact details, and you will get a phone response within 24 hours during normal business hours</p>
<p>Early Help</p>	<p>Phone: 020 8496 1517 Email: earlyhelp@walthamforest.gov.uk</p>
<p>Virtual School</p>	<p>Phone: 020 8496 1741 Email: virtual.school@walthamforest.gov.uk Head of Virtual School: fay.blyth@walthamforestgov.uk</p>
<p>Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Service [formerly known as Disability Enablement Service (DES)]</p>	<p>Phone: 020 8496 6503 Email: senteam@walthamforest.gov.uk</p>
<p>Corporate Director Children's Social Care (CSC)</p> <p>Inter-agency Escalation of concerns beyond escalation to Team Manager for Children's social care intervention</p>	<p>Phone: 020 8496 1907 Email: cspahub@walthamforest.gov.uk; amana.gordon@walthamforest.gov.uk</p>
<p>Corporate Director Quality Assurance (QA)</p> <p>Inter-agency Escalation of concerns beyond escalation to Team Manager for LADO intervention</p>	<p>Phone: 020 8496 3685 Email: cspahub@walthamforest.gov.uk; Darren.McAughtrie@walthamforest.gov.uk</p>

Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Local Safeguarding Partners (LSPs)	Email: strategicpartnerships@walthamforest.gov.uk
Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) notifications	Phone: 020 8496 3691 Email: cdop@walthamforest.gov.uk
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Community Safety	Refer via MASH . Phone: 020 8496 3281 Email: Sylvie.lovell@walthamforest.gov.uk
Prevent Community Safety	Refer via MASH . Phone: 020 8496 3000 Mobile: 07816150037 Email: communitysafety@walthamforest.gov.uk ; Amy.Strode@walthamforest.gov.uk
Gangs Community Safety	Refer via MASH . Email: Adeolu.Solarin@walthamforest.gov.uk
Adolescent Safeguarding Lead Children's Social Care	Refer via MASH . Email: Reanne.Turner@walthamforest.gov.uk
Harmful Sexual Behaviour Lead Children's Social Care	Refer via MASH . Email: tracey.goddard@walthamforest.gov.uk Tel: 020 8496 5027 Mob: 0797 476 8433
MARAC / DRM queries	Refer via MASH . Dianne.Andrews@walthamforest.gov.uk
Mental Health First Aid / Public Health	catherine.hutchinson@walthamforest.gov.uk
Private Fostering	Refer via MASH . Email: Pamela.Levy@walthamforest.gov.uk Phone: 020 8496 1575
Violence against women and girls (VAWG) & Domestic Abuse one-stop-shop	Refer via MASH . Email: vawg@walthamforest.gov.uk ; domesticabuseadvice@walthamforest.gov.uk

Appendix 3. Standards for Effective Child Protection Practice in Schools

The school's child protection and safeguarding responsibilities are inspected under the 'Leadership and Management' judgement in Ofsted inspections. The following standards may assist schools in evaluating their practice. They should be used jointly by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Designated Link Governor for Safeguarding to ensure the school is effective in safeguarding and child protection matters.

In best practice, schools:

- Have an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued and they are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- Provide suitable support and guidance so that pupils have a range of appropriate adults to whom they can turn if they are worried or in difficulties;
- Work with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and a recognition that this may occasionally require children to be referred to investigative agencies as a constructive and helpful measure;
- Ensure all staff are able to identify children who may benefit from early help; provide co-ordinated offers of early help; and ensure that children receive the right help at the right time to address concerns and risks and prevent issues escalating;
- Are vigilant in cases of suspected child abuse, recognising the signs and symptoms, have clear procedures whereby all members of staff report such cases to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or – in her/his absence – the deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, and are aware of Local Authority and procedures so that information is passed on effectively to the relevant professionals;
- Monitor children who have been identified as in need of early help or at risk; maintain clear records of pupils' progress and welfare *in a secure place*; maintain sound policies on confidentiality; provide appropriate information to other professionals; and submit reports to and attend child protection conferences;
- Provide and support regular child protection training and updates for all school staff and ensure that Designated Safeguarding Leads attend refresher training every two years to ensure their skills and expertise are up to date; and ensure that targeted funding for this work is used solely for this purpose;
- Contribute to an inter-agency approach to safeguarding and child protection by developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies;
- Use the curriculum to teach children about safeguarding and raise their awareness and build confidence so that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to identify risk, know who they can talk to about anything causes them concern and understand the importance of protecting others;
- Provide clear policy statements for parents, staff and children and young people on this and on both positive behaviour policies and the school's approach to bullying;
- Have a clear understanding of the various types of bullying and child-on-child abuse – face to face, online, physical, verbal, sexual, prejudice based and indirect - and act promptly and firmly

to combat it, making sure that pupils are aware of the school's position on this issue and who they can contact for support;

- Have a clear understanding of the signs and impact of racist, disability, homophobic, transphobic and teenage relationship abuse; and a clear commitment to identifying and challenging those forms of abuse in order to safeguard children and maintain the safeguarding culture of the school.
- Take particular care that pupils with SEN in mainstream and special schools, who may be especially vulnerable to abuse, are supported effectively with particular attention paid to ensuring that those with communication difficulties are enabled to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communication skills;
- Have a clear policy about the handling of allegations of abuse by members of staff, ensuring that all staff are fully aware of the procedures and that they are followed correctly at all times, using the guidance set out in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2023.
- Have a written whole school safeguarding policy, which is produced, owned and regularly reviewed by all school staff, taking into account the views of children, parents/carers and governors, and which clearly outlines the school's position and positive action in respect of the aforementioned standards;
- Ensure that specified information is passed on in a timely manner to the Local Authority for monitoring purposes;
- Have a Single Central Record in place that fully complies with the guidance in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2023

For advice and support about any safeguarding matter in school or for information about a range of safeguarding training courses, please contact the Education Safeguarding Service:

- **Caroline Aitken**
LADO & Safeguarding in Education Manager
- **Jennifer Knight**
Education Safeguarding Early Years' Lead
- **Yvonne Akyeampong**
Education Safeguarding Training Coordinator

safeguardingineducation@walthamforest.gov.uk

020 8496 3646

Appendix 4. Safer Recruitment Proforma: Model Reference Request Form

Name of Applicant:					
Post Applied for:					
What is the name of your organisation?					
What position do you hold in relation to the applicant?					
How long have you worked/did you work with the Applicant?					
Applicant's role and/or duties held					
Applicant's dates of employment:					
Employment commenced:			Employment ended:		
Please confirm below the reason for the termination of the Applicant's employment. If the Applicant was dismissed, please explain the reason for the Applicant's dismissal and the surrounding circumstances.					
Please rate the Applicant against the following criteria:	Needs substantial development	Needs development	Acceptable	Strong	Outstanding
Attitude to work					
Reliability					
Working relationships					
Skill Experience					
Has the Applicant been the subject of disciplinary proceedings (whether formal or informal) during the last 12 months of their employment? If so, please provide details of the allegation(s) against the Applicant and the outcome of the proceedings.	Yes / No *delete as appropriate, and provide details				
Has the Applicant been the subject of allegations involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children or young	Yes / No *delete as appropriate, and provide details				

people? If so, please provide details of the allegation (s) against the Applicant and the outcome of the proceedings.	
To the best of your knowledge, has the applicant ever been subject to investigation for a safeguarding reason? Please provide details.	Yes / No *delete as appropriate, and provide details
With reference to the attached job description, are you satisfied that the Applicant has the ability and is suitable to undertake this role? If not, please give specific reasons for your concerns.	Yes / No *delete as appropriate, and provide details
Are you completely satisfied that the Applicant is suitable to work with children? If, not please give specific reasons for your concerns.	Yes / No *delete as appropriate, and provide details
Would you be willing to re-employ the Applicant? If your answer is "No", please explain why.	Yes / No *delete as appropriate, and provide details
Please include any other information which you consider may be relevant to the Applicant's application?	
Signed:	Please print name:
Job Title:	Dated:
Telephone No:	Extension:
E-mail address:	
Organisation 'name and address:	
Official Stamp:	If you do not have an official stamp, then please attach this reference to signed headed paper/compliment slip.
For Requesting School use only: (Record details of conversation, who had conversation, and date, upon phone follow up)	

Appendix 5. Links to other policies

This policy is based on and should be read alongside:

- a) Legislation and statutory guidance:
 - Education Act (2002)
 - [Working together to safeguard children \(DfE, 2018\)](#)
 - [Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023](#)
 - [Domestic Abuse Act \(2021\)](#)
 - [Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act \(2014\)](#)
 - [Counter -Terrorism Act \(2015\)](#)

 - b) Relevant school policies:
 - [Leytonstone School Behaviour Policy](#)
 - [Leytonstone School Anti-Bullying Policy](#)
 - [Staff Code of Conduct Policy](#)
 - [Pupil Mental Health Policy](#)
 - [Whistleblowing Policy](#)
 - [Health and Safety Policy](#)
 - [Complaints Policy](#)
 - [Relationship and Sex Education Policy](#)
 - Attendance Policy
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