Blossom Federation

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

2026/2027

SAFEGUARDING POLICY REVIEW DATES

Review Date	Changes made/Details of action plan	Due Date	By Whom
September 2025	P7 Information about Safeguarding for Pupils – Link added to revised RSE & H Policy 2026 P17 Updated links for advice on alternative provision safeguarding P25 Updated to clarify misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories are safeguarding harms. P26 bullet point added on generative artificial intelligence safety. Governing Bodies responsibilities add relating to IT, P27 Bullet points added to Staff, agency… section adding updated links regarding new teachers and mentors. New paragraph on Information Security and Access Management P28 new links for advice on filtering and monitoring P57 Update to the Acceptable Use Policy Agreement	Full GB Sept 2025	Terry Corpe
September 2026	Change of policy layout based on Hackney Education's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy. Updated from changes to 2026 – 2027 KCSIE.	Full GB Sept 2026	Terry Corpe

Daubeney, Lauriston, Sebright Primary Schools (Blossom Federation)

Executive Head Teacher: Robin Warren

Heads of Schools: Gregory Logan, Louis Harris, Terry Corpe

DESIGNATED MEMBERS OF STAFF FOR SAFEGUARDING

	Designated Safeguarding Lead	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	Nominated Safeguarding Governor	Chair of Governors
SEBRIGHT	Ms Lucie Collins	Mr Robin Warren Ms Terry Corpe Mr Joel Power Ms Jen Roberts Ms Jenni Bird	Katie Beck	Mr Will Emms
LAURISTON	Ms Daljeet Panesar	Mr Louis Harris Mr Robin Warren	Katie Beck	Mr Will Emms
DAUBENEY	Ms Cheryll Gustave	Mr Gregory Logan Mr Robin Warren Mr Raj Dharma Ms Seema Bibi	Katie Beck	Mr Will Emms

Designated Safeguarding Leads' Supervision – Ms Terry Corpe (Blossom Federation Inclusion Lead, Head of School - Sebright)

DESIGNATED MEMBER OF STAFF FOR ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

	Designated Senior Manager	Deputy Designated Senior Manager	Chair of Governors	Nominated Governor
SEBRIGHT	Mr Robin Warren	Ms Terry Corpe	Mr Will Emms	Mr Will Emms
LAURISTON	Mr Robin Warren	Mr Louis Harris	Mr Will Emms	Mr Will Emms
DAUBENEY	Mr Robin Warren	Mr Gregory Logan	Mr Will Emms	Mr Will Emms

SAFEGUARDING AUDIT DATES

Review Date	Changes made/Details of action plan	By Whom
March 2023	All Schools Compliant	Lucie Collins - Sebright Matt Swarbrick – Daubeney Daljeet Panesar – Lauriston Katie Beck – Blossom Federation Safeguarding Governor
June 2024	All Schools Compliant	Lucie Collins - Sebright Cheryl Gustave – Daubeney Daljeet Panesar – Lauriston Katie Beck - Blossom Federation Safeguarding Governor

June 2025	All Schools Compliant	Lucie Collins - Sebright Cheryl Gustave – Daubeney Daljeet Panesar – Lauriston Katie Beck - Blossom Federation Safeguarding Governor
Feb 2026	All Schools Compliant	Lucie Collins - Sebright Cheryl Gustave – Daubeney Daljeet Panesar – Lauriston Katie Beck - Blossom Federation Safeguarding Governor

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Introduction

Everyone at The Blossom Federation who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. School staff are particularly important in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as we are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children. Our school staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children to prevent concerns from escalating. Our school will work with Children and Families Service, the police, health services and other relevant agencies to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

This policy applies to all staff, including volunteers, contractors and/or apprentices, working in or on behalf of the school. It provides information about the actions the school expects from all staff, it will be updated annually and known to everyone working in the school and the governing body. It will be available to parents/carers on request and via our website.

This policy is in line with statutory guidance for Early Years Foundation Stage, schools and colleges;

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Keeping Children Safe In Education 2026:

Working Together To Safeguard Children 2026;

London Safeguarding Children Procedures 2026.

This policy also has regard to:

- The Children At 1989 and 2004;
- Children and Social Work Act 2017;
- Education Act 2002;
- Data Protection legislation;
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026;
- Crime and Policing Act 2026;
- Equalities Act.

Everyone working in or for our school must share the objective to help keep children and young people safe by:

- Providing a safe, anti-racist and trauma informed environment for children and young people to learn and develop in our school setting;
- Identifying and responding to 'early help' needs of children and families;
- Identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe at home, in the community, online and in our school setting;
- Maintaining a culture of vigilance and an attitude of 'It could happen here'.

Our School's Commitment

The Blossom Federation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all of our pupils. Each pupil's welfare is of paramount importance. We are committed to an inclusive and anti-discriminative culture where all children, families and staff feel valued and supported. Throughout this document 'children' includes everyone yet to have their 18th birthday.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) is:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether within or outside the home, including online;
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection, as defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026), refers to the activity undertaken to protect individual children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes timely assessment, intervention, and referral to statutory services where necessary. Safeguarding extends beyond child protection and includes:

- promoting children's health and wellbeing, including mental health;
- preventing harm from all forms of abuse, neglect, discrimination, exploitation, or radicalisation;
- ensuring online safety and protection from digital risks;
- early identification and support for children with additional needs (early help);
- addressing risks in the wider environment (contextual safeguarding); and
- listening to children's voices and involving them in decisions affecting their welfare.

We as a school recognise that:

Some children may be especially vulnerable to abuse including those missing education, those experiencing extra-familial risk, including child on child abuse, or with a special educational need or disability;

- Children who are abused or neglected may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way; subsequently whilst at school their behaviour may be disruptive and/or challenging;
- Children can be both victims and perpetrators of child-on-child abuse;
- Children who harm others may have been maltreated themselves;
- Children may experience simultaneous and/or multiple harms;
- Allegations against staff may be made however careful and safe our recruitment practices.

Our Approach to Safeguarding Children

The Blossom Federation will ensure all staff are aware of their safeguarding and child protection responsibilities and that they are able to identify children and young people where concerns about their safety and welfare arise. We will ensure all staff and pupils know they can raise issues with any member of staff, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy DSL) and that their concerns will be taken seriously. There will always be a DSL (or Deputy DSL) on site and they will have appropriate training and understanding of how to manage concerns in an effective way with the welfare of children and young people as their primary focus.

Whole school approach

The school will maintain a whole-school approach to preventing and responding to child-on-child abuse by:

- Providing an age-appropriate preventative curriculum covering healthy relationships, consent, respectful behaviour, online safety, including the risks from deepfakes and Artificial Intelligence (AI) and how to seek help;

- Ensuring that staff receive appropriate training to recognise, report and respond to concerns;
- Providing children with clear, accessible and trusted routes for reporting concerns;
- Challenging inappropriate, abusive, racist, religious discrimination, ableism or disablism, misogynistic and misandrist behaviour;
- Completing prompt and proportionate risk assessments and safety and support plans;
- Monitoring patterns, trends, locations and times where concerns are more likely to arise;
- Sharing relevant safeguarding information and emerging local trends with safeguarding partners, where appropriate; and
- Using incidents and pupil voice to review the curriculum, behaviour systems, staff training and the school's physical and online environments.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff and volunteers will:

Fully comply with the school's policies and procedures, attend appropriate safeguarding training, inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead of any concerns and read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe In Education 2026.

Our Governing Body will ensure that:

The schools has a safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures in place that are in accordance with statutory guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures, and the policy is made available to parents/carers on request and via our website;
The school operates safer recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on staff and volunteers who work with children;
The school follows the 7th Edition of the London Child Protection Procedures and the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe In Education 2026 for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers;

- A senior member of the school's leadership team is designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding (and deputy);
- There is a named Governor lead for safeguarding and there is good communication between them and Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) within the school;
- Staff undertake appropriate safeguarding/child protection training, at regular intervals;
- Comply with the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership Self Assessment auditing requirements;
- Action is taken to remedy, without delay, any deficiencies or weaknesses regarding safeguarding practice and arrangements;
- A Governor is nominated to be responsible for liaising with the LA and /or partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Headteacher;
- Where services or activities are provided on the school premises by another service, group or individual, the school will check they have appropriate policies and procedures in place regarding safeguarding children and have 'hire agreements' with external groups and individuals;
- Policies and procedures are reviewed annually and provide information to the Local Authority about them and about how the above duties have been discharged.

Our Heads of Schools will ensure that:

- The policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body or Proprietor are fully

implemented, and followed by all staff;

- All pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online, relationship education and extra-familial risks including child on child abuse, exploitation and online harms;
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputy to carry out their roles effectively including the assessment of pupils, attendance at initial child protection conferences, core group, Extra Familial Risk Panel (EFRP) and other necessary meetings;
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with the agreed Whistle Blowing Policy;
- They have completed Safer Recruitment training;
- The procedure for managing allegations against staff is known to all staff and displayed in staff rooms;
- Operate the procedure for managing allegations effectively and refer relevant concerns to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO);
- That anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the DBS;
- A senior manager is appointed to deal with allegations against staff in the absence of the Heads of School.

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads Cheryll Gustave, Daljeet Panesar & Lucie Collins:

Our schools Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Cheryll Gustave Daljeet Panesar and Lucie Collins, are substantive member of the school's Senior Leadership Team and have the authority, time, training and resources necessary to fulfil the responsibilities of the role.

During term time, the DSL or an appropriately trained deputy will always be available during school hours for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns. Robust cover arrangements will be maintained during periods of illness, leave or other absence. These arrangements may include a confidential safeguarding mailbox or another secure communication system monitored by appropriately trained DSLs or deputy DSLs. [insert your school's reporting mechanism here]

Appropriate DSL cover will also be available for school activities taking place outside normal school hours or during school holidays. Where necessary, availability may be provided remotely by telephone, video call or another secure means of communication.

The DSL:

- Is a senior member of the school's leadership team and has the status and authority required to carry out the duties of the role, including committing resources and supporting and directing staff;
- Takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at the school;
- Is provided with the time, funding, training, resources and support necessary to carry out the role effectively;
- Maintains oversight of the school's safeguarding profile and ensures that deputy DSLs have access to the information required to undertake their responsibilities;
- Acts as a source of advice, support and expertise to staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters;
- Has a working knowledge of local safeguarding procedures and acts as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners;

- Ensures that all staff have access to and understand the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, with particular attention given to new and part-time staff;
- Links with the local safeguarding partner arrangements to ensure staff are made aware of relevant training opportunities and the latest local safeguarding policies and procedures;
- Undertakes role-specific training at least every two years, including Prevent awareness training, and refreshes their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually;
- Understands the assessment process for providing Family Help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements;
- Understands the relevant referral arrangements for child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation, trafficking and modern slavery, including the National Referral Mechanism where appropriate;
- Makes, or supports staff to make, referrals to local authority children's social care, the police, the Prevent programme and other relevant agencies, as appropriate;
- Ensure that all staff can identify children who may benefit from Family Help. Family Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.
- Supports staff throughout the referral and assessment process and ensures that the school provides appropriate information and assistance to children's social care and other agencies;
- Keeps safeguarding cases under review and ensures that concerns are reconsidered or escalated where risks change and/or increase, the child's circumstances do not improve or the support provided is not meeting the child's needs;
- Keeps detailed, accurate, secure and up-to-date records of all safeguarding concerns, discussions and decisions, including the action taken, advice received, outcomes and rationale for making or not making a referral;
- Ensures that child protection records are stored securely, accessed only by those who need to see them and managed in accordance with data protection and information-sharing requirements;
- Ensures that when a pupil leaves the school, their child protection file is transferred separately from the main pupil file, through secure means, and that confirmation of receipt is obtained;
- Ensures that child protection files are transferred within five days of an in-year transfer or within the first five days of the start of a new term;
- Considers whether relevant safeguarding information should be shared with a receiving school in advance, particularly where it is needed to assess risk to the child or others and to establish appropriate safety and support arrangements;
- Attends and contributes effectively to strategy discussions, child protection conferences, review conferences and other relevant multi-agency meetings;
- Coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans, assessments and other multi-agency safeguarding arrangements;
- Liaises as appropriate with the Headteacher/Principal, the Multi-school Trust, the case manager, the LADO, children's social care, the police and other relevant agencies;
- Liaises with relevant school staff, including pastoral leaders, the SENCO, attendance staff, IT staff and the senior mental health lead, so that children's needs are considered holistically;
- Liaises with the senior mental health lead, [the WAMHS link where applicable], and relevant external services where safeguarding concerns are linked to a child's mental health;
- Promotes supportive engagement with parents and carers in safeguarding and promoting children's welfare, unless doing so may place a child or another person at increased risk or compromise an investigation (advice will be sought from the MASH when necessary);
- Understands the circumstances in which a child is entitled to an Appropriate Adult under Code C of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act;

- Works with attendance staff and Hackney Education Alternative Learning Service to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns associated with repeated or prolonged absence from education, making referrals where appropriate;
- Works with the Headteacher/Principal and relevant strategic leaders to promote the educational outcomes of children who have or have had a social worker and work alongside Hackney Virtual School when appropriate;
- Promotes a culture in which children are listened to and their wishes and feelings are considered when decisions are made about their safety and welfare;
- Ensures that the safeguarding and child protection policy and its implementation are reviewed at least annually and updated regularly in partnership with the governing body or proprietor; and
- Ensures that the safeguarding and child protection policy is publicly available and that parents and carers understand the school's role in making safeguarding referrals.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL)

Our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are Robin Warren, Gregory Logan, Raj Dharma, Seema Bibi, Louis Harris, Joel Power, Jen Roberts, Jenni Bird.

The Deputy DSLs:

- Are trained to the same standard as the DSL and receive the same regular safeguarding updates;
- Support the DSL in carrying out the safeguarding and child protection responsibilities set out in this policy;
- Have access to the safeguarding information and systems necessary to discharge their responsibilities effectively;
- Act as a source of advice and support to staff on safeguarding and child protection matters; and
- Carry out the necessary functions of the DSL during periods of absence to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils.

Where the DSL is absent for a prolonged period, an appropriately trained Deputy DSL will undertake the day-to-day functions of the role in accordance with the school's agreed cover arrangements.

Although safeguarding duties may be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the DSL retains ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. This responsibility must not be delegated.

The responsibilities of the DSL and Deputy DSL(s) are clearly set out in the relevant postholders' job descriptions.

Our Safeguarding Training will:

- Ensure all staff can recognise how to identify signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation, including online and community-based risks and know when it is appropriate to speak with the DSL and/or make a referral to Children and Families Service;
- Have knowledge of the CHSCP Dispute Resolution Policy, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) role, the conduct of a child protection case conference and be able to attend and contribute to these;
- Ensure that all staff have access to and understand the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures;
- Be aware of the Families First (Family Help) approach and the Child Wellbeing Framework;

- Ensure that all staff have induction safeguarding training and receive regular updates;
- Access resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses at least every two years;

- Ensure accurate records of training, updates, policy dissemination and that all staff have read of Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe In Education are kept.

Raising Awareness

- Ensure the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is updated and reviewed at least annually and work with the Governing Body regarding this;

- Ensure parents/carers are routinely made aware of the safeguarding policy which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the school in this to avoid conflict later;

- When a child leaves the school, ensure the child protection file is copied for the new setting in a timely manner and transferred to the new school separately from the main pupil file, as well as ensure the pupil's Social Worker is informed if necessary.

Supporting Children and Working in Partnership with parents/carers

- Blossom Federation recognises that children's welfare is paramount. Good safeguarding and child protection practice and securing good outcomes for children relies on a positive, open and honest working partnership with parents/carers;
- Whilst we may, on occasion, need to make referrals to Children and Families Service without consultation with parents/carers, we will make every effort to maintain a positive working relationship with them whilst fulfilling our duties to protect children;
- Our DSLs will have a detailed knowledge of the Child Wellbeing Framework and will rely on the MASH Consultation Line to inform our decision-making regarding seeking consent from parents/carers/carers regarding seeking consent to share information;
- Children will be given a proper explanation (appropriate to age & understanding) of what action is being taken on their behalf and why;
- We will endeavour to preserve the privacy, dignity and right to confidentiality of the child and parents/carers/carers whilst discharging our statutory duties;
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will determine which members of staff 'need to know' personal information for the purpose of supporting and protecting the child(ren) on the principle of those working directly with children will need to know more;
- Staff will not be enabled to further share this information further without the expressed permission of the DSL.

Information about Safeguarding for Pupils

Through the curriculum and lessons pupils are taught to understand and manage risks they may encounter during school life and work out with staff how these risks may be overcome; considering their wishes and feelings. They are regularly reminded about online safety and bullying procedures and taught how to conduct themselves and behave in a responsible and respectful manner. Opportunities are provided for children to learn about democracy and the rule of law, positive relationships and safe

choices. Child on child abuse, generative Ai and online harms will be addressed in a supportive and age-appropriate way.

All pupils know there is Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) responsible for their safety and welfare, who this is and that they have a right to speak to this member of staff, or any other, if they are worried or concerned. They are reminded that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, but that they will be listened to, heard, helped and informed of what steps can be taken to protect them from harm and that feedback will be sought, so that their views about actions are known. There is a display in the school identifying the DSLs and children are made aware of this.

Partnership With Parents/carers and Carers

The Blossom Federation recognises that it is essential to establish positive and effective working relationships with other agencies that are partners of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership, including Children and Families' Services and the MASH. There is a joint responsibility on all these agencies to share information to ensure the safeguarding of all children and work together to secure positive outcomes.

Our school will work openly and collaboratively with parents/carers/carers and seek consent (where possible) when sharing information with other agencies. We will inform parents/carers/carers of our responsibilities to safeguard their children. We will make this policy available via our website and provide additional safeguarding information via our newsletter and parents/carers meetings.

Identifying children who may be at risk or may have been significantly harmed

Teachers, staff and volunteers in school are well placed to observe any physical, emotional or behavioural signs which indicate that a child may have additional needs or be at risk of or suffering significant harm. The relationships between staff, pupils, parents/carers and the public which foster respect, confidence and trust can lead to disclosures of abuse, and/or school staff being alerted to concerns. That children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or they may not recognise theire experiences are harmful.

Harm means ill-treatment or impairment of health and development, including, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. This may include prejudice-based harm and discrimination;

Development means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development;

Health includes physical and mental health;

Ill-treatment includes sexual abuse and other forms of ill-treatment which are not physical.

Abuse and Neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or 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 a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, another child, children or young people. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to asa child to parent or care giver abuse. There are four categories of abuse; physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. Children can also be abused by other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images, deepfakes and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content.

Definitions and Indicators of Abuse

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

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

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

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food and clothing, shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caretakers);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment;
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

Extra-Familial Contexts: Extra-Familial contexts include a range of environments outside the family home in which harm may occur. These can include peer groups, schools and community/public spaces, including known places in the community where there are concerns about risks to children (for example parks, housing estates, shopping centres, take-away restaurants, or transport hubs), as well as online, social media or gaming platforms.

Our DSLs will understand these contexts and the role of the Extra-Familial Risk Panel (EFRP) in

Hackney and similar panels in other boroughs where necessary.

Our school understands extra-familial abuse and exploitation may affect children in our school/setting. The Designated Safeguarding Lead has the training, skills and knowledge to support staff, children and families in contexts such as sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, county lines and serious youth violence.

Taking action to ensure that children are safe

All staff must read and follow the statutory guidance for schools and colleges; Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 – Part One: Safeguarding information for all staff and our school's/setting's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

It is not the responsibility of the school staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation, although seeking clarification from children and young people is encouraged. Accordingly, all concerns regarding the welfare of pupils will be recorded and discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) prior to any discussion with parents/carers/carers.

All Blossom Federation Staff Must Immediately Report

- Any suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way which is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play;
- Any explanation which appears inconsistent or suspicious;
- Behaviours which give rise to suspicions that a child may have suffered harm, including child-on-child abuse and extra-familial harms;
- Any concerns that a child may be suffering from inadequate care, ill treatment, or emotional maltreatment;
- Concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect, including child on child abuse or extra-familial risks and online harms;
- Any significant changes in a child's presentation, suspected use of drug or alcohol, persistent or unexplained non-attendance;
- Any hint or disclosure of harm or abuse about or by a child or young person;
- Concerns regarding person(s) who may pose a risk to children (e.g. those living in a household with children present), or a staff member;
- Information which indicates that the child is living with someone who does not have parental responsibility for them for a period of more than 28 days (Private Fostering).

Responding to Disclosure

Our schools will have regard to Hackney Education's Managing Disclosures guidance.

Disclosures or information that a child has been harmed or is at risk may be received from pupils, parents/carers/carers, other professionals or members of the public. The school recognises that those who disclose such information may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Accordingly, all staff will handle disclosures with sensitivity. Such information cannot remain confidential and staff will immediately communicate what they have been told to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and make a record using clear, straightforward language.

Staff will not investigate but will, wherever possible, listen, record and pass on information to the DSL in order that s/he can make an informed decision of what to do next. (See Hackney Education's

Managing Disclosures Guidance).

All staff will:

Maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** where safeguarding is concerned, listen to and take seriously any disclosure or information that a child may be at risk of harm;

- Seek clarification about the information (if necessary) without asking leading or probing questions;
- Make a written record of what the child has said using the Cause for Concern Form or the school's internal reporting mechanism;
- Keep questions to a minimum and of an 'open' nature e.g. 'Can you tell me what happened?' rather than 'Did x hit you?';
- Try not to show signs of shock, horror or surprise;
- Not express feelings or judgements regarding any person alleged to have harmed the child;
- Explain sensitively to the child or young person that they have a responsibility to pass the information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Reassure and support the child or young person as far as possible;
- Not promise secrecy;
- Explain that only those who 'need to know' will be told;
- Explain what will happen next and that the child will be involved as appropriate.

Confidentiality

The schools will operate with regard to Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers (2018), and have a clear and explicit Confidentiality Policy. However, where there is a concern that the child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration.

The school will ensure:

- Information is shared with Children and Families Service and/or Police where the child/young person is or may be at risk of, or experiencing, significant harm, including child on child abuse and/or online abuse;
- Pupil's and/or parent's/carer's confidentiality is respected;
- That any information shared is necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure;
- Allegations and/or disclosures of a historic nature will be managed in the same way as current safeguarding issues.

Pupil Information

The school's record-keeping policy for child welfare and child protection is consistent with Hackney Education's guidance, which is known to all staff.

In order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them, our school requires accurate and up to date information regarding:

- Names and contact details of persons with whom the child normally lives;
- Names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above);
- Emergency contact details (if different from above);
- Details of any persons authorised to collect the child from school (if different from above);

- Any relevant court orders in place including those, which affect any person's access to the child (e.g. Residence Order, Contact Order, Care Order, Injunctions etc.);
- If the child is or has been subject to a child in need, child protection or care plan;
- Name and contact detail of GP;
- Any other factors which may impact on the safety and welfare of the child.

Data protection laws do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 now sits alongside the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR under one term, **'data protection laws'.**

All child protection documents will be retained in a 'Child Protection' file, separate from the child's main school file. The main file will clearly show an alert that a child protection file exists and the location of this. This child protection file will be securely stored and only accessible to the Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead. These records will be transferred to the next school or setting the child moves to, clearly marked 'Child Protection, Confidential, for attention of Designated Safeguarding Lead' as soon as is practicable but no longer than one working week.

Action by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead in their absence)

Following any information raising concern, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Consider the child's wishes and feelings, but not promise confidentiality;
- Consider any urgent medical needs of the child;
- Have an immediate consultation with Hackney Children and Family Services' Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) (or the Children's Social Care team where the child is resident) if there has been a disclosure and/or allegation of abuse, including child on child abuse, or there are clear grounds for concerns about the child's safety and well-being;
- Consult with a member of Children and Families Service's MASH if they are uncertain whether or not a referral is required or review action when a child has suffered or is likely to suffer harm or Early help and threshold criteria for intervention.

In consultation with Hackney Children and Family Services' MASH or children's social care in the borough the child resides, decide:

- Wherever possible, to talk to parents/carers, unless to do so may place a child at risk of significant harm, impede any police investigation and/or place the member of staff or others at risk;
- Whether to make a child protection referral to social care because a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm and if this needs to be undertaken immediately;
- Contact the designated officer for safeguarding in another agency if that agency is working with the family;

OR

- Not to make a referral at this stage, but retain the information in written notes on the child's school file;
- If further monitoring is necessary, agree who and how this will be undertaken;

- If it would be appropriate to undertake an assessment and/or make a referral for other services including Early Help.

All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented. All referrals to Hackney Children and Family Services for children living in Hackney needs to be completed using the Multi-agency Request for Support Form. For children living outside Hackney the local authority where the child is resident will be contacted.

Action following a Safeguarding Referral

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or other appropriate member of staff will:

- Maintain contact with the child's allocated Social Worker as required;
- Contribute to any Strategy Discussion and/or Strategy Meeting as required;
- Provide a report for, attend and contribute to any Initial and Review Child Protection Conference;
- Consult with, report to and attend the Extra-Familial Risk Panel as appropriate;
- Share the content of this report with the parent/carer, prior to the meeting;
- Attend Core Group Meetings for any child subject to a Child in Need Meeting for any child subject to a Child in Need Plan or Child Protection Plan, or the Extra-Familial Risk Panel (EFRP);
- Where a child on a Child Protection Plan moves from the school or goes missing, immediately inform the child's Social Worker.

Dealing with Disagreements and Escalation of Concerns

Effective working together depends on an open approach and honest relationships between agencies and professionals. Dispute resolution is an integral part of professional co-operation and joint working to safeguard children. Occasionally situations arise when workers within one agency feel that the actions, inaction or decisions of another agency do not adequately safeguard a child. The CHSCP Dispute Resolution Policy defines the process for resolving such professional differences and should be read alongside the London Child Protection Procedures and relevant internal policies on escalating matters of concern.

Professional disagreements can arise in a number of areas, but are most likely to arise around:

- Levels of need;
- Roles and responsibilities;
- The need for action;
- Progressing plans and communication.

Where professionals consider that the practice of other professionals is placing children at risk of harm, they must be assertive, act swiftly and ensure that they challenge the relevant professionals in line with this policy and be aware that:

- The safety of children and young people is the paramount consideration in any professional activity;
- Resolution should be sought within the shortest time scale possible to ensure the child is protected;
- As a guide, professionals should attempt to resolve differences through discussion within one working week or a timescale that protects the child from harm (whichever is shortest);
- Disagreements should be resolved at the earliest possible stage.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or other appropriate member of staff will:

- Contact the line manager in Children and Families Service (MASH) if they consider the response to a referral has not led to the child being adequately safeguarded and follow this up in writing;
- Contact the line manager in Children and Families Service if they consider that the child is not being adequately safeguarded by the child protection plan and follow this up in writing;
- Use the CHSCP Dispute Resolution Policy if this does not resolve the concern.

Providing a Safe and Supportive Environment

At the Blossom Federation we understand that for safeguarding to be effective we have a collective responsibility to ensure that children, staff and visitors are empowered to speak out if they are concerned about any aspect of our school's/setting's life. This includes maintaining vigilance about risks and harms children may face at school, at home or in the community and online.

Our behaviour policy will work to enhance children's experiences of authority and reflect our understanding of behaviour as communication and potentially symptomatic of a child's experiences outside of school/setting. We commit to taking a 'safeguarding first' approach and if in doubt we will consult with external agencies to maintain a child centred focus.

Community-based Early Help Assessments

If children do not require the support of statutory children's services, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will generally lead the liaison with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in carrying out this assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Further guidance on effective assessment of the need for Family Help can be found in Working Together to Safeguard Children

Safer Recruitment and Selection

The Blossom Federation pays full regard to the statutory guidance for schools and colleges; Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) – Part Three: Safer Recruitment. We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the school and who is therefore likely to be perceived and experienced by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult. This includes volunteers, supervised volunteers and staff employed by contractors.

Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applications, verifying identity and academic/vocational qualifications, obtaining professional references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

In line with statutory changes, underpinned by regulations, the following will apply:

DBS and barred list checks will be undertaken for all posts that are deemed regulated activity, and for all other posts an enhanced DBS check will be undertaken unless they are supervised roles that are deemed not to meet the definition of regulated activity;

- This schools are committed to keeping an up to date Single Central Record detailing the range of checks carried out on our staff;
- All new appointments to our schools' workforce who have lived outside the UK will be subject

to additional checks as appropriate;
- Our schools ensure that supply staff have undergone the necessary checks and will be made aware of this policy;
- Identity checks that must be carried out on all appointments to our school workforce before the appointment is made, in partnership with the Local Authority;
- Staff responsible for recruiting and appointing must be suitably qualified.

Third-Party staff (Contractors)

The schools will ensure that contractors and other third-party staff working on the premises have undergone the appropriate checks for the work they will undertake.
Where a contractor will engage in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS check with the children's barred-list information will be required.

Where a contractor will not engage in regulated activity but will have the opportunity for regular contact with children, an enhanced DBS check without barred-list information may be required.

Where a contractor has not undergone the appropriate checks, they will not be permitted to work unsupervised or undertake regulated activity while children are present.
The school will:

- obtain written confirmation from the contractor's employer that the appropriate checks have been completed;
- check the identity of contractors and third-party staff when they arrive at the school; and
- ensure that the individual presenting for work is the same person on whom the checks were completed.

Where a self-employed contractor is engaged, the school will obtain the appropriate check directly or verify that the individual holds a suitable and eligible check at the required level.
Where the school directs a pupil to attend alternative provision, it will obtain written assurance that adults working with pupils have undergone the appropriate safer recruitment checks. This assurance does not remove the school's responsibility to undertake its own safeguarding due diligence and keep the placement under review.

Site security and visitors

Visitors to the school, including contractors, will be required to sign in and will be issued with an identification badge confirming that they have permission to be on the premises. Parents and carers who are only delivering or collecting their children will not normally be required to sign in.

All visitors are expected to comply with the schools' safeguarding, conduct and health and safety requirements. For visitors attending in a professional capacity, the school will check their identity and obtain assurance that the appropriate checks have been completed by their employer, where relevant. The school will not normally ask to see the DBS certificate itself where satisfactory written assurance has been provided.

The school will not request DBS or barred-list checks for visitors such as children's relatives attending sports days, performances or similar events where those checks are not legally permitted or necessary.

The Heads of Schools will exercise professional judgement when deciding whether a visitor should be escorted or supervised while on the premises, taking account of the nature and purpose of the visit, the visitor's level of contact with children and any checks that have been completed.

Volunteers

All volunteer roles will be assessed before the individual begins work. The school will determine whether the role amounts to regulated activity and what checks are required.
From 1st September 2026, a volunteer who teaches, trains, instructs or supervises children frequently, on more than three days in any 30-day period, or overnight, will be regarded as engaging in regulated activity, even where they are supervised. In these circumstances, the school will obtain an enhanced DBS check with the children's barred-list information before, or as soon as practicable after, the volunteer begins the role.

A volunteer will not undertake regulated activity until their children's barred-list status has been confirmed.
The schools will review the roles of existing volunteers to identify any individual who becomes engaged in regulated activity because of the changes introduced from 1 September 2026. Where this applies, the school will check the individual's children barred-list status and obtain the appropriate DBS check.

Where a volunteer meets the frequency requirement through volunteering across more than one school or setting, the school will work with the other settings to determine which organisation will obtain the enhanced DBS check with the children's barred-list information.
Where a volunteer is not engaged in regulated activity, the school will undertake and record a written risk assessment to determine what checks, if any, are appropriate.

The assessment will take account of:

- the nature of the work with children;
- the level and frequency of contact with children;
- what is known about the volunteer, including information provided by staff, parents, referees or other volunteers;
- whether the individual undertakes other paid or voluntary work where a referee can comment on their suitability; and
- whether an enhanced DBS check without barred-list information, or another level of check, is appropriate.

Under no circumstances will a volunteer on whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or permitted to undertake regulated activity.

Where the statutory criteria are met, the school will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service in relation to a volunteer who is removed from regulated activity, or who ceases volunteering before they can be removed.

Safe Practice

Our school will comply with the current Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People and ensure that information in this guidance regarding conduct, is known to all staff, visitors and volunteers who come into the school.

Safe working practice ensures that pupils are safe and that all staff:

- Are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation, intentions and actions;
- Work in an open, honest and transparent way;
- Work with other colleagues where possible in situations that could be open to question;
- Discuss and/or take advice from school management over any incident which may give rise for concern;
- Record any incidents or decisions made;
- Apply professional standards respectfully and consistently in relation to diversity and inclusion issues;
- Be aware of information-sharing and confidentiality policies;

- Are aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.

Positive Handling

Blossom Federation staff, including volunteers, are only empowered to physically restrain pupils with 'reasonable force' to prevent them from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.

Blossom Federation staff will familiarise themselves with the Department for Education's Use of Reasonable Force and Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance and follow the school's Behaviour Policy. The school will offer training to staff in appropriate use of physical intervention and/or restraint.

Sport, toilets, changing facilities and showers

The schools will manage participation in sport and the use of toilets, changing rooms and showers in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, the Equality Act 2010, the School Premises (England) Regulations 2012 and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Where the nature of a sport means that physical strength, stamina or physique creates a safety or competitive disadvantage, pupils may be grouped according to biological sex. Where single-sex provision is necessary for safety, no exceptions will be made. In other circumstances, requests concerning participation will be considered individually, taking account of safety, fairness, the welfare and best interests of the child and other children, and the school's equality and human rights duties.

The schools will provide separate toilet facilities for boys and girls where required by law. Pupils will not use toilets designated for the opposite biological sex. Where a pupil does not wish to use the facilities designated for their biological sex, the school will consider whether a suitable self-contained individual facility can be provided without compromising the safety, privacy, comfort or dignity of that pupil or any other child.

Pupils aged 11 or over at the start of the school year will not be required or permitted to undress in front of pupils of the opposite biological sex and will not use changing or shower facilities designated for the opposite sex. Where necessary, the school will consider an alternative fully enclosed facility or use of the facilities at a different time.

Any individual arrangements will be clearly recorded, communicated to relevant staff on a need-to-know basis and reviewed regularly.

Residential visits and sleeping arrangements

All residential visits, exchanges, sports tours, camps and other overnight activities will be subject to a documented safeguarding and educational-visits risk assessment.

Children will not share overnight accommodation with children of the opposite biological sex. This applies to shared bedrooms, dormitories, tents and other communal sleeping arrangements.

Where a child does not wish to share accommodation with children of the same biological sex, the school will consider whether suitable separate accommodation can reasonably be provided. Any alternative arrangement must preserve the safety, privacy, comfort and dignity of the child and all other children.

Sleeping arrangements will be agreed and documented before departure and will not be changed informally by individual staff during the visit. Any safeguarding concern arising during a residential activity will be reported to the visit leader and DSL without delay.

School Training and Staff Induction

The schools' Designated Safeguarding Lead and Governor with designated responsibility for safeguarding will undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and refresher training at two yearly intervals.

All other school staff, including non-teaching staff, will undertake appropriate induction training and safeguarding/child protection training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding effectively, which will be updated regularly, including (as a minimum) a yearly update. The school will maintain a register of who has undertaken training and when.

All staff (including temporary staff, volunteers, supervised volunteers and staff employed by contractors) are provided with the school's safeguarding policy and informed of the schools' safeguarding arrangements on induction. The schools will maintain a register of who has received this information and when.

Support, Advice and Guidance for Staff

Staff will be supported by Raj Dharma, Matthew Swarbrick, Seema Bibi, Louis Harris, Daljeet Panesar, Lucie Collins, Jen Roberts, Joel Power and Jenni Bird. The DSL will be supported by Gregory Logan, Louis Harris, Terry Corpe and appropriate supervision will be provided.

The DSL will know how to access the online London Child Protection Procedures, be aware of the CHSCP's work and policies alongside Hackney Education's guidance.

If you are not sure whether or not to make a safeguarding referral you can contact the Children and Family Services' Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and request a consultation to discuss your concerns on **020 8356 5500** during office hours and **020 8356 2710** out of hours.

Any contact with the MASH must be directed to the Local Authority in which the child/family live.

Allegations regarding person(s) working in or on behalf of the school (including volunteers

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) – Part Four: Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff)

Where an allegation is made against any person working in, or on behalf of, the Blossom Federation that he or she has:

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

Whilst we acknowledge such allegations may be false, malicious or misplaced, we also acknowledge they may be based in fact and/or founded. It is, therefore, essential that all allegations are investigated properly, in line with agreed procedures and outcomes are recorded. All school staff will maintain a culture of vigilance based on the notion that 'it could happen here'. Staff are expected to maintain highly professional behaviours and always set appropriate professional boundaries in line with the schools Code of Conduct. Staff will be encouraged to use the Whistle Blowing Policy if they have concerns regarding the conduct or behaviour of a colleague and they feel that matter has not been addressed appropriately by the school.

Low level concerns

As part of our whole Federation approach to safeguarding, we will ensure that we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Creating a culture in which all concerns about adults (including allegations that do not meet the harms threshold (see Part Four - Keeping Children Safe In Education 2026) are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical. We will endeavour to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early; minimise the risk of abuse; and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the Blossom Federation are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the Blossom Federation.

Our schools will have regard to Hackney Education's Managing Low Level Concerns guidance.

What is a low-level concern?

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold set out in bullet points above. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being over friendly with children;
- Having favourites;

- Taking photographs of children on their own mobile phone;
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

It is crucial that any such concerns, including those which do not meet the harm threshold, are shared responsibly and with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from potential false allegations or misunderstandings

Initial Action by person receiving or identifying an allegation or concern

- Treat the matter seriously and keep an open mind;
- Make a written record of the information using the school's internal mechanism for reporting concerns, 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 of School or designated person (unless the allegation is against the Head of School or designated person, in which case the report will be made to the Executive Headteacher. Any concerns regarding the Executive Headteacher will be reported to the Chair of Governors).

Initial Action by the Head of School (or designated person)

- Obtain written details of the concern or allegation, but do not investigate or interview child, adult or witnesses;
- Contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 1 working day and seek their advice on how to proceed;
- Discuss with the LADO next steps using the London Child Protection Procedures Flow Charts Allegations/Concerns Against Staff;

- Inform the Executive Headteacher and/or the Chair of Governors of the allegation.

Subsequent Action by the Head of School (or designated person)

- In consultation with the LADO conduct a disciplinary investigation, if an allegation indicates the need for this;
- Contribute to the child protection process by attending Allegations Against Professionals meetings and other meetings as required;
- Maintain contact with the LADO throughout the process;
- Ensure clear and comprehensive records regarding the allegation, actions taken and outcome are retained on the staff member's personnel file;
- Consider whether a referral to the DBS should be made.

Further Information on Safeguarding Issues

Safeguarding covers more than the Blossom Federation's contribution made to child protection in relation to individual children. It also encompasses issues such as pupil health and safety, bullying,

arrangements for meeting the medical needs of children providing first aid, school security, drugs and substance misuse, gang related activity and promoting positive behaviour. Determining the most appropriate agency to consult with or refer to should be made by referring to the Hackney Wellbeing Framework.

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk. Other safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of include:

Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority, but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical.

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, can have a significant effect on a child's wellbeing 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 must be reported and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. All pupils and parents/carers receive a copy of the anti-bullying procedures on joining the school and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in the (PSHE) curriculum. If the bullying is particularly serious, or the anti-bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the Headteacher and the DSL will consider implementing safeguarding procedures.

For further information please see the DfE's Guidance.

Online Safety

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

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material;
- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users;
- Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm.
- Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. The anti-phishing working group can be contacted via this link APWG

The school recognises that its pupils will use mobile phones and computers at some time. They are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that some men, women and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, behaviours, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. Cyber-bullying by pupils via

emails and texts will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and managed through our anti-bullying procedures. Deepfakes and AI use to alter or AI generated nude and semi-nude images can also be used to bully and harm other and as a federation we take these risks serious and will respond to any report through the appropriate channels.

Chatrooms and social networking sites are the most obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful content and behaviour, which pupils are not allowed to access in school. Some pupils will undoubtedly 'chat' on mobiles or social networking sites at home and the school will encourage parents/carers to consider measures to keep their children safe when using social media and take measures to keep their children from accessing social media. As schools we will take steps to tackle misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories through teaching opportunities with children.

Filters and monitoring

Governing bodies and proprietors must be doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the schools' IT systems. As part of this process, governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their school or college has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place. Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, governing bodies and proprietors should consider the age range of their pupils, the number of pupils, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs vs risks. The appropriateness of any filters and monitoring systems are a managed by London Grid for Learning (LGfL) and are informed in part by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty.

The UK Safer Internet Centre has published guidance as to what "appropriate" might look like. Whilst filtering and monitoring are an important part of the online safety picture for schools to consider, it is only one part. Governors and proprietors should consider a whole school approach to online safety. This will include a clear policy on the use of mobile technology in the school. Many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via cellular networks in particular and the schools should carefully consider how this is managed on their premises. Whilst it is essential that governing bodies and proprietors ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place, they should be careful that "over blocking" does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regard to online teaching and safeguarding.

Staff training, including Governors and proprietors should ensure that the nature of online risks is understood and the school's role in filtering and monitoring children's online lives must be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach.

The advent of generative Ai creates additional safeguarding issues and our schools understands this in the context of children's lives and our approach to filtering and monitoring make reference to the DfE's guidance on Generative Ai: Product Safety Expectations.

As technology advances and with the advent of Artificial Intelligence we will be agile and proactive in our responses, ensuring our filtering and monitoring system can effectively respond to the potential threats.

The DSL will keep their skills and knowledge up to date by accessing appropriate and timely training and working with our IT technicians.

Photography and Images

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely understandable and acceptable reasons. However, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have safeguards in place.

To protect pupils, we will:

- Seek their consent where appropriate, for photographs to be taken or published (for e.g. on our website or in newspapers or publications);
- Seek parent/carer consent;
- Use only the pupil's first name with an image;
- Ensure pupils are appropriately dressed;
- Only use school equipment to make images of children (no personal devices are permitted for this purpose);
- Encourage pupils to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

Looked after children and previously looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe.

In particular, they should ensure that appropriate staff have access to the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents/carers, or on an interim or full care order) and the child's contact arrangements with birth parents/carers or those with parental responsibility. They should also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The designated safeguarding lead49 should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the Virtual School Head in the authority that looks after the child.

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

The Designated Teacher

Our governing body has appointed a designated teacher who will work with local authorities to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked after. With the commencement of sections 4 to 6 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, our designated teacher has a responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.

Our designated teacher will have appropriate training and the relevant qualifications and experience.

We will adhere to the statutory guidance: Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children which contains further information on the role and responsibilities of the designated teacher.

The Virtual School

As a Federation we understand the additional experiences and vulnerabilities of Children Looked After by the local authority. We have a named Designated Teacher who will liaise with the Virtual School as required. Virtual School Heads manage pupil premium plus for looked after children; and receive this funding based on the latest published number of children looked after by the local authority.

The designated teacher will work with the Virtual School Head to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan. The designated teacher should also work with the Virtual School Head to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children.

Hackney Education Alternative Learning Service

HEALS is an education support service. They are here to identify children that are experiencing lost learning (through illness, absence, exclusion, suspension or otherwise), at the earliest opportunity, and to work in partnership with schools and families to ensure every child receives the right support at the right time. With early intervention and a commitment to including all children in a school that can meet their needs, together we will ensure that all children in Hackney receive a high-quality education, alongside their peers. HEALS has oversight for all children that are outside of school settings in Hackney, and it is their duty to ensure children in Hackney can access a suitable, full-time education that allows them to achieve and thrive.

Children potentially at greater risk of harm

Whilst all children should be protected, we recognise that some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm than others (both online and offline).

Children who need a social worker (Family Support, Children in Need and Child Protection Plans)

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

Hackney Local Authority should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the designated safeguarding lead should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This should be considered as a matter of routine. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both local authorities and schools and colleges to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

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

Educational Outcomes

The DSL will work with the Heads of Schools the designated teacher and relevant strategic leads to promote the educational outcomes of children who have, or have had, a social worker.

The DSL will understand the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues affecting these children and consider the impact that these experiences may have on their attendance, engagement, behaviour, progress and achievement.

This will include:

- maintaining an up-to-date overview of children who have, or have had, a social worker, including their attendance, progress and attainment;
- promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations for these children;
- supporting teaching and pastoral staff to provide appropriate academic support, pastoral intervention and reasonable adjustments;
- recognising that the impact of abuse, neglect, exploitation or other adverse experiences may continue after statutory social care involvement has ended; and
- working with children's social care, the Virtual School Head and other relevant professionals, where appropriate, to improve attendance, engagement and educational outcomes.

Children who are absent from education

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. It is important the schools response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who requires family support or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

When parents/carers inform our school that they wish to 'home educate' their child/ren our schools will inform HEALS, who will implement the 'Elective Home Education' procedure. Hackney Education is responsible for the delivery of CME (Children Missing from Education) duties defined by the Education Act Amendments, and we will refer to HEALS as necessary.

Elective home education (EHE)

Many home educated children have a positive learning experience. We would expect the parents/carers' decision to home educate to be made with their child's best education at the heart of the decision. However, this is not the case for all. Elective home education can mean that some children are not in receipt of suitable education and are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

In accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, we will make a return to the local authority when a pupil's name is deleted from the admission register.

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to

educating at home, we will work together with local authorities, and other key professionals to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible. This would be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child. This is particularly important where a child has special educational needs or a disability, and/or has a social worker, and/or is otherwise vulnerable. Where a child has an Education, Health and Care plan local authorities will need to review the plan, working closely with parents/carers.

Children requiring mental health support

We understand that schools and settings have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils. 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. The Governing body will ensure they have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.

Daubeney, Lauriston and Sebright have a senior mental health lead in each school who is a member of or supported by the senior leadership team.

If a child is in a mental health crisis, then call 999 ir get the child to A&E if they are in danger or use NHS 111 if it is urgent but not an emergency.

Alternative Provision

We acknowledge that when we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs.

The cohort of pupils in Alternative Provision often have complex needs, our governing body are aware of the additional risk of harm that their pupils may be vulnerable to. We will obtain written information from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at their establishment (i.e. those checks that schools would otherwise perform on their own staff). This includes written confirmation that the alternative provider will inform the commissioning school of any arrangements that may put the child at risk (i.e. staff changes), so that we (the commissioning school) can ensure itself that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on new staff.

We will endeavour to ensure we always know where a child is based during school hours. This includes having records of the address of the alternative provider and any subcontracted provision or satellite sites the child may attend. They should regularly review the alternative provision placements they make. We will review placements frequently enough (at least half termly) to provide assurance that the child is regularly attending, and the placement continues to be safe and meets the child's needs. Where safeguarding concerns arise, the placement should be immediately reviewed, and terminated, if necessary, unless or until those concerns have been satisfactorily addressed.

The Department for Education has issued two pieces of statutory guidance to which commissioners of Alternative Provision to which we will have regard:
• Alternative Provision DFE statutory guidance and
• Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) – DFE statutory guidance.

Children who harm others

Our schools recognise that the harm caused to children by abusive, exploitative and harmful behaviour of other children can be significant. Children who harm others should be held responsible for their behaviour and the school staff are alerted to the fact that they are likely to pose a risk to other children in the school, home and community.

Where this harm involves sexual abuse, serious physical or emotional abuse, the safeguarding procedures set out in this policy will be applied. This school recognises that children who harm others are likely to have considerable needs themselves and may have experienced or be experiencing significant harm.

Where a child has caused significant harm to another child, through sexual abuse or serious physical or emotional abuse, the school will make separate referrals to Children and Families Service of the victim(s) and perpetrator(s). The school will be mindful that these concerns may sit in contexts unknown to the school that involve extra-familial harms.

The London Borough of Hackney has produced guidance regarding Multi-agency Planning (MAP) Meetings for children and young people who present a risk of demonstrating harmful sexual behaviour.

Our schools will be mindful of the sections in the London Child Protection Procedures concerning 'Harming Others' and work closely with social care, the police and other agencies following a referral.

Child on Child Abuse

Child on Child abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between children and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate). Peer-on-peer abuse can take various forms, including serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), relationship abuse, domestic violence, child sexual exploitation, youth and serious youth violence, harmful sexual behaviour, and/or gender-based violence. See below for more detailed information.
All staff must be aware that children can abuse other children and that it can happen inside and outside of school and online. Staff should report any suspicion of child-on-child abuse to the DSL (or deputy). It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature. They must not downplay behaviours and dismiss them as 'just banter, 'just having a laugh', 'part of growning up' or 'boys being boys.

Both Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have

been sexually exploited even if sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

If, as a Federation, we are concerned a child is being sexually exploited we will follow the procedures set out in this document and make reference to the guidance provided by CHSCP. This further Governmental guidance can be useful when considering cases of CSE.

Child Criminal Exploitation

Child criminal exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

County lines: A term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other forms of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons. This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK; no specified distance of travel is required. For further information see 'Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines' guidance.

Child on Child sexual harassemen and sexual violence

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

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Schools and colleges should consider the following:

It is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and more likely that sexual harassment will be perpetrated by boys. Schools should be aware of the importance of:

- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up (zero tolerance);
- Not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"; and
- Challenging behaviours (which are potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts, vaginas and penises. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
- Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can be especially vulnerable. Disabled and deaf children are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children;
- 'Upskirting' has now become a criminal offence and therefore requires a safeguarding response

if happening in school.

-

The Extra-Familial Risk Panel

Hackney Extra Familial Risk Panel (EFRP) coordinates safeguarding interventions in cases where a child, or a group of children are:

- At risk of, or already experiencing harm caused by people (including other children) outside their family and/or;
- At risk of, or already causing harm to children outside their family.

Our schools will respond to issues of risk or harm outside the family home as child protection issues and consult with and/or refer to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) following the same procedures as for any form of harm or abuse.

Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism

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

Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance. Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims.

Police and Criminal Evidence Act (1984) – Code C

The Designated Safeguarding Leads (and deputies) are aware of the requirement for children to have an appropriate adult when in contact with Police officers who suspect them of an offence.

PACE states that anyone who appears to be under 18, shall, in the absence of clear evidence that they are older, be treated as a child for the purposes.

PACE also states that If at any time an officer has any reason to suspect that a person of any age may be vulnerable, then that person is entitled to be accompanied by an appropriate adult at any point.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputies) will communicate any vulnerabilities known by the school to any police officer who wishes to speak to a pupil about an offence they may suspect. This communication will be recorded on CPOMS.

If, having been informed of the vulnerabilities, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) does not feel that the officer is acting in accordance with PACE, they should ask to speak with a supervisor or contact 101 to escalate their concerns.

A person whom there are grounds to suspect of an offence must be cautioned before being questioned about an offence or asked further questions if the answers they give provide the grounds for suspicion, or when put to them the suspect's answers or silence, (i.e. failure or refusal to answer or answer satisfactorily) may be given in evidence to a court in a prosecution.

A police officer must not caution a juvenile or a vulnerable person unless the appropriate adult is present. If a child or a vulnerable person is cautioned in the absence of the appropriate adult, the caution must be repeated in the appropriate adult's presence.

The appropriate adult' means, in the case of a child:

- The parent, guardian or, if the juvenile is in the care of a local authority or voluntary organisation, a person representing that authority or organisation.
- A social worker of a local authority
- Failing these, some other responsible adult aged 18 or over who is not:
- A police officer;
- Employed by the police;
- Under the direction or control of the chief officer of a police force; or
- A person who provides services under contractual arrangements (but without being employed by the chief officer of a police force), to assist that force in relation to the discharge of its chief officer's functions.

Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - PACE Code C 2019.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges, with research stating that SEND children can be up to four times more likely to be abused due to additional vulnerabilities. As a Federation we will ensure a culture of vigilance that recognises that barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in this group of children. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- The potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM.

If, as a federation, we have concerned we will follow the procedures set out in this document and make reference to the guidance provided by CHSCP.

Where a teacher discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18, there is a mandatory duty upon that individual to report it to the police. They will report their discovery to the DSL and they will support the teacher during the reporting process.

FGM Mandatory Reporting Duty

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a mandatory duty upon teachers, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory

reporting duty applies.

Further information on so-called 'honour-based' violence

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves the wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV.

Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism

We as a federation will fulfil our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty, it is essential that staff are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and know what to do when they are identified. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences.

We aim to build pupils' resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views. The Prevent duty is not intended to stop pupils debating controversial issues. On the contrary, the schools will provide a safe space in which children, young people and staff can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments. We will be mindful of the risk of children being exposed to extremist materials via the internet.

If, as a federation, we are concerned we will follow the procedures set out in this document and refer to the guidance provided by Hackney Education.

Domestic Violence and Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduces the 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. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be "personally connected" (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio- economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government will issue statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of peer-on-peer abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures must be followed, and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

As a federation, if we are concerned about the life lived experience of children who are, or may be, living in a household where domestic violence and abuse are present, we will adhere to our safeguarding procedures and consult with Hackney MASH or where appropriate other local authorities' MASH. To inform our decision making we will consult with the information provided by Hackney Council.

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child's needs. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools make a referral to children's social care if they are concerned about a child's welfare. More information about the scheme and how schools can become involved is available via Hackney Education Safeguarding Team.

Extended School and Off-Site Arrangements

Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own safeguarding policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site, we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures and staff training.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and/or other activities, we will check that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place. We will also undertake appropriate and robust risk assessments for the venue, location and activity to be undertaken in accordance with the school's risk assessment protocol.

Children who are questioning their gender and requests for support with social transition

The schools will provide a respectful and supportive environment for children who are questioning their gender. Bullying, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated, and any related safeguarding or wellbeing concerns will be addressed promptly.

The schools will not initiate social transition. Individual members of staff must not independently make changes relating to social transition, including changes to names, pronouns, uniform, facilities, sport or other arrangements.

Where a child or their parent/carer requests support involving social transition, the matter will be referred to the Head of School and the DSL. The request will be considered through a careful, documented and case-by-case process.

Parents/carers will be involved as a matter of priority, and their views will be given proper consideration. In the rare circumstances where there is reason to believe that involving parents/carers may place the child at increased risk, the DSL will determine what safeguarding action is necessary before parents/carers are contacted or any decision is made.

Decisions will take account of:

- The welfare and best interests of the child and other children;
- The child's age, development, wishes and individual circumstances;
- Any wider mental health, medical, neurodevelopmental or safeguarding needs;
- Relevant clinical or other professional advice;
- The impact of agreeing or declining the request;
- The school's safeguarding responsibilities; and
- Its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998.

Primary-age requests will be approached with particular caution. Staff will not provide clinical advice or undertake functions that require clinical expertise.

The school will explain that support with social transition will not include access to toilets, changing rooms, showers or residential accommodation designated for the opposite biological sex, or participation in sport designated for the opposite sex where single-sex participation is necessary for safety.

The child's biological sex will be recorded accurately. Information will only be shared with staff who need it to safeguard and support the child and other pupils. Decisions and their rationale will be recorded and reviewed where circumstances change, including where a child wishes to reverse or amend an earlier arrangement. ☐

Appendix 1

Cause for Concern Form (Page 1):

Name of child:	Date of incident:
Class and year:	Time of incident:
Location of incident:	Date of record:

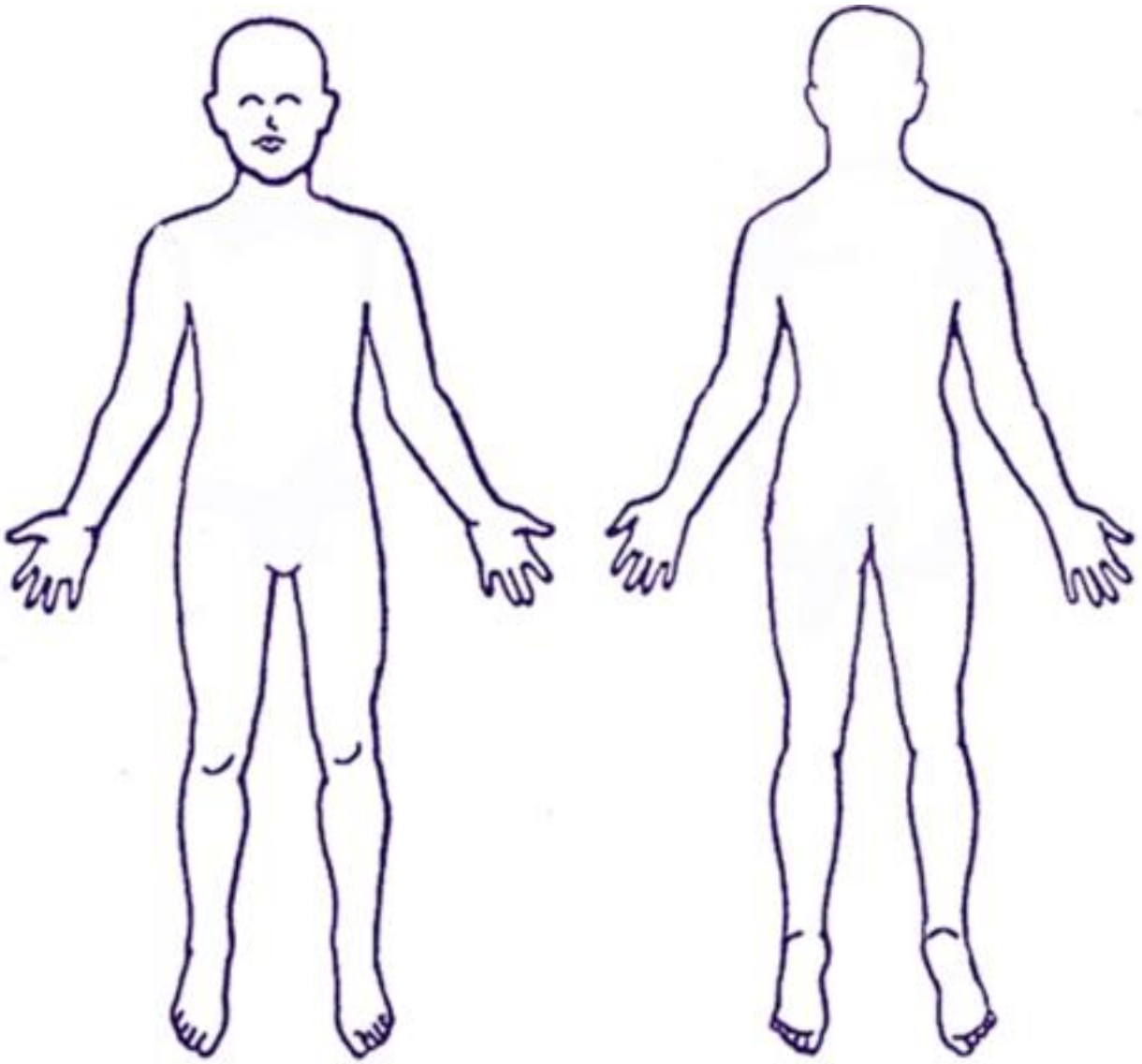
Name of person reporting:	Time of record:

Concern/Incident – Describe your concern using clear, straightforward language:	Opinion: How does this fit with what you know about the child?

Appendix 1

Cause for Concern Form (Page 2) – Body Map

This body outline can be used to record marks and/or bruises and the date of occurrence or observation and should be kept in the Child Protection File of the child.



Appendix 2

MASH Consultations and Online Referral Form

If a case is already allocated within Hackney Children and Families Services, please contact the child's allocated unit to discuss your concerns.
If you are worried about a child who is not open to Hackney Children and Families Services, where you feel your concern is urgent and you need to speak to a social worker to agree a plan of action today, please call MASH on 020 8356 5500 or email MASH@hackney.gov.uk:

- the phone line is open 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays
- outside of these hours, please contact the Emergency Duty Team on 020 8356 2710

If you're unsure about what support a child and family needs, or whether you should make a referral to MASH, please call MASH and ask for a consultation with a member of the team.

How does the consultation line work?

- it's for professionals only
- for cases that are not already open to the Council's service
- you must have consulted your designated safeguarding lead first
- you will need to use the usual MASH number – 020 8356 5500 – and ask for a consultation
- experienced members of staff from MASH will respond
- MASH will listen to your concerns and offer advice and guidance about the most appropriate next steps – their advice may include:
    - a request for you to have further conversations with the child and family about the concerns and – with their consent – other members of the family's network
    - a written referral to MASH
    - a referral to another service

MASH will keep a log of calls to monitor the consultation line's use, but calls will not be recorded on their files. It is important that anyone contacting MASH make their own agency records of discussions.

Referral form

Please complete a MASH referral form if you wish to request either early help or statutory social work support for a family after consultation with the MASH.
MASH Request For Support Form

Information submitted via the form will only be reviewed during office hours.

Please note, it is expected that you will have spoken to the family about the referral you are making to MASH, prior to contacting MASH, in all cases except where it is felt that doing so will place a child at immediate risk of harm.

All decisions in MASH about the most appropriate next steps for a child and family are made in line with the Hackney Child Wellbeing Framework.

Appendix 3

Hackney Key Contacts and Guidance

Useful Contact Details:

- Hackney Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 020 8356 5500
- Hackney MASH Out of Hours: 020 8356 2710
- Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT) @ Police: 020 8217 6537
- Hackney Education Safeguarding in Education Team: 020 8820 7255
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 020 8356 4569
- City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership: 020 8356 4183
- NSPCC- 24-hour Helpline: 080 8800 5000
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS): www.gov.uk/dbs

Useful guidance documents:

Hackney Wellbeing Framework:

https://chscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/Hackney-Child-Wellbeing-Framework-June-2026.pdf

London Child Protection Procedures:

https://londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/

Working Together to Safeguard Children:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2

Keeping Children Safe in Education:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf

Information Sharing Guidance for Practitioners:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice