



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy



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Key abbreviations

CAF	Common Assessment Framework
CAE	Children Absent from Education
CSC	Children’s Social Care
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
DDSL	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FM	Forced marriage
GSCB	Greenwich Safeguarding Children Board
HBV	Honour Based Violence
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
KCSIE	Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for school and colleges
LA	Local Authority
LAC	Looked After Children
LADO	The Local Authority Designated Officer
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
NEN	National Education Network
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
PSHE	Personal, Social, Health and Education
RBG	Royal Borough of Greenwich

SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SMSC	Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural Values
TAC	Team Around the Child
TES	Weekly publication aimed primarily at school teachers in the UK
URL	Uniform Resource Locator, an address to a source on the internet
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls

Key personnel

Acting Designated Safeguarding Lead Claire Wates Claire.Wates@blackheathprep.co.uk	020 8858 0692 Internal Ext: 108
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Tamara Reeves Tamara.Reeves@blackheathprep.co.uk	020 8858 0692 Internal Ext: Late Stay 133
Head of Pre Prep and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Claire Wates Claire.Wates@blackheathprep.co.uk	020 8858 0692 Internal Ext: 108
Head of Prep and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Odile Clark Odile.Clark@blackheathprep.co.uk	020 8858 0692 Internal Ext: 109
Head of Early Years and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Melissa Forbes Melissa.Forbes@blackheathprep.co.uk	020 8858 0692 Internal Ext: 701
School Nurse Claire Fishlock / Angelina Osei Nurse@blackheathprep.co.uk	020 8858 0692 Internal Ext: 103
Head Vikki Lloyd Vikki.Lloyd@blackheathprep.co.uk	0208 858 0692 Internal Ext: 101
Chair of Governors Peter Doyle Email: clerk@blackheathprep.co.uk Nominated Safeguarding and Prevent Governor Dean Huang Email: fbgov@eltham-college.org.uk	Contactable by Internal Ext: 827
<i>Concerns regarding a child's safety or wellbeing</i>	Referral line: 020 8921 3172

Greenwich Children’s Social Care Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Mash-referrals@royalgreenwich.gov.uk	Consultation line: 020 8921 2267
Sadie Bates LADO Education Office childrens-lado@royalgreenwich.gov.uk Laura Lumbis School’s Safeguarding Officer Laura.lumbis@royalgreenwich.gov.uk	Referral line: 020 8921 3930 020 8921 2247 / 020 8291 2206
Greenwich Safeguarding Children’s Partnership Safeguardingchildren@royalgreenwich.gov.uk	020 8921 4477
Prevent Lead – Angela Beaton Prevent Co-ordinator – Adam Brown Prevent@royalgreenwich.gov.uk	Prevent National Referral Form Royal Borough of Greenwich
Greenwich Child Missing Education children-missing-education@royalgreenwich.gov.uk Caroline Donaghy caroline.donaghy@royalgreenwich.gov.uk	020 8921 8505
Police	101
DBS Helpline	03000 200 190
DfE dedicated non-emergency advice	020 7340 7264
Early Years (Ofsted)	0845 640 4040
ISI	020 7600 0100
Childline	0800 1111
NSPCC	0800 028 0285
Blackheath Prep Safeguarding Concern Reporting Form	Online Platform Paper Form available on Staff Portal

Child Protection, Safeguarding and Prevent Policy

Introduction

Blackheath Prep fully recognise their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in their care. This policy takes account of the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' September 2025 statutory guidance and makes frequent reference to it as KCSIE2025.

The school adopts a child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding and as part of the ethos of the school we are committed to:

- Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern.
- Staff undergoing regular updated safeguarding training, including online safety, which is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole school or college safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning.
- Providing an environment in which children feel safe, secure, valued and respected; confident to talk openly and sure of being listened to, and that concerns will be reassessed when situations do not improve.
- Teachers managing behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment and all teachers have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils.
- Providing suitable support and guidance so that children have a range of appropriate adults who they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties.
- Being mindful of the changing behaviours of the children and looking beyond the school into what is happening in other areas of the child's life.
- Taking a child's wishes or feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect them; children will be given the opportunity to express their views and given feedback wherever possible.
- Using the curriculum, including but not exclusively, PSHE and Relationships and Sex Education to teach about safeguarding and online safety as well as provide opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, assertiveness and decision making so that all students have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others; and to recognise when they do not feel safe and identify who they might/can talk to.
- Ensuring that sufficient account is taken of the nature, age-range, and other significant features of the school in the provisions made for safeguarding; for example, e-safety, historical issues, how to build resilience to the risks of radicalisation or matters referred to in KCSIE 2022 such as looked after children, child on child sexual harassment and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).
- Ensuring all children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection: to feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident, and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties.
- Working with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children including the need for referral to other agencies in some situations.
- Ensuring all staff receive up to date training and support, can recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the school's procedures and lines of communication.
- Sharing information quickly and challenging inaction.
- Monitoring children and young people who have been identified as "in need" including the need for protection; keeping confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals.

- Developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.

The law forbids a teacher or other members of staff from using any degree of physical contact that is deliberately intended to punish a pupil, or that is primarily intended to cause pain, injury or humiliation.

Teachers at school are allowed to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils under certain circumstances, including those with SEN, a disability or with medical conditions. In some circumstances, teachers and authorised members of staff can use positive handling techniques to protect the child and others from harm, and relevant staff members have received training on how to use de-escalation strategies to do this.

Any concerns or allegations that a member of staff may have acted inappropriately should be brought to the Head immediately and in confidence. The Head, in turn, will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Managing safeguarding and child protection

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding is defined as:

- protecting children from harm (maltreatment)
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health and development
- ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care thus enabling those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully
- ensuring children know how to keep themselves safe online and in the wider world
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

What is Child Protection?

Child Protection is one very important aspect of safeguarding. It refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm.

What is significant harm?

The Children's Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention by statutory agencies in family life in the best interests of children. There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Sometimes it might be a single traumatic event but more often it is a compilation of significant events which damage the child's physical and psychological development. Decisions about significant harm are complex and require discussion with the statutory agencies.

Policy links

The policy refers to current statutory guidance and other national guidance, including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025, KCSIE)
- Annex A, (2025, KCSIE)
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges (2018)
- London Child Protection Procedures and Practice Guidelines (2018)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2025)
- The Prevent Duty (Updated March 2025)
- Sexting in Schools (2016, UKCCIS)

- Education (Independent School Standards)(England) Regulations 2010 (amended 2013)
- Multi Agency Practice Guidelines – Female Genital Mutilation (2016)
- Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2012)
- Dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff (2012)
- Information Sharing – Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2018)
- Children Act 1989 (Section 87(1))
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Childcare Act 2006
- Education Act 2002 (Section 157)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Right Child, Right Service, Right Time – Guidance provided by Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership (November 2019)

Safeguarding, in addition to Child Protection, encompasses other issues, such as pupil health and safety, bullying, cyber bullying and appropriate medical provision. Blackheath Prep has specific policies and guidance as follows which should be read in conjunction with this document:

- Anti-Virtual bullying
- Anti-bullying
- Attendance
- Behaviour
- Behaviour for SEND pupils
- Child Bereavement
- Children Absent from Education
- Digital Communications
- First Aid
- Health and Safety
- IT Equipment and Service Delivery Policy
- Low Level Concerns
- Mental Health
- Positive Handling
- Risk Assessments (particularly offsite activities)
- Safer Recruitment
- SENDA
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing

The staff at Blackheath Prep form part of the wider safeguarding system for our children (please see Working Together to Safeguard Children 2025). Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider at all times, what is in the best interest of the child. No single staff member can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right

help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. All victims will be given the correct level and type of support that they need. All staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. They are trained and should know how to RECOGNISE signs that children may be at risk or in need of early help, how to RESPOND appropriately, how to RECORD accurately, and how to REFER if necessary.

Roles and responsibilities of the school and all school staff

The school is responsible for ensuring that all action taken is in line with Greenwich's Safeguarding Children procedure. This process follows the requirements of the central government guidance contained in the Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and their Families, as well as Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. The child protection process is now incorporated within a comprehensive policy and procedure for all children in need.

The role of the school within this procedure is to contribute to the identification, referral, assessment and support of children in need, including children who may have suffered, be suffering, or who are at risk of suffering significant harm. The school may also have a role in the provision of services to Children in Need and their families.

Our responsibility encompasses the following principles:

- To protect children from harm (maltreatment)
- To prevent impairment of children's mental and physical health and development
- To ensure that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care thus enabling those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully
- To ensure that children know how to keep themselves safe online and in the wider world
- To take action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Blackheath Prep address their commitment to these principles through:

Prevention

We will ensure all reasonable measures are taken to minimise the risk of harm to children's welfare.

These include:

- Ensuring that all staff read Part 1 of KCSIE 2025.
- Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in line with national legislation by using at least one suitably trained recruiter on all interview panels and by checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children and ensuring any unsuitable behaviour is reported and managed using the procedures outlined for the "*Management of allegations*" by the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Ensuring through training that all teaching and non-teaching staff and volunteers are aware of and committed to the Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedures
- Adopting a code of conduct for all staff which can be found in the Staff Code of Conduct
- Ensuring all staff are aware of their responsibilities regarding mobile phones and cameras as detailed in our IT Equipment and Service Delivery Policy
- Establishing a positive, supportive and secure culture in which children can learn and develop, together with a School ethos which promotes in all pupils a sense of being valued, listened to and respected
- Taking an active approach to preventative education by including in the PSHE AND RSE curriculums, and the wider curriculum, learning opportunities which equip pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and radicalisation and which will help them develop realistic attitudes to building and maintaining positive

relationships, both with themselves and others

- Ensuring children know how to keep themselves safe online
- Providing pastoral support that is accessible and available to all pupils and ensuring that pupils know to whom they can talk about their concerns.
- In accordance with the PREVENT strategy, the School research any visitor who comes into School to present information to our pupils. No one is allowed to present information to the school community that is not in accordance with the school encouraging tolerance and respecting diversity
- Ensuring parents are aware of and adhere to the School's Attendance Policy and monitoring pupils absences.

Protection

We will ensure all appropriate actions are taken to address concerns about the welfare of a child or children, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies especially the Police and Children's Social Care (Safeguarding Children Joint Chief Inspectors' Report Department of Health October 2002) and 'Prevent' with the Channel process. These include:

- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involving children and their parents/carers appropriately.
- Monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm and to contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those children.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed as outlined in the School's Safer Recruitment policy.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations on the school website and on the parent portal (My School Portal)
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Follow the procedures set out in this document, if an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Notify Greenwich Social Care through the completion of a Referral Form for a Child Missing Education immediately (on the first day of absence) if there is an unexplained absence of a child on a Child Protection Plan or a report has previously been made to Greenwich Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) with concerns the child is at risk of significant harm.
- Should we have a child who is *Looked After* we will contact the child's social worker directly if there is an unexplained absence. This may then trigger actions identified in the "Joint Police and Social Care Protocol for Dealing with Children Missing from Care".

Use of school or college premises for non-school activities

When the school hires or rent out facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) it will ensure that the organisation or individual has appropriate arrangements in place to safeguard children and knows to liaise with the school or college on these matters where appropriate.

When activities are provided under the direct supervision or management of the school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection will apply. The school ensures that safeguarding requirements are included in any lease or hire agreement as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

Safer recruitment

The School is committed to safer recruitment and the Head SLT, and HR Manager are responsible for implementing these practices having undergone training in this area, in addition to following the guidance in KCSIE 2022 Part 3.

Before appointment of staff and/or volunteers or anyone who has unsupervised contact with pupils, a barred list check will have been undertaken and must be clear. For teachers the same applies to Prohibition Order checks. Any arrangements for staff/volunteers supervision pending receipt of an enhanced DBS must be in writing, must be shared with the person concerned and be subject to regular review. The school undertakes to report promptly to the DBS any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm to a child, and any person who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) with children, or would have been removed had he or she not left earlier. A referral will be made to the National College for Teaching and Leadership where a teacher has been dismissed for professional misconduct (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned first).

Disqualification by association:

The Government removed the 'Disqualification by Association' rules for childcare workers in schools in September 2018. The school makes it clear about the expectations they place on staff, including where their relationships and associations, both within and outside the workplace (including online) may have implications for the safeguarding of children in school. The school also makes it clear that staff should inform the Head if their circumstances change.

Roles and responsibilities of the governors

Peter Doyle Chair of Governors

Frances Brown Nominated Governor responsible for Child Protection

It is the governing body's overall responsibility to ensure compliance with child protection statutory requirements and the Charity Commission guidance on charity and trustee duties to safeguard children. The governing body takes seriously its responsibility to uphold the aims of the charity and its duty of care in promoting the welfare of children and staff, ensuring their security and protecting them from harm.

The governing body are also responsible for:

- Overseeing a whole school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development so that all systems, processes and policies should operate in the best interests of all children in their care.
- Enabling regular evaluation of the effectiveness of safeguarding systems, including adherence to safer recruitment procedures, and ensuring there are checks on the effectiveness of online safety (including the filtering strategies, as outlined in KCSIE 2025 para 14).
- Ensuring that if there is a safeguarding concern, the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

- Systems are in place, and they are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.

The reporting of Safeguarding practice at the School enables the governing body to ensure compliance with current legislation and to identify areas for improvement. The governing body recognises that close liaison with the local authorities is also vital in order that appropriate support and training can be given. The DSL ensures that all governors are informed regarding any changes or updates to Safeguarding, KCSIE 2021 and the relevant school policies. Safeguarding is included as an item on the agenda of the termly Governors' Board Meeting. There are also supplementary meetings monthly between the DSL and safeguarding governor. The Child Protection, Safeguarding and Prevent Policy will be reviewed and approved annually, unless changes are required by the government. If this occurs the policy will be updated immediately.

The designated Safeguarding Governor, Mr Simon Parton, and the Chair of Governors, Mr Hugh Stallard will be informed of any allegations of child abuse and will be kept informed of all communications with outside agencies. Notes of the communication will be kept. The Safeguarding Governor meets and discusses the *At Risk Register* monthly with the Head and DSL The Chair of Governors, and in his absence, the designated safeguarding governor, and in his absence the vice chair will liaise with the LA if there are allegations against the Head or governing body. If allegations are made against the DDSL they must be referred to the DSL or Head and in their absence the chain of Governors outlined above. Governors will oversee and record any safeguarding issues against the DSL, the DDSL and Governors.

Roles and responsibilities of the Head

In line with the statutory guidance (KCSIE 2025), the Head will ensure that systems and procedures are in place to support all staff to understand their individual and collective roles in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

The Head will ensure:

- the policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are fully implemented and followed by all staff
- the DSL has a clear and concise job description, explicitly referring to the role of taking lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection
- statutory guidance is followed to ensure safe staff recruitment and that adequate staff checks and records are maintained
- Induction procedures are robust and meet the requirements outlined in KCSIE 2023 (para 560)
- staff respond to preventing radicalisation on a day-to-day basis
- the school's curriculum addresses the issues involved in radicalisation
- that staff conduct is consistent with preventing radicalisation
- sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the designated person and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and other interagency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children
- all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice with regard to children and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle blowing procedures where appropriate

Roles and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy (DDSL)

The DSL and DDSL will be an appropriate senior member of staff, from the school management team. They will be given time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy meetings and/or to support other staff to do so-and to contribute to the assessment of children. The DSL will act to meet the requirements of the role, as outlined in KCSIE 2022 (Annex C), which includes but is not limited to:

Change this to section to (for clarity)...

- Referring cases of suspected abuse, neglect, radicalisation or allegations to the relevant statutory agencies (children's social care, the police or the Channel program)
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff within the school
- Liase as appropriate with staff, including the IT Director, the SENCO, the Head Teacher and the Place2Be leads
- Promote positive engagement with parents and/or carers to safeguard children and protect families facing challenging circumstances
- Champion educational outcomes for vulnerable children and those who have or have had a social worker
- Have procedures in place to re-assess concerns when a child's situation fails to improve
- Ensure procedures and guidance are in place to ensure all searches of pupils are witnessed (including the appointment of an appropriate adult for strip searches) and all searches for prohibited items are logged on CPOMs

Record Keeping:

- Maintain clear, concise and confidential records of the concern, action taken and outcome
- Ensure safe and secure transfer of records when a child leaves the school

Promoting a culture of safeguarding and training

- Maintain their own secure and up to date knowledge of safeguarding developments and share as appropriate with staff in line with the Greenwich Safeguarding Children's Partnership (GSCP)
- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes, such as the Royal Greenwich Early Help Guidance
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's safeguarding/child protection policy and procedures, especially new or part-time staff
- Ensure all staff have robust induction training, covering safeguarding/child protection and are confident to recognise and report any concerns about children's safety and welfare immediately as they arise
- Promote a culture of listening to children and building trusting relationships to support those children who find difficulty in approaching staff with a concern

- Ensure all staff are aware of the additional risks that children with Special Educational needs and disabilities face online
- Ensure all staff are aware of the guidance ‘What to do if you are worried a child is being abused’
- Ensure staff are aware of contextual safeguarding and extra familial harm from the influence of factors outside of school or in the child’s own family, including vulnerability to possible abuse, exploitation and youth violence
- Provide feedback and reassurance to staff who have raised a child protection concern
- Liaising with the school governors to inform them of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations

The Role and Responsibilities of Staff and Volunteers

At the start of the academic year, (or commencement of employment) if starting the school during the academic year), all staff will receive training on the most up to date version of KCSIE part one and the school’s safeguarding/child protection policy, with time allocated to ensure they have read and understood both. Through this, staff are indicating that they understand their statutory duty to safeguard children and to report any concerns.

All staff are to familiarise themselves with the signs of abuse and neglect outlined in this policy, so that they are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection.

All staff will ensure that they understand and can follow the school’s procedures for reporting concerns.

All governors and staff, including peripatetic, temporary staff, domestic, ground staff and volunteers in school have a role and statutory responsibility to:

- Maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ where safeguarding is concerned.
- Consistently act in the best interests of the child
- Be aware that mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered abuse, neglect or exploitation
- Recognise that a disclosure may come directly from a child or a third party, eg friend, neighbour or other family member. Alternatively, it may be through the suspicion of staff based on a variety of signs, symptoms and knowledge of the indicators of abuse
- Recognise that child on child abuse (all forms, including physical and sexual violence and harassment, sexting, upskirting, bullying and initiation/hazing) must not be downplayed and must be taken seriously and appropriately reported
- Be aware of indicators which may signal involvement with violent crime (absences from school, changes in friendship groups and relationships with older individuals/groups, decline in performance or unexplained injuries)
- Staff will take seriously any disclosures made to them and provide reassurance to the discloser through their responses and behaviour (*without promising that they will not tell anyone*). Ensuring the victim or person disclosing is not given the impression that they are causing a problem by reporting a concern or abuse

- Staff will carefully read any documentation provided by the DSL, IT Director or HR Manager to update their safeguarding training
- All staff and volunteers have a duty to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them
- All staff are subject to a Code of Conduct which includes interaction with pupils (including the use of mobile phones, cameras, texting, and social networking sites) taking images, physical restraint, giving lifts, and dress codes. Any physical restraint is only permissible when a child is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on himself/herself or on another, and then only as a last resort, when all efforts to diffuse the situation have failed. Another member of staff should, if possible, be present to act as a witness. All incidents of the use of physical restraint should be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the DSL or DDSL who will decide what to do next. Where this relates to the school's EYFS setting, parents will be informed of any physical restraint used on their child the same day or as soon as reasonably practical.
- The role of the school in situations where there are child protection concerns is NOT to launch an investigation but to recognise, gather factual information and refer
- *THE NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00am to 8:00pm Monday to Friday and email help@nspcc.org.uk*

Roles and responsibilities of the parents

Parents and carers will be made aware of the school policy through published information and in initial meetings with parent and carers of new children. Parents will be engaged with openly where there are concerns about welfare at home. However, if such concerns are regarded as being significant parents and carers will be informed that there may be a need to contact other agencies without first notifying them. This decision will be made in partnership between the Education Services and Social Care. It will be made clear that this is a legal obligation and not a personal decision.

Role of the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)

The School will make contact with the LADO for Greenwich if there is a concern that a member of staff, volunteer, casual worker, agency or self-employed worker, or any adult in a position of trust has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child. It is the LADO's role to manage and oversee allegations against adults working with children. Any allegation or concern about staff conduct should be discussed with the LADO who will provide the necessary advice on threshold decisions for a referral to police, social services and subsequent follow up in all cases. The LADO will be involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case, whether or not a police investigation continues. The LADO will help to co-ordinate information-sharing with the right people and will also monitor and track any investigation, with the aim to resolve it as quickly as possible.

Recognising signs and forms of abuse

What constitutes child abuse?

‘A child is considered to be abused or at risk of abuse when the basic needs of the child are not being met through acts of either commission or omission, leading to demonstrable harm or demonstrable likely harm’. NSPCC 1987 (adapted)

Abuse is maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by failing to act to prevent harm.

Most children suffer harm from within their own families or from someone they know and with whom they have formed a relationship. They may be abused in an institutional or community setting known to them or by other e.g. on the internet. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse which are not mutually exclusive. They are often not stand-alone issues but overlap with each other. The following definitions are based on those from Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2025).

Neglect

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 failing to provide the basic necessities of life: adequate food, clothing, warmth and shelter; failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of adequate care-takers; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

Affluent neglect

Children of affluent families may be overindulged with money or material possessions, while at the same time being starved of love and affection. Neglect can occur when parents are too busy to spend time with children. Academic achievement or good behaviour are rewarded with material possessions but too many luxuries early in life may result in a lack of boundaries and a powerful sense of entitlement, even narcissism. Anxiety and Depression may be a resulting mental health issue.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse involves physical injury to a child, where there is definite knowledge or reasonable suspicion that injury was deliberately inflicted or was not prevented. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It also involves giving a child poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs and alcohol. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission, can also be caused through omission or the failure to protect, as well as forced marriages and female genital mutilation (FGM). If FGM is believed to have been carried out on a girl under 18 years old then it will be reported to the Police by the DSL or by any member of staff.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent (Child Sexual Exploitation CSE). It

involves forcing or enticing a child or young person (including abuse of trust (Sexual Offences Act 2003 amended in 2007 sections 3 and 5)) to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, and may include penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. CSE can take many forms, ranging from a seemingly 'consensual' relationship, to serious and organised crime. There is often an imbalance of power which can increase as a relationship develops. Men, women and children are all capable of sexual abuse. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, child on child sexual violence/harassment and sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional and psychological development. It may involve conveying to children 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 the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploring and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another (e.g. in domestic violence). It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger. Online bullying such as through social networks, online games and mobile phones by peers also constitutes emotional abuse.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Indications or signs of possible abuse:

Some of the following signs might be indicators of abuse or neglect:

- Children whose behaviour changes – they may become aggressive, challenging, disruptive, withdrawn or clingy, or they might have difficulty sleeping or start wetting the bed;
- Children with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty;
- Children with consistently poor hygiene;
- Children who make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends, without an obvious reason;
- Children who don't want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities;
- Children who are having problems at school, for example, a sudden lack of concentration and learning or they appear to be tired and hungry;
- Children who talk about being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers;
- Children who reach developmental milestones, such as learning to speak or walk, late, with no medical reason;
- Children who are regularly missing from school or education;
- Children who are reluctant to go home after school;
- Children with poor school attendance and punctuality, or who are consistently late being picked up;
- Parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to practitioners' concerns;

- Parents who collect their children from school when drunk, or under the influence of drugs;
- Children who take drugs or drink alcohol regularly from an early age;
- Children who are concerned for younger siblings without explaining why;
- Children who talk about running away;
- Children who shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements;
- Children who share images or videos of nudes, semi nudes

Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children may be at increased risk of significant harm as a result of neglect and/or physical, sexual or emotional abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse happens, or who have a high level of tolerance in respect of neglect. Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Abuse can take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse their peers online. This can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messaging, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images especially in chat groups and the sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who do not want to receive such material. To ensure that all of our children receive equal protection and support, we will give special consideration and attention to children who are in special circumstances, including:

- affected by known parental substance misuse;
- asylum seekers;
- living away from home;
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying;
- living in temporary accommodation;
- living transient lifestyles;
- living in chaotic, neglectful and unsupportive home situations;
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality;
- involved directly or indirectly in prostitution or child trafficking;
- do not have English as a first language;
- ‘Looked After’ Children (LACs) or children in care. This includes those who are subject to a care order or temporarily classed as looked after on a planned basis for short breaks or respite care;
- children in the court system;
- children with family members in prison; children involved in child criminal exploitation; homelessness.

Staff must be mindful that children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect 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;

- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Early help

All staff should be aware of the early help process, and understand their role in it. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.

KCSIE and the School also recognise the following as specific safeguarding issues as children may also be at risk of factors in their wider environment beyond their parents.

- Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) – see also below;
- Bullying including cyberbullying;
- Domestic violence;
- Drugs and Alcohol;
- Fabricated or induced illness;
- Faith abuse;
- Female genital mutilation (FGM) – see also below;
- Forced marriage - See also below;
- Gangs and youth violence including honour based violence;
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG);
- Mental health;
- Private fostering;
- Radicalisation;
- Sexting and or banter;
- Teenage relationship abuse (by family, friend or stranger).

Mental health

The School has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils. Staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following guidance in this policy and speaking to the DSL or DDSL.

The school can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies, and the Place2Be service in school. The school can access 'The mental

health and behaviour in schools guidance’, as well as the resources published by Public Health England to support and promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among children.

The DfE has published advice and guidance on ‘Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools’ ‘The Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools’ guidance sets out how schools and colleges can help prevent mental health problems by promoting resilience as part of an integrated, whole school/college approach to social and emotional wellbeing, which is tailored to the needs of their pupils.

The mental health lead at the school is the Assistant Head, Pastoral and is supported by the senior leadership team and school nurse.

Specific safeguarding issues

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

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Every member of staff at Blackheath Prep recognises that children at risk of CSE and CCE need to be identified and issues relating to CSE and CCE should be approached in the same way as protecting children from other risks.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE)

Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources. Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims or their families with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to. It should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online. “County lines” is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other forms of “deal line”. Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money

The experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

CSE involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. However, it also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse or recognise this as abusive.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. The school has signed up to Operation Encompass. 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 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 support to be given to the child according to their needs.

Honour based abuse (HBA)

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

Forced marriage

This is a marriage conducted without valid consent of one or both parties, or where duress is a factor. Staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 1500 or email fm@fco.gov.uk.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

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. Section 5B of the 2003 FGM Act introduced a mandatory reporting duty which requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s which they identify in the course of their professional work to the police. It is now a legal requirement to report any cases of FGM to the police. The school ensure that all new staff receive training on this, and that exiting staff access the training, via The National College, again every three years.

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is often carried out on girls aged between 5-8 years. FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practice FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. If staff have any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home or that a girl may have been subjected to (or at risk of) female genital mutilation they must act upon it.
(www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-guidelines)

Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 11-12 of the Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines referred to previously and may include;

- A request for extended school holidays to stay or visit relatives in a high-risk area (eg East Africa, Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan but also Egypt and parts of West Africa and the Middle East);
- Girls as young as 5 years old from families originating in risk areas may talk about a special ceremony or party involving girls of a similar age;
- Refusal to allow the child to attend PSHCE/Sex education lessons;
- Physical discomfort, urinary problems;
- Recurrent infection or psychological issues.

The full national guidance is available at this link

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-guidelines> A resource pack is available:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-resource-pack>

Prevent

From 1st July 2015 all school and registered early years and childcare providers are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This is known as 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. The school ensure that all new staff receive training on this, and that exiting staff access the training, via The National College, again every three years.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

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

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 forms of harm and abuse. During the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. School staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral to the Channel programme.

Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from the school or college may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.

Blackheath Prep's responsibilities under the Prevent Duty involve four general themes, namely risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training and IT policies, and include the following:

- Assessing the risk of pupils being drawn into terrorism, including extremist ideologies;
- Continuing to work in partnership with local authorities;
- Assessing the need for staff training;
- Ensuring the DSL undertakes Prevent awareness training;

Ensuring that suitable filtering and monitoring is in place on school internet, and that school Computer training for pupils and staff includes the risks of radicalisation and the dangers of extremism. This is reflected in the Computing Acceptable Use policies. Please see KCSIE 2021. We must always be alert at all times to different risks and needs our children have. We must be prepared to take steps to promote pupil welfare or contact other agencies where this is required.

Children absent from education

All schools must inform their Local Authority of any pupil who is deleted from the Admissions Register when a child is taken off roll except when leaving at a usual point in their education (e.g. Year 6).

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, we try to coordinate a meeting between school staff, other key professionals and the parents/carers where possible. Ideally, 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 SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker. DfE guidance for local authorities on Elective Home Education sets out the role and responsibilities of LAs and their powers to engage with parents in relation to Elective Home Education.

Procedures can be found at:

- Government website for elective education
- Greenwich Reporting Procedures: Child Missing Education
- RBG CME Team: 020 8921 8505

Missing, lost or runaway children

If a child goes missing, runs away from an education setting or from home, or is not collected from school it is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect. It is the responsibility of staff to report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. It is essential that staff are alert to potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage. The governing bodies has put in place appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify any risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

Online Safety and related issues

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. We have an effective whole school approach to online safety which empowers the school to protect and educate pupils, students, and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate. The school ensure that all new staff receive training on this, and that exiting staff access the training, via The National College, again each new school year.

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

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example:
- pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism;
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes;
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying;
- commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

The school does all it can to reasonably limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's IT system. The school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place appropriate for the; age range of our pupils, the number of children in a class, and how often they access the IT systems. We ensure that online safety is a running and interrelated theme through our policies and procedures and is reflected in all relevant policies, the curriculum, teacher induction and training, in job descriptions and a feature of parental engagement. Online safety is reflected in this policy as well as the more detailed Online Safety Policy. The school has a clear policy on the use of mobiles and smart technology at school to manage pupil's unrestricted access using these devices. Pupils hand in personal devices to a member of staff as they arrive and collect them at the end of the day when they leave.

Where children are being asked to learn online at home the School has provided advice to support pupils to do so safely. In order to ensure that the school has the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place, (in order to safeguard their systems, staff and learners) we review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies. Technology, and risks and harms related to it, evolve and changes rapidly. We carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks the children face.

The School is committed to internet safety, there is a whole school approach to online safety. Strategies have been put in place to protect pupils and staff and to educate the whole school community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate any incident where appropriate. Children are taught to keep themselves safe both online and in everyday life, including the dangers of sexting.

To minimise risk the following procedures are in place:

- Regular updates / guidance / advice for parents;
- Visits from external agencies (e.g. Childnet);
- Robust internet safety policies;
- Appropriate internet filters, monitoring systems and procedures for intervention;
- An Acceptable Use Policy signed by pupils and parents (age appropriate).
- In addition, pupils receive:
- Regular guidance in Computing and PSHE lessons regarding safe internet use;
- Regular assemblies and Form Time on issues surrounding internet safety;
- Clear written information and guidance for parents.

In order to ensure that children remain safe, staff and pupils are not permitted to access inappropriate sites that could put others at risk. These sites include, but are not limited to, websites with a sexual or pornographic theme, websites which promote racial, homophobic, sectarian viewpoints or other extreme points of view and websites which might contain terrorist or extremist material. If staff or pupils discover unsuitable sites, the URL (address) and content will immediately be reported to the Director of ICT who will take appropriate action.

“Over blocking” is carefully monitored to avoid unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding. Please see Computing and ICT Policy and Online Safety Policy and UK Safer Internet Centre: appropriate filtering and monitoring. Further Guidance on e-security is available from National Education Network (NEN).

Abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil (child on child abuse)

All members of staff at Blackheath Prep recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. It can happen both inside and outside of school and online. Child on child abuse can take many forms, including (but not limited to) bullying, cyberbullying, gender-based abuse, hazing (initiation type violence), sexually harmful behaviour and violence, and ‘sexting’.

Child on child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- causing someone to be involved in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

We are aware of the potential gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with child on child abuse including but not limited to, girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence.

Steps the school takes to minimise the risk of child on child abuse;

- We take the approach that even if there are no reports in school it does not mean it is not happening; it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such, if staff have any concerns regarding child on child abuse they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- We will ensure that appropriate curriculum time is dedicated to enable children to develop an awareness and understanding of abusive behaviour and to ensure that children recognise warning signs and support available, both within the school and externally (such as Police, ChildLine etc.). Further information can be found in the PSHE policy, Computing and ICT Policy and E-Safety Policy.
- All staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears relatively innocuous). These may be important interventions that may prevent problematic, abusive or violent behaviour in the future between peers.
- All staff know that we have a zero tolerance approach to child on child abuse.
- Verbal, written or cyber bullying will never be dismissed as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “kids being kids” as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.
- Blackheath Prep believes that abuse is abuse and it will never be tolerated, dismissed or minimised.

There is a clear system in place for children to confidently report child on child abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously;

- Children can talk to their form teachers, the school counsellor, the SENCO, Place2Talk or any other member of staff
- They know they will be listened to and their concerns treated seriously

Allegations of child on child abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with as any other child protection concern and will follow the same procedures, and be in accordance with Greenwich Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

Pupils who have experienced child on child abuse will be supported by:

- Offering them an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice;
- Offering advice on how to respond to concerns and build resilience, if appropriate;
- Ensuring a record of concerns and evidence is kept;
- Providing reassurance and continuous support;
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

Pupils who are alleged to have abused other pupils will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the specific concern and the need for behaviour to change;
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child
- Providing appropriate education and support;
- Sanctioning them in line with school policy. This may include official warnings, removal of privileges (including denial of online access), fixed-term and permanent exclusions;
- Speaking with police or other local services (such as early help or children's specialist services) as appropriate.

Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment

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

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. All staff maintain the attitude that it could happen here.

Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment wherever it happens, will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) continue to attend the same school.

Whilst any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously, staff should be aware it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys.

Staff have read the guidance *Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges* which contains further detailed information on:

- what sexual violence and sexual harassment constitutes;
- important context to be aware of, including; what is consent, power imbalances, and developmental stages;
- harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), including that a child displaying HSB may be an indication that they are a victim of abuse themselves;
- related legal responsibilities for schools and colleges;
- advice on a whole school or college approach to preventing child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- more detailed advice on responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, including safeguarding and supporting both the victim(s) and alleged perpetrator(s).

All staff are aware of the importance of making clear that sexual violence and harassment is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. They know not to be dismissive of allegations of sexual violence or harassment and they should challenge potential criminal behaviours e.g. touching or grabbing. They are proactive in identifying concerns and are mindful that this does not have age boundaries. It is important that staff are aware that sexual violence and harassment does happen and that children can abuse their peers in this way in any context.

Sexual harassment is the unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur online and offline and is likely to violate a child's dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded, humiliated and create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. It can include: telling sexual stories, making sexual remarks and calling someone sexualised names, displaying pictures of a sexual nature and upskirting (which is a criminal offence). 'Upskirting' is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

All incidents of child on child sexual abuse involving children younger than 10 should be reported to the police. All staff, especially the DSL, should take a contextual safeguarding approach to incidents and ensure that appropriate support systems are in place for all involved.

Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment

The school has systems in place that are promoted by staff, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously.

Not recognising, acknowledging or understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and/or downplaying some behaviours related to abuse can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure. In the case of a report of sexual violence or harassment, the school will follow its safeguarding practices and procedures, with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a Deputy) taking a leading role. They will use their professional judgement, and be supported by other agencies, such as children's social care and the police as required.

Children may not find it easy to tell staff about their abuse verbally. Children can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. The victim may not make a direct report. For example, a friend may make a report or a member of staff may overhear a conversation that suggests a child has been harmed or a child's own behaviour might indicate that something is wrong. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told.

The school's initial response to a report from a child is incredibly important as it can encourage or undermine the confidence of future victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment to report or come forward.

It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school should not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report or their experience minimised.

As with any concerns, all staff are trained to manage a report. Local policies (and training) will dictate exactly how reports should be managed. However, effective safeguarding practice includes:

- if possible, managing reports with two members of staff present, (preferably one of them being the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy);
- where the report includes an online element, being aware of 'searching screening and confiscation advice (for schools)' and 'UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'. The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child. In some cases, it may be more appropriate to confiscate any devices to preserve any evidence and hand them to the police for inspection;
- not promising confidentiality at this initial stage as it is very likely a concern will have to be shared further. Staff should only share the report with those people who are necessary in order to progress it. It is important that the victim understands what the next steps will be and who the report will be passed to;
- recognising that a child is likely to disclose to someone they trust: this could be anyone on the school or college staff. It is important that the person to whom the child discloses recognises that the child has placed them in a position of trust. They should be supportive and respectful of the child;
- recognising that an initial disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported, rather than representative of a singular incident and that trauma can impact memory and so children may not be able to recall all details or the timeline of abuse;
- keeping in mind that certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation;
- listening carefully to the child, reflecting back, using the child's language, being non-judgmental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the child where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc. It is important to note that whilst leading

questions should be avoided, staff can ask children if they have been harmed and what the nature of that harm was;

- best practice is to wait until the end of the report and immediately write up a thorough summary. This allows the staff member to devote their full attention to the child and to listen to what they are saying. It may be appropriate to make notes during the report (especially if a second member of staff is present). However, if making notes, staff should be conscious of the need to remain engaged with the child and not appear distracted by the note taking. Either way, it is essential a written record is made;
- only recording the facts as the child presents them. The notes should not reflect the personal opinion of the note taker. Schools and colleges should be aware that notes of such reports could become part of a statutory assessment by children’s social care and/or part of a criminal investigation;
- informing the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) as soon as practically possible.

The school will respond to cases of “sexting” (or Youth Produced Sexual Imagery) in line with the UKCCIS “Sexting in Schools and Colleges” guidance and GSCB guidance.

Risk Assessment following a report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) will make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk and needs assessment will consider:

- the victim, especially their protection and support;
- whether there may have been other victims;
- the alleged perpetrator(s);
- all the other children, (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harms.

Risk assessments are recorded electronically and are kept under review so that the school can actively consider the risks posed to all their pupils and students and put adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) will ensure they are engaging with children’s social care and specialist services as required. Where there has been a report of sexual violence, it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers and or sexual violence specialists will be required. The school’s risk assessment is not intended to replace the detailed assessments of expert professionals. Any such professional assessments will be used to inform the school’s approach to supporting and protecting their pupils, as well as informing the school’s own risk assessment.

Once the risk assessment has been completed the school will follow the processes described in the School’s Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment policy, acting in the best interests of the children involved with consideration given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) and any other children involved or impacted.

Blackheath Prep is aware of and will follow the GSCB procedures for supporting children who are at risk of harm as a result of their own behaviour.

Serious violence

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

Responding to concerns about a child in need

A child in need is defined as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled.

Concerns for a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger) may come to the attention of staff in a variety of ways, for example, through observation of behaviour or injuries or disclosure. Any member of staff who has a concern for a child or young person, however insignificant this might appear, including their wellbeing or safety and child on child abuse, should be discussed with the DSL as soon as is practically possible.

It is important that staff provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence to decide where children are being harmed in contexts outside the home and enable a contextual approach to address such harm.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If, in exceptional circumstances, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) as soon as is practically possible. We adopt an attitude of 'it could happen here' as we always act in the best interests of the child. The DSL will then report it to children's social care if appropriate. More serious concerns must be reported immediately to ensure that any intervention necessary to protect the child is accessed as early as possible. Other options could include:

- managing any support for the child internally via the school's own pastoral support processes;
- undertaking an early help assessment;
- making a referral to statutory services in accordance with the referral threshold set by the Local Safeguarding Children Board;
- referral to specialist services.

If a child makes a disclosure of abuse to a member of staff they should:

- Preferably conduct the conversation in a quiet, comfortable area where there is little chance of interruptions;
- Explain that confidentiality cannot be promised;

- Allow the child or young person to make the disclosure at their own pace and in their own way;
- Avoid interrupting except to clarify what the child is saying (attentive listening/reflective feedback);
- Not ask leading questions or probe for information that the child or young person does not volunteer;
- Reassure the child or young person that they have been heard and explain what you will do next and to whom you will talk;
- Record the conversation as soon as possible using the child's words;
- Inform the DSL;
- If necessary, make a referral then inform the DSL as soon as possible.

Note: Best practice dictates that you should not write any notes whilst the pupil is speaking. Write up your notes immediately after the meeting, and give the Designated Safeguarding Lead these notes, however rough. If an aide-memoire is required, only very brief phrases or notes should be jotted down - the priority is to listen, not to write down everything that is said, and the writing of any notes may lead a pupil to clam up.

If early help is appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

Responding to a child in immediate danger or at risk

Local authorities have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Such enquiries enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment. This includes all forms of abuse and neglect, female genital mutilation, or other so-called 'honour'-based abuse, forced marriage and extra-familial harms like radicalisation and sexual exploitation.

If, a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police if a crime has been committed, immediately (and no later than 24 hours). Anyone can make a referral. If referrals are not made by the DSL, the DDSL should be informed as soon as possible that a referral has been made. Typing 'Reporting child abuse to your local council' into your search engine directs you to your local children's social care contact number and their website containing further information.

Within one working day of a referral being made, a local authority social worker should acknowledge its receipt to the referrer and make a decision about the next steps and the type of response that is required. This will include determining whether:

- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required;
- any services are required by the child and family and what type of services;
- the child is in need and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989;
- there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made, and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989;
- further specialist assessments are required to help the local authority to decide what further action to take.

The referrer should follow up if this information is not forthcoming. If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, staff will do everything they can to support that assessment supported by the DSL. If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the referrer should consider following local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

Procedures in reporting

- Reports should be made immediately after a case is discovered, and best practice is for reports to be made by the close of the next working day, unless any of the factors described below are present. You should act with at least the same urgency as is required by your local safeguarding processes.
- Contacting Children's Services/Police (where it is thought a crime is committed).
- In order to allow for exceptional cases, a maximum timeframe of one month from when the discovery is made applies for making reports. However, the expectation is that reports will be made much sooner than this.
- A longer timeframe than the next working day may be appropriate in exceptional cases where, for example, a professional has concerns that a report to the police is likely to result in an immediate safeguarding risk to the child (or another child, e.g. a sibling) and considers that consultation with colleagues or other agencies is necessary prior to the report being made. If you think you are dealing with such a case, you are strongly advised to consult colleagues, including your designated safeguarding lead, as soon as practicable, and to keep a record of any decisions made. It is important to remember that the safety of the child is the priority.

'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners' available from GOV.UK is a useful aid.

Record keeping

It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address safeguarding risks, prevent issues escalating and to promote children's welfare. Research and serious case reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action.

Examples of poor practice include:

- failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect;
- poor record keeping;
- failing to listen to the views of the child;
- failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve;
- not sharing information with the right people within and between agencies;
- sharing information too slowly;
- a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

Staff can play a vital role in safeguarding children by effective monitoring and record keeping. Any incident or behavioural change in a child or young person that gives cause for concern are recorded on CPOMs.

It is important that records are factual and reflect the words used by the child or young person. Opinion should not be given unless there is some form of evidence base which can also be quoted. Records must detail the date with timings if appropriate.

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, are recorded digitally on CPOMs in an aggregated chronology. Information is securely encrypted on this platform and allows for individual files to be kept on each pupil in a confidential manner. The information includes:

- Child's name and date of birth;
- Child in normal context, e.g. behaviour, attitude, (has there been an extreme change);
- The incident(s) which gives rise for concern with date(s) and times(s);
- A verbatim record of what the child or young person has said;
- If recording bruising/injuries indicate position, colour, size, shape and time on a body map;
- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

The details above are vital to the information gathering process and do not constitute an investigation. Written information should be passed to the DSL. The DSL will evaluate the quality of the recording of concerns and may ask staff to provide further information.

Confidentiality and sharing information

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the child and staff involved but also to ensure that being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence. Staff must not promise confidentiality to a pupil and will always act in the best interests of the pupil. Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL, the DDSL and the designated governor. That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to know' basis. The School will co-operate with police and RGB Safeguarding Team to ensure that all relevant information is shared for the purposes of child protection investigations under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 in accordance with the requirements of Working Together to Safeguard Children (2025). Where allegations have been made against staff, the School will consult with the LADO and, where appropriate, the police and CSC to agree the information that should be disclosed and to whom. The reporting restrictions applicable to such matters will be observed. Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Schools have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

When children leave the school the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school to allow the new school or college to continue supporting children. Confirmation of receipt should be obtained. This is transferred separately from the main pupil file.

In addition to the child protection file, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse, or those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purpose of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not stand in the way of the need to promote the

welfare and protect the safety of children. Data Protection Act 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent.

Storage of records

The DSL will ensure that records relating to concerns for the welfare or safety of children are kept separate from other school files and are stored securely. Any electronic information will be password protected.

Referrals

Blackheath Prep will always undertake to share their intention to refer a child to Greenwich Children's Social Care with their parents/carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk or harm, or impede a criminal investigation and as advised by the guidance of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.

Once the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection, or in their absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) or the DSL for Early Years (EYFS), has been informed, they will discuss the concern with the Safeguarding Team to make the decision whether or not to refer the concern to Social Care. The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) will be consulted when there is uncertainty about whether to refer on: 0208 921 2267.

Once the decision to refer has been made the referrals will be made as soon as possible by telephone and the appropriate forms completed and sent at the same time. The Interagency Referral Form can be found on the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership website. Referrals to Greenwich Children's Social Care will be made to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (**MASH**) (see contact details below)

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
Children's Services
Safeguarding and Social Care, 1st Floor
The Woolwich Centre,
35 Wellington Street,
Woolwich,
London SE18 6HQ

MASH Referral Line Tel: 0208 921 3172
Email: mash-referrals@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

The school operates in accordance with the policies of Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership.

In summary, the action to be taken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead following the receipt of a report is:

- to consult with the Safeguarding Team to clarify decisions to move forward with the concern;
- to seek advice from Greenwich Children's Social Care (MASH). This may be done without giving names at first and then follow the advice given. Blackheath Prep School will not investigate allegations of abuse, but will instead always refer to the appropriate authority. In cases of serious harm the Police would be informed from the outset;
- to agree with Greenwich Children's Social Care or the LADO any necessary next steps in relation to:
 - informing a pupil's parents
 - medical examination or treatment

- immediate protection for the victim or a pupil who has given information about an abuser or a pupil against whom an allegation has been made;
- to inform the pupil or adult who made the initial allegation of what the next steps are to be;
- to ensure long term protection support for all pupils involved; and
- if unhappy with the action of the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership then use the Escalation Policy of the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership.

If there is an allegation against a person outside the school community the DSL will seek advice from external agencies and contact the parents as and when appropriate.

Under the Prevent Duty (updated March 2025) the school will report in line with the recommended policies and procedures to the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership / the local Police force (Tel: 101) / Prevent Channel duty offices as appropriate. The DfE dedicated telephone number for non-emergency advice for staff and governors is: 0207 340 7264 and email is: counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk.

The school will be persistent in making referrals if it is felt appropriate action is not being taken by the statutory agencies; this will be recorded.

Any member of staff can make a referral and therefore all staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to Greenwich Children's Social Care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (Children in Need) and section 47 (a child suffering or likely to suffer significant harm) **that may follow disclosure**. If, in exceptional circumstances the DSL (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should speak to a member of SMT or take advice from Greenwich Children's Social Care. Any action taken should be shared with the DSL (or deputy) as soon as possible.

Staff should also access and familiarise themselves with the broad government guidance on the issues listed below via the GOV.UK website:

- Abuse trafficking;
- Bullying including cyberbullying;
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE);
- Domestic violence drugs fabricated or induced illness faith abuse;
- Female genital mutilation (FGM);
- Forced marriage;
- Gangs and youth violence;
- Gender-based violence;
- Mental health;
- Private fostering;
- Radicalisation and the Prevent duty;
- Relationship;
- Sexting;
- Banter;
- Violence against women and girls (VAWG).

Dealing with allegations against school staff

It is important to draw a distinction between complaints and allegations against staff. In other words, the difference between behaviours that suggest misconduct or unprofessionalism, and those which specifically raise child protection concerns.

There are two levels of concern/allegation:

- Allegations that may meet the harm threshold
- Allegations/concerns that do not meet the harm threshold ('low level concern')

An allegation that meets the 'harm threshold' is any information which indicates that a member of staff (including supply staff), volunteer or contractor may have:

- behaved in a way that has, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or in relation to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way which indicates s/he would pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children
- behaved in a way contrary to the staff code of conduct

Any concern or allegation should be reported **immediately** to the Head. The Head will follow the guidance in KCSIE part 4.

The Head will assess whether it is necessary to refer to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to determine the next step. If the concern meets any of the above criteria, then the Head Teacher will contact the LADO without delay, and provide the LADO with written confirmation of the allegation.

If there is an allegation or concern raised against the Head Teacher, then the chair of Governors should be contacted. They will inform the LADO and follow guidance in KCSIE (Part 4)

Greenwich LADO Education Office

Tel: 020 8921 3930

Email: childrens-lado@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and/or DDSL), the Head and Governors will not carry out investigations themselves.

If it is decided by the appropriate LADO that an investigation is called for, it is the responsibility of the Greenwich Children's Social Care manager to arrange a Strategy Meeting. This would normally involve the Police, Children's Social Care, the Head and preferably a member of the Governing Body of Blackheath Prep. The arrangements agreed upon will include informing the parents and seeking their consent for any immediate medical examination.

Any allegation or concern about the Head must be made directly to the Chairman of the School's governing body without informing the Head first. The Chairman is responsible for liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Head.

In some circumstances Blackheath Prep may have to consider an allegation against an individual not directly employed by them, where its disciplinary procedures do not fully apply, for example, supply teachers provided by an employment agency. Whilst schools and colleges are not the employer of supply teachers, they should ensure allegations are dealt with properly. In no circumstances should a school or college decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the local authority designated officer (LADO) to determine a suitable outcome. Governing bodies and proprietors should discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out their investigation.

If the allegation is made against a volunteer, a supply teacher, contractor etc:

- For volunteers and those that are self-employed – the allegation will be passed directly to the LADO for advice or action.
- For those who are supply staff – the school will take the lead in processing the allegations whilst keeping the supply agency fully informed and involved.
- For those who are employed by an organisation – an investigation will necessarily involve the organisation and the allegation will also be passed directly to the LADO for advice or action.

If it is established that the allegation is not well founded, either on the basis of the medical evidence or further statements, then the person against whom the allegation has been made would normally be informed that the matter is closed and any notes will be removed from their personnel file and will not be referred to in any references.

Pupils that are found to have made malicious allegations are likely to have breached school behaviour policies. The school will then determine what, if any, sanctions are appropriate. Police may well be informed if there are grounds to believe that a criminal offence may have been committed. Also, Children's Social Care may need to be involved with any follow up work with the pupil.

If the police decide to take the case further, the member of staff implicated would normally be suspended or, where the circumstances are considered to warrant it, dismissed. It is reasonable to ask the police to give some indication of their timescale.

The school will report to the DBS **within one month of leaving** any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children, and the school has a duty to consider referral to the DfE.

The School will also make a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) where a teacher has been dismissed for serious misconduct (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned).

A clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made against a member of staff, and all details leading to and including a resolution, will be kept on the confidential personnel file and will be retained until the member of staff reaches retirement age, or for a period of 10 years after the allegation has been made. The school will provide information regarding an allegation for the purposes of future references and DBS disclosures.

Staff code of conduct policy (see Staff Handbook) – the school has a Staff Code of Conduct which provides clear guidance about behaviour and actions so as not to place pupils or staff at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil.

Safer recruitment policy (see Staff Handbook) – the policy includes details of the school’s recruitment procedure and sets out the process from beginning to end, including details of the required checks.

Children subject of a child protection plan

The DSL will inform staff who have direct pastoral responsibility for children and young people who are the subject of a child protection plan. These children must be monitored very carefully and the smallest concern should be recorded on CPOMS. Strict chronologic order must be adhered to.

Supervision and Support

Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for children’s welfare or safety can seek support from the DSL.

All newly qualified teachers and classroom assistants have a mentor or Officer with whom they can discuss concerns including the area of Safeguarding.

The DSL can put staff and parents in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish.

The school will ensure that members of staff who are working within the foundation stage are provided with appropriate supervision in accordance with the statutory requirements of Early Years Foundation Stage 2017.

Safeguarding and ICT guidelines

Protecting young people in the online world means thinking beyond the school environment. With the advance of Internet technology, pupils increasingly have access to personal devices not covered by School network protection and therefore the emphasis should be on educating all users as to the risks involved and their obligation to act responsibly whilst online.

Safeguarding pupils in both the real and virtual world is the responsibility of all staff. Staff must be familiar with these guidelines and understand how to respond to e-safety incidents. Staff need to be vigilant for threats of radicalisation on line as well as virtual-bullying or any other safety issues. Pupils will be taught through the curriculum, including PSHE and other pastoral support systems, how to behave and build resilience in dealing with such matters. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are given advice specifically relating to the use of mobile phones and social media.

Pupils’ internet access is subject to filtering and the category content type settings meet or exceed those recommended by the UK Safer Internet Centre. All access is recorded and linked to their individual user accounts. From Nursery to Year 1 access is recorded by PC only. From Year 2 onwards access is recorded by individual although filtering levels are NOT dependent on age group – i.e. all pupils are subject to the same level of filtering.

Where inappropriate content is blocked, a warning message will be displayed on screen explaining the reason why and providing advice on what should be done. It is then up to a teacher to either request the denied content is ‘unblocked’ by IT Support or explain why the content may not be accessed. In the event of any breach, attempted breach or effort to circumvent the filtering system the IT Manager will be notified.

While every effort is made to prevent accidental access to inappropriate content, no automatic system is 100% reliable and this filtering policy exists and operates alongside the general principles of active supervision and good teaching practice.

All staff must abide by the Digital Communications Policy and ICT Acceptable Use Agreement which forms part of the Induction procedure.

Procedures for dealing with inappropriate/illegal internet access or material

Blackheath Prep have installed web filtering software to ensure the protection of its pupils whilst accessing the Internet. It is recognised that no software is infallible and the following procedures will be abided by where necessary.

Discovery of inappropriate websites, by staff or pupils, should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who in liaison with the Safeguarding Team and Director of Technology will consider referral to CEOPS and the Police.

Illegal material within the School's network is a very serious situation and must always be reported to the Police. Any incident that involves inappropriate adult access to legal material on Blackheath Prep's premises will be dealt with by the School's disciplinary policy in conjunction with the Police.

Action in the event of discovery of illegal material:

- seek immediate and specific advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will consult with the IT and Communications Manager, the Head and the Police
- prevent any further access to the device/network location until the correct advice is gained
- **unless absolutely necessary, DO NOT remove the power from a working device and under no circumstances start a device if it is already switched off**
- Consider if it is necessary to prevent remote access to the device/network location
- If it is believed that a member of staff or pupil who has left the site, could remove or damage evidence on the device remotely, unplug ONLY the network cable from the back of the device to prevent this access from occurring
- If the device is already turned off and it is no longer realistically possible to prevent further physical access (i.e. due to lack of supervision, high levels of access or an unoccupied location) disconnect the power and remove the device. Store this device securely in a location where no one else can gain access to it and make a note of the date, time and name of the individual who performed this action.

Under no circumstances should any member of staff attempt to conduct an investigation of their own or bring in an outside expert to do so as this may compromise the evidence if a legal case were to result. In some cases this may constitute a criminal offence in itself.

Policy on keeping staff safe

Good Practice and Guidance on the Prevention of Allegations of Abuse - 'Safe School, Safe Staff'

Blackheath Prep is committed to ensuring that relationships between staff and pupils are conducted on a professional basis. Anticipation of possible risks and seeking to prevent all reasonable risk of misunderstandings and false allegations are seen as part of this commitment. The Low Level Concerns Policy details the procedures for alerting the Head to behaviour by an adult that does not meet the threshold for LADO intervention.

Good practice includes valuing and respecting children as individuals and the adult modelling of appropriate conduct – please refer to the Staff Code of Conduct. **It is recognised that it is the action rather than the intention that may subsequently give rise to problems.**

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) only: No-one may use personal devices such as phones, cameras etc, to capture or record pupils in the Early Years settings.

It is always recommended as good practice that all staff only use Blackheath Prep owned devices to take photographs, record children.

It is important for all staff and others in contact with children to:

- be mindful of safe working practices and alert to situations which may present risks and manage these
- ensure that a sense of accountability exists between staff so that poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unchallenged
- empower children – discuss with them their rights and responsibilities, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and what they can do if there is a problem.

Staff and others must never:

- hit or otherwise physically assault children
- develop relationships with children which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive
- use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive
- behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative
- condone, or participate in, behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive
- act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse
- discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others
- touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent – e.g. never touch a pupil below the shoulder unless there is a justifiable reason
- do anything of a personal nature for a pupil that he/she can do for him/herself
- indulge in horseplay, tickling or other games involving physical contact.

Staff should:

- not invite pupils (groups or individuals) or their families to their homes unless there is a good reason and it has been approved by Senior Leadership.
- not give pupils their home address, home telephone number, mobile telephone number, or email address
- not give a pupil a lift in their own vehicle

This is not an exhaustive list. The principle is that staff should avoid actions or behaviour which may constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour or be open to misinterpretation.

The Use of Reasonable Force

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children. The term ‘reasonable force’ covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. Reasonable means using no more force than is necessary.

If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be recorded in writing as soon as possible and given to the DSL with a copy placed on the child's file.

Record keeping

The DSL will keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.

The DSL will ensure all safeguarding and child protection records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations. They will only be discussed with staff on a need to know basis. Staff need to know when a child is at risk and what plan has been decided by case conference, but may not need to know all the confidential details.

These notes will be based on observation and evidence, which separate fact, allegation, hearsay, opinion or unsubstantiated evidence and which clearly indicate decisions and actions taken.

The DSL will also keep detailed, contemporaneous notes of:

- discussions with staff
- discussions with the child
- discussion with parents
- information provided to social services
- decisions taken (with times, dates and signed)

The DSL will confirm verbal and telephone referrals to social services in writing within 48 hours of the referral.

All records, notes and observations made by staff as part of ongoing monitoring of children on the child protection register or causing concern, must be completed on the School's Safeguarding Concern Reporting Form and immediately handed to the DSL. All child protection conference minutes must be stored in the confidential files kept by the DSL.

The completed forms/records will be kept for the duration of the child's school career and where a child changes school the forms/records will be forwarded to the DSL at the receiving school. The school will retain a receipt for the records signed by the receiving school.

Reports for child protection conferences or core group meetings must be written on the agreed pro-forma. They should focus on the child's educational progress and achievements, attendance, behaviour, participation, relationships with other children and staff and, where appropriate, their appearance and concerns. They should provide clear factual information. Staff should be aware that these reports will be made available to parents at the child protection conference.

The information contained will be regarded as confidential. Any request for access to the information by non-Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership Agencies (e.g. Solicitor, investigating agent) will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who is advised to seek legal advice before acting.

APPENDIX 1 How to manage a disclosure from a child

DO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • React calmly so as not to frighten the young person. • Take what the person says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is being said by a person who has for example a speech impairment and/or differences in language. • Avoid asking leading or direct questions other than those seeking to clarify your understanding of what the person has said. They may be subsequently formally interviewed by the Police and/or Social Care Services and they should not have to repeat their account on several occasions. The first person told may become a witness at court if they have asked/gained direct relevant information. • Try to reduce any questions you may choose to ask to an absolute minimum and concentrate on listening to the person. Questions should never be leading and should only consist of • Who? Where? When? What? • Reassure the young person that they are right to tell and are not to blame. • Do not make promises of confidentiality. Explain to them that concerns will have to be shared with someone who is in a position to act. • Make a full written record of what has been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible (preferably on the day that the concern/disclosure was first identified/made) using the incident report template. • Discuss the incident report with the Designated Safeguarding lead.
DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dismiss the concern • Try to resolve the issue yourself. • Panic or allow your shock or distaste to show. • Probe for more information than is freely offered to open questions. • Speculate or make assumptions about what may have happened. • Make any comments about the alleged abuser. • Make promises or agree to keep secrets. • Ask the young person or any witnesses to sign your written information as this may be significantly detrimental to any subsequent police investigation. • Take photographs of any alleged injuries. Any such recording must only be done by an approved medical or other practitioner, following referral. • Discuss the issue with anyone other than the Designated Safeguarding lead.

APPENDIX 2 Keeping staff safe

Communication with Children (including the Use of Technology)

In order to make best use of the many educational and social benefits of new and emerging technologies, pupils need opportunities to use and explore the digital world. Online risks are posed more by behaviours and values than the technology itself.

Staff should ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours, working to local and national guidelines and acceptable use policies which detail how new and emerging technologies may be used.

Communication with children both in the 'real' world and through web based and telecommunication interactions should take place within explicit professional boundaries. This includes the use of computers, tablets, phones, texts, e-mails, instant messages, social media such as Facebook and Twitter, chat-rooms, forums, blogs, websites, gaming sites, digital cameras, videos, web-cams and other hand-held devices. (Given the ever-changing world of technology it should be noted that this list gives examples only and is not exhaustive.)

Staff should not request or respond to any personal information from children other than which may be necessary in their professional role. They should ensure that their communications are open and transparent and avoid any communication which could be interpreted as 'grooming behaviour'.

Staff should not give their personal contact details to children for example, e-mail address, home or mobile telephone numbers, details of web-based identities. If children locate these by any other means and attempt to contact or correspond with the staff member, the adult should not respond and must report the matter to their manager. The child should be firmly and politely informed that this is not acceptable.

Staff should adhere to their establishment's policies, including those with regard to communication with parents and carers and the information they share when using the internet.

This means that adults should:

- *not seek to communicate/make contact or respond to contact with pupils outside of the purposes of their work*
- *not give out their personal details*
- *use only the equipment and internet services provided by the school or setting, unless school policies state otherwise*
- *only use internet-enabled personal devices in line with school acceptable use policies*
- *follow their school /setting's acceptable use policy and online safety guidance*
- *ensure that their use of technologies could not bring their employer into disrepute*
- *not discuss or share data relating to children/parents /carers in staff social media groups*

This means that education settings should:

- *wherever possible, provide school devices such as cameras and mobile phones rather than expecting staff to use their own (e.g. on school trips)*

Taken from:

Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People, May 2019.

APPENDIX 3 Recognising the signs of vulnerability to radicalisation

There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”: those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

Pupils may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors – it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that school staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.

Indicators of vulnerability include:

- Identity crisis – the pupil distanced from their cultural/religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society
- Personal crisis – the pupil may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing family friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
- Personal circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the pupils country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy
- Unmet aspirations – the pupil may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure
- Experiences of criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement/reintegration
- Special educational needs – pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others

More critical risk factors could include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and/or personal crisis.

ACTING DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD – MRS CLAIRE WATES

HEAD – MS VIKKI LLOYD

Deputy DSL Pre-Prep: Mrs Claire Wates

Deputy DSL Prep: Miss Odile Clark

Deputy DSL: Miss Tamara Reeves

EYFS DSL: Mrs Melissa Forbes

Email: dsl@blackheathprep.co.uk Mobile: 07732980156 / Ext: 110

SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE’S RESPONSIBILITY

What must I do if I have a concern:

- Report your concern to DSL or Deputy
- Record – write it down, sign and date it, it to DSL

What I should do if a child makes a disclosure to me:

- Receive, actively listen, non-judgemental
- Reassure but make no promises
- Respond and tell child what you are going to do
- Report your concern to DSL or Deputy ASAP
- Record only facts – Who? What? Where? When?

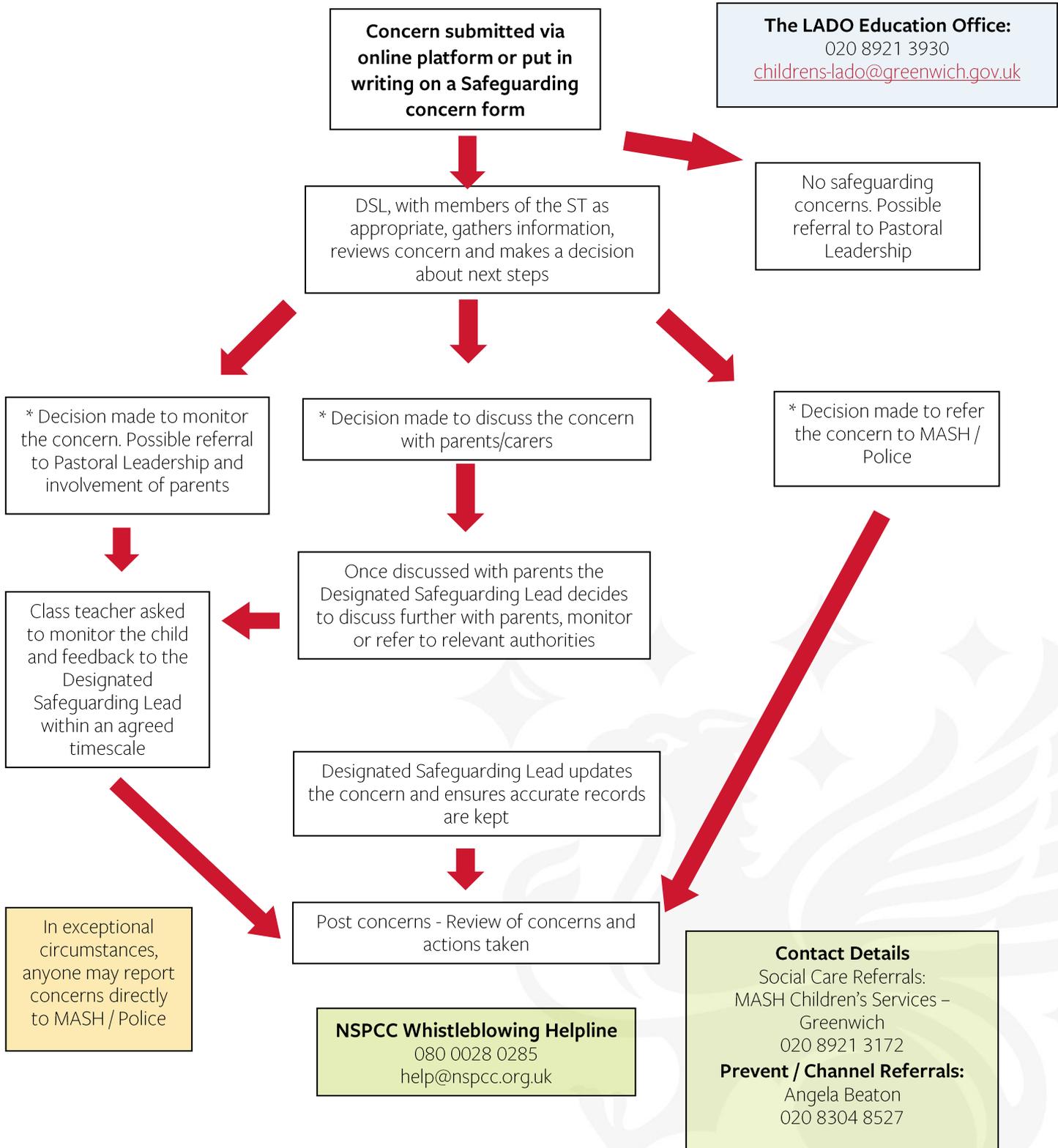
Do not investigate or attempt to resolve

CONCERNS REGARDING STAFF SHOULD BE SENT DIRECTLY TO THE HEAD

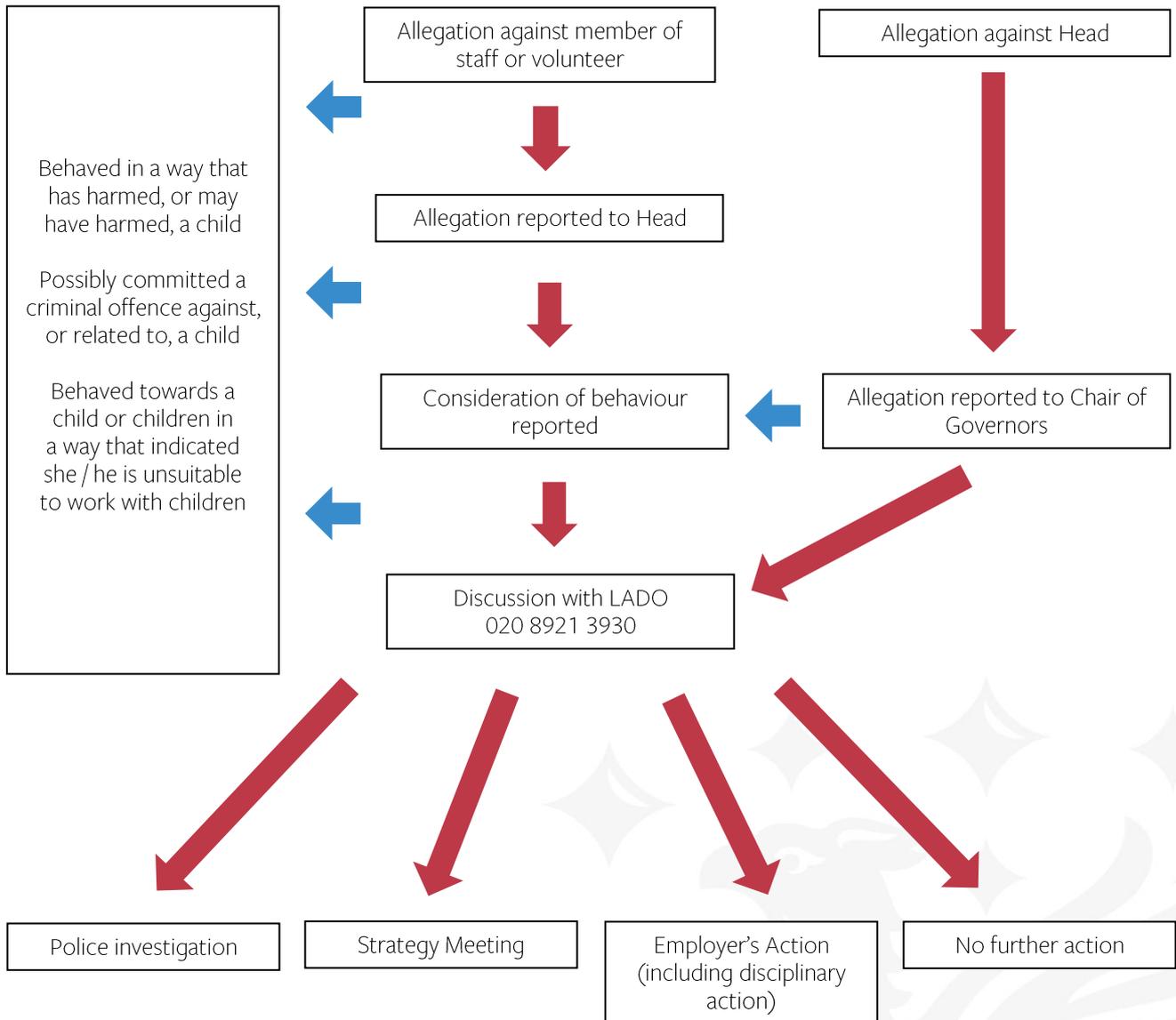
Email: vikki.lloyd@blackheathprep.co.uk Mobile: 07494 326038 / Ext:101

APPENDIX 5 HOW TO MANAGE A CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD

* See 'Information gathering checklist for Safeguarding concerns' on T Drive / Policies / CP Linked



APPENDIX 6 HOW TO MANAGE A CONCERN ABOUT A MEMBER OF STAFF



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Document Version	Main Changes	Date	Who
Baseline		March 2022	Assistant Head Pastoral
2022.1	Name of AHP updated throughout	September 2022	Executive Assistant
2023.1	Reviewed Board of Governors names updated following merger with Eltham College effective September 2023	July 2023	Assistant Head Pastoral
2023.2	Review of Filtering and Monitoring provisions	September 2023	IT Director
2023.3	Minor updates following feedback from Full Board Meeting in November 2023	November 2023	Executive Assistant
2023.4	EYFS – Summary of changes	January 2025	IT Director / Head of Pre Prep
2025.1	Names of relevant governors updated throughout Where revised, dates of key documents updated Child on child abuse replaces peer on peer Children absent from education replaces children missing from education	May 2025	Assistant Head Pastoral
2025.2	LADO contact name updated	October 2025	Executive Assistant
2025	KCSIE 2025 updates; names of Key Personnel updated	September 2025	Assistant Head Pastoral

2026.1	Updated details for Acting DSL	January 2026	Executive Assistant
Distribution list	BP_Resources: Policies & Teacher_Resources		

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