



**Better futures
for children &
young people.**

The Charter Schools Educational Trust
Child protection and safeguarding policy
2026-27

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1. Safeguarding culture

The Charter Schools Educational Trust (the 'Trust') is committed across all our schools to providing a safe and secure environment for children, staff and visitors and to promoting a culture in which everyone feels confident about sharing any and all concerns they may have about their own safety and well-being or the safety and well-being of others.

The Trust aims to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by protecting them from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking robust action to enable all children to have the best outcomes possible.

1.1 The purpose of the Child Protection Policy (CPP) is to:

- Identify the responsible individuals in the Trust or individual school and explain the purpose of their roles
- Outline the role of the Trust Board and the Local Governing Body of each respective school
- Describe the procedures to be followed if anyone in the Trust has a concern about the safety and welfare of a child who attends any school or other service or activity provided by the Trust
- Identify the particular attention that should be paid to those children who might be deemed vulnerable, including any child (as defined by the DfE statutory guidance) who is at risk of harm or who:
 - is disabled and has specific additional needs
 - has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
 - is a young carer
 - is pregnant and/or is a parent themselves
 - has exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours
 - is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
 - is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
 - has been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiple suspensions, is on a part-time timetable, or is at risk of permanent exclusion
 - is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
 - is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
 - is lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or questioning their gender
 - is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
 - is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
 - has a medical condition (including allergies) which may increase safeguarding risk if not properly managed
 - is looked after under the Children Act
 - has returned home to their family from care
 - is a privately fostered child
- Set out our policy on training for staff
- Ensure that those responsible for recruitment understand how to apply safeguarding principles when employing new staff, volunteers and trainees
- Set out expectations of how to ensure children are safeguarded when there is contact with non-school staff, e.g. volunteers, contractors, etc.
- Outline how safeguarding complaints against staff will be handled

- Set out expectations regarding record keeping
- Clarify how children will be kept safe through the everyday life of our schools
- Outline the role of the Trust board and the local governing bodies
- Outline how the implementation of this policy will be monitored.

1.2 Why it is important

1.2.1 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and it is the duty of The Charter Schools Educational Trust (the 'Trust') and its schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This is our core safeguarding principle.

1.2.2 In adhering to this principle, we focus on providing a safe and welcoming environment for all our children regardless of age, ability, culture, race, language, religion, gender identity or sexual identity. All our children have equal rights to support and protection.

1.2.3 One of the cornerstones of our safeguarding culture is this policy and the procedures contained within it. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, trustees and governors, all of whom are trained upon its contents and on their safeguarding duties. We update this policy at least annually to reflect changes to law and guidance and best practice.

1.2.4 This policy should be read alongside our other safeguarding policies, which are set out in Appendix Two.

1.3 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

1.3.1 Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge

1.3.2 Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online

1.3.3 Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development

1.3.4 Making sure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

1.3.5 Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

1.4 What it means for our pupils

1.4.1 We work with our local safeguarding partners, which include the local authority, the police and the local integrated care boards, to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a coordinated offer of Family Help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans which provide additional support to the child.

1.4.2 All our staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may indicate that a child is at risk of harm. Any pupils or staff involved in a child protection or safeguarding issue will receive appropriate support.

1.4.3 Our strong safeguarding culture ensures that we treat all pupils with respect and involve them in decisions that affect them. We encourage positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils, and we set a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately.

1.4.4 Identifying safeguarding and child protection concerns often begins with recognising changes in pupils' behaviour and knowing that these changes may be signs of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse.

1.4.5 All our staff will reassure children that their concerns and disclosures will be taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

2. Safeguarding legislation and guidance

2.1 The following safeguarding legislation and guidance has been considered when drafting this policy:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026, as updated)
- Working together to improve school attendance 2024
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – advice for practitioners (2015)
- The Teacher Standards 2012
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended by the Crime and Policing Act 2026)
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- The School Premises (England) Regulations 2012
- The Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- PACE Code C 2019
- Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- The Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998, as they apply to gender questioning children, single-sex facilities and single-sex sport (now set out directly within KCSIE 2026 rather than in standalone guidance)
- The Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- The Crime and Policing Act 2026
- Online Safety Act 2023

3. Roles and responsibilities

For full details of the Trust's safeguarding team and other useful contacts please refer to Appendix Three in this policy.

The Trust Lead DSL is Cassie Buchanan CEO: email: cbuchanan@tcset.org.uk

The Safeguarding Link Trustee is Karen Robinson: email: krobinson@tcset.org.uk

3.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

3.1.1 Each school within the Trust will appoint a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) in the school. The DSL duties include:

- ensuring child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately by staff
- working with the board of trustees and local governing body to ensure that the Trust's child protection policies are reviewed annually and that the procedures are reviewed regularly
- acting as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff on child protection and safeguarding matters
- liaising with the headteacher regarding ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations and being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult in relevant circumstances
- acting as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners
- making and managing referrals to children's social care, the police, or other agencies
- taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings
- liaising with the "case manager" and the designated officer(s) at the local authority if allegations are made against staff, supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers or contractors
- ensuring that written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions (including the rationale for those decisions) are maintained
- making staff aware of training courses and the latest local safeguarding arrangements available through the local safeguarding partner arrangements
- transferring the child protection file to a child's new school

- working with the Headteacher to ensure that the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable
- working with the Headteacher to ensure that each EYFS child is assigned a key person
- Each school must have robust cover arrangements for when the DSL (and any deputy) is unavailable due to illness, leave or other

3.1.2 The Trust has an appointed Lead DSL who takes the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) across the Trust. The Trust Lead DSL duties include:

- ensuring a consistent approach to safeguarding across the Trust through regular audit and QA
- determining the job descriptions, responsibilities and appointment process for DSLs and DDSLs
- reviewing annually the Trust's safeguarding policies to ensure that they are in line with statutory guidance and legal requirements
- ensuring that training is delivered to a high standard across the Trust including the delivery of Trust-wide safeguarding training and updates for staff and trustees/governors
- meeting the safeguarding trustee on a regular basis to discuss safeguarding issues and to agree steps to continuously improve safeguarding practices in the Trust
- reporting to the Trust Board on a termly basis

3.2 The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

In the Trust central team and within each school within the Trust, our Deputy DSLs are trained to the same level as the DSL and support the DSL with safeguarding matters on a day-to-day basis. The ultimate lead responsibility for child protection remains with the DSL

3.3 The safeguarding trustee/link governor

3.3.1 The role of the safeguarding trustee is to provide support and challenge to the Trust Lead DSL and the leadership of the Trust on how they manage safeguarding so that the safety and wellbeing of the children can continuously improve. They are supported by appointed link safeguarding governors on each of the school local governing bodies. The role includes:

- understanding the requirements of the DfE Academy Trust Governance Guide and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- supporting and challenging the Trust Lead DSL on the standards of safeguarding across the Trust
- confirming that consistent and compliant safeguarding practice takes place across the Trust
- reporting to the board of trustees about the standard of safeguarding in the Trust

3.3.2 The school DSL and the safeguarding link governor meet on a regular basis to discuss safeguarding issues and to agree steps to continuously improve safeguarding practices in the school.

3.3.3 The safeguarding trustee and school safeguarding link governors will meet on a termly basis.

4. Children who may be particularly vulnerable

4.1 Some children are at greater risk of abuse. This increased risk can be caused by many factors including social exclusion, isolation, discrimination and prejudice. To ensure that all our pupils receive equal protection, all staff are expected to be able to identify and recognise all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation and shall be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is vulnerable because of their race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender or sexuality
- has a disability
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education health and care (EHC) plan)
- is a young carer

- is bereaved
- is pregnant and/or a parent themselves
- has exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including being affected by gangs, county lines, organised crime groups and/or serious violence, including knife crime
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol
- is suffering from mental ill health
- has returned home to their family from care
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage
- is a privately fostered child
- has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending
- is missing education, or persistently absent from school, or not in receipt of full-time education
- has experienced multiple suspensions and is at risk of, or has been, permanently excluded
- has a medical condition (including allergies) that requires careful management, where a lapse in that management could itself raise a safeguarding question

Staff, volunteers, trustees and local governors must follow the procedures set out in this policy in the event of a safeguarding issue.

5. Children with special educational needs and disabilities

5.1 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, which can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- being more prone to peer group isolation than other children
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers, including a child not understanding that what is happening to them is abuse
- greater dependence on adults for intimate or personal care, which can increase vulnerability

5.2 Our staff are trained to be aware of and identify these additional barriers to ensure this group of children are appropriately safeguarded.

6. Children who are absent from education

6.1 Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions, and children missing education, can be an indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation, child criminal exploitation, mental health problems, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Our staff are alert to these risks.

6.2 We closely monitor attendance, absence and exclusions and our DSL will take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day.

7. Mental health

7.1 Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils. Each school in the Trust has appropriately trained mental health staff. The Trust has a self-harm toolkit which must be referred to.

7.2 All staff are aware that mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff are also aware that where children have suffered adverse childhood experiences, those experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

7.3 Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff are, however, well placed to observe children day to day and identify those whose behaviour suggests they may be experiencing, or at risk of developing, a mental health problem including self-harm, an eating disorder, or suicidal ideation.

7.4 Where staff feel a child is in immediate danger, they must call 999 or arrange for the child to be taken to A&E immediately by a parent/carer or other suitable person. Where a child needs urgent (but not emergency) help for their mental health, staff can get help from NHS 111 online or by calling 111 and selecting the mental health option.

7.5 Where staff are concerned that a child's mental health is also a safeguarding concern, they will discuss it with the DSL or a deputy.

8. Children who are questioning their gender, and children who are lesbian, gay or bisexual

8.1 Lesbian, gay or bisexual pupils

The fact that a child or young person may be lesbian, gay or bisexual is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. Unfortunately, children who are LGB, or are simply perceived to be LGB, can be targeted by other children. The risk to these children can be compounded where they lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. Our staff endeavour to reduce the barriers and provide a safe space for those children to speak out or share their concerns with them and will address any bullying robustly under our anti-bullying policy.

8.2 Children who are questioning their gender: our starting principle

It is not the role of our schools to initiate any action in this area. This section applies only where a child or their parent has raised a request relating to social transition, for example, a change of name, pronouns, uniform, or use of facilities, to which the school is responding.

It is common for children to engage in activities or interests less typically associated with their sex, and for some children to go through a period of questioning their gender that does not continue into adulthood. Staff should take time to understand a child's thoughts and feelings with professional curiosity, remaining alert to wider vulnerabilities, including complex mental health or psychosocial needs, and discriminatory bullying, without treating gender questioning itself as a risk factor. Schools should maintain flexibility in policies across school life and avoid rigid rules based on gender stereotypes.

8.3 Considering a request for support with social transition

Where a child or parent asks the school to support any degree of social transition, the school will make and document a decision guided by the following principles, taking advice from the DSL:

- Best interests first: the school must consider what is in the best interests of the child making the request and of other children, and a decision may not match the child's wishes.

- Parents and carers involved as a priority: their views should carry great weight and be properly considered. The only exception is the rare circumstance where involving a parent or carer would itself create a greater risk to the child than not doing so, in which case the DSL must be involved to determine what action is needed before parents are contacted.
- A very careful, cautious approach: social transition is treated as an active intervention with potentially significant psychological and longer-term effects, not a neutral accommodation. Full social transition is expected to be agreed very rarely in primary schools, with early clinical input sought where families are considering it for pre-pubertal children.
- Compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998: where a policy might disadvantage a gender questioning child, the school must consider whether it has a legitimate aim (e.g. safeguarding, or fairness in sport) and is a proportionate way of achieving it.
- Documentation: the decision-making process, and the reasons for the decision, must be recorded and kept under review, including reviewing decisions made before this policy came into force.

8.4 Rules that apply regardless of any decision on social transition — no exceptions

Whatever is decided about social transition more broadly, our schools must not:

- allow a child access to toilets designated for the opposite biological sex (from age 8)
- allow a child to undress in front of, or use changing rooms/showers designated for, the opposite biological sex (from age 11)
- allow a child to share boarding or overnight accommodation with a child of the opposite biological sex
- allow a child to participate in sport designated for the opposite biological sex where the single-sex arrangement exists for safety reasons

Where single-sex sport is organised for reasons of fairness rather than safety, and there are no safety concerns, the school will undertake a balanced, case-by-case consideration of any request, taking fairness and the wellbeing of all pupils into account.

Where a child does not want to use the facility designated for their biological sex, the school will consider whether it can offer a suitable alternative (for example a lockable, self-contained individual facility, or access at a different time), but never in a way that removes or compromises single-sex provision for other children, or the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of any child. Any such arrangement will be recorded, communicated appropriately to relevant staff, and reviewed regularly. See also Section 33 (Site security) for facilities requirements.

8.5 Children living in stealth, and support for detransition

Staff should be conscious that a child who has fully socially transitioned from an early age may be 'living in stealth', meaning peers and/or staff are unaware of their biological sex. This carries its own safeguarding considerations, particularly as the child approaches puberty, and the DSL should be involved in managing these cases.

Where a child wishes to fully or partially reverse ('detransition') a previously agreed arrangement, the school will work closely with parents/carers and relevant experts to support the child, maintaining flexibility and keeping options open.

8.6 Accurate records

Schools are legally required to record a child's biological sex accurately wherever it is recorded, and to ensure relevant staff are aware of it in all cases, as this underpins the school's ability to fulfil its safeguarding duties.

8.7 Talking with children and families

Staff will take time to sensitively explain the constraints set out above when discussing a request with a child, while remaining conscious of the rights of pupils and staff in relation to religion or belief. Where social transition is being supported, options such as using a preferred name rather than pronouns may be discussed as a middle ground.

9. Child protection procedures (see flow chart in Appendix Four)

9.1 Recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation

9.1.1 All staff will be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, and understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home, and online.

9.1.2 All staff will exercise professional curiosity and know what to look for to ensure the early identification of abuse, neglect and exploitation so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 refers to four categories of abuse: physical, emotional, sexual and neglect. These are set out at Appendix One along with indicators of abuse.

9.1.3 All staff will be aware of the potential risk of adultification of children when responding to potential cases of abuse, neglect and exploitation. Adultification is discrimination and bias in the context of child protection and safeguarding, where a child is presumed to be older and less vulnerable when compared to other children. It is often used to describe the experiences of children from particular ethnic minority backgrounds, such as Black children. In these cases, police and other public services may not meet their safeguarding responsibilities as they may disregard the child's needs and legal rights.

9.2 Taking action

9.2.1 Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- If staff members have a concern about a child's welfare they will act immediately, following the processes in this policy
- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, if necessary, call 999
- complete a record of concern form as soon as possible. In our school we use CPOMS/MyConcern and staff will receive full training in how to do this
- share information on a need-to-know basis only and do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family

9.3 If you are concerned about a pupil's welfare

9.3.1 Staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk. This may be because the pupil's behaviour has changed, their appearance has changed, or physical signs are noticed. In these circumstances, staff will give the pupil the opportunity to talk and ask if they are OK.

9.3.2 If the pupil does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below.

9.3.3 Staff are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. Children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or threatened, which could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This will not prevent our staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to our DSL if they have concerns about a child.

9.4 If a pupil discloses to you

9.4.1 If a pupil tells a member of staff about a risk to their safety or wellbeing, the staff member will:

- remain calm and not overreact
- allow them to speak freely
- not be afraid of silences
- not ask investigative questions
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me'
- not automatically offer physical touch as comfort
- let the pupil know that in order to help them they must pass the information on to the DSL
- tell the pupil what will happen next

- always complete the concern form using CPOMs/MyConcern (as appropriate) and this will be sent to the respective school safeguarding team immediately
- if the child is in immediate danger or at risk of significant harm, always immediately report the concern via CPOMs/MyConcern and face to face to the DSL, or in their absence a Deputy DSL. In the case of an allegation against a member of staff, trainee teacher, supply staff, volunteer or contractor, talk to the Headteacher; in their absence contact Cassie Buchanan (Trust Chief Executive) using the contact details in Appendix Three
- staff may also share information directly with children's social care or the police if they are convinced that a direct report is required or if the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the deputies, the headteacher or the Trust Chief Executive are not available, and a referral is required immediately

10. Referral to children's social care

10.1 The DSL will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child. Any referral must be copied into CPOMs/MyConcern (as appropriate).

10.2 Referrals to services regarding concerns about a child or family typically fall into these categories:

- Universal services and community-based Early Help
- Targeted Family Help
- Child in need – Section 17 (Children Act 1989) referrals
- Child protection – Section 47 (Children Act 1989) referrals

10.3 Safeguarding referrals should be made to the local authority's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) via the referral form and copied to the local authority's Schools Safeguarding Coordinator. Any referral must be copied into CPOMs/MyConcern.

10.4 Prior to any referral form being sent to social care, there should be a verbal consultation with the MASH social worker or manager, by calling the duty desk (see Appendix Three for local authority and other agency contacts), to ensure that making a referral is an appropriate action. This conversation should be recorded on CPOMs/MyConcern.

10.5 See Appendix Three for the contact details of the relevant Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), the website of the relevant local safeguarding board to consult the threshold for referral, and the London Safeguarding Children Procedures (the 'Blue Book').

10.6 The parent/carer will normally be contacted to obtain their consent before a referral is made. However, if the concern involves, for example, alleged or suspected child sexual abuse, honour-based abuse, fabricated or induced illness, or the DSL has reason to believe that informing the parent at this stage might compromise the safety of the child or a staff member, nothing should be said to the parent/carer before the referral, and the reasons for the decision to progress without consent should be provided with the referral. Any parental conversation should be recorded into CPOMs/MyConcern.

10.7 When the school makes a referral, the local authority should decide, within one working day of a referral being made, about the type of response that is required and should let the school, as the referrer, know the outcome. The DSL will follow up if this information is not forthcoming. Any local escalation must be recorded into CPOMs/MyConcern.

10.8 If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL will consider following local escalation procedures to ensure that the concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves. Any referral must be copied into CPOMs/MyConcern.

10.9 The Early Help Referral Form will be used to request additional support for a family when the needs of a child are beyond the level that can be provided by universal services. Any referral must be copied into CPOMs/MyConcern.

10.10 If a child has an unexplained or suspicious injury that requires urgent medical attention, the CP referral process should not delay the administration of first aid or emergency medical assistance. If a pupil is thought to be at immediate risk because of parental violence, intoxication, substance abuse, mental illness or threats to remove the child during the school day, for example, urgent police intervention must be requested. Any medical attention must be recorded into CPOMs/MyConcern.

10.11 Where a child sustains a physical injury or is distressed as a result of reported chastisement or alleges that they have been chastised by the use of an implement or substance, this will immediately be reported for investigation. Any referral must be copied into CPOMs/MyConcern.

10.12 At all stages of the referral process staff must keep the child's circumstances under review and re-refer if appropriate, to ensure that the child's circumstances improve. Each school has the right to complain and/or escalate the referral if they feel that the local authority has not conducted its duty fully. Any escalation and/or complaint must be copied into CPOMs/MyConcern.

10.13 Where children are made subject of a child protection plan or child in need plan the school has a vital role to play. This includes attending child protection conferences and child in need meetings, attending core group meetings, monitoring the child, providing up to date reports and contributing to the child protection plan or the child in need plan. All emails, phone calls, meeting minutes and resulting plans and actions must be recorded or copied into CPOMs/MyConcern.

11. Commitment to multi-agency working

11.1 We recognise and are committed to our responsibility to work with other professionals and agencies in line with statutory guidance. We must ensure children's needs are met and to protect them from harm. All staff will endeavour to identify those children and families who may benefit from the intervention and support of external professionals and will seek to enable referrals, in discussion with parents/carers as appropriate.

11.2 Schools are not the investigating agency when there is a child protection concern and the school will therefore pass all relevant cases to the statutory agencies. We will, however, contribute to the investigation and assessment processes as required and recognise that a crucial part of this may be in supporting the child while these take place.

11.3 We will follow the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements under the Safeguarding Partnership system. We recognise the importance of multi-agency working and will ensure that staff are enabled to attend relevant safeguarding meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Strategy Meetings, Child in Need meetings and Early Help/Family Help Teams around the Child/Family. The School Leadership Team and DSL will work to establish strong and co-operative relationships with relevant professionals in other agencies.

12. Reporting directly to child protection agencies

12.1 Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care or the police if they are convinced that a direct report is required or if the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the deputies, the headteacher or the Trust CEO are not available, and a referral is required immediately.

12.2 Staff may also contact the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000 if the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the deputies, the headteacher or the Trust CEO are not available, and they need advice.

13. Reporting to the police

The school follows the advice 'When to call the police' which covers incidents on school premises where pupils have potentially committed a crime. It provides guidance on what schools should bear in mind

when considering contacting the police and aims to support schools to make defensible decisions when considering whether to involve the police. This advice covers the following situations:

- Assault
- Criminal damage
- Cybercrime
- Drugs
- Harassment
- Sexual offences
- Theft
- Weapons

14. Notifying parents

14.1 The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. If the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police before parents are notified. Further guidance is detailed in 'Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility'.

14.2 There may be occasion to apply the competency, for example, if a child or young person:

- would like to have contextual support but doesn't want their parents or carers to know about it
- is seeking confidential support for substance misuse
- has strong wishes about their future living arrangements which may conflict with their parents' or carers' views

Further guidance from the NSPCC is available online.

15. Record keeping

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in CPOMs/MyConcern. CPOMs/MyConcern should be the single source of all information relating to safeguarding. Records should include:

- all concerns
- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- a record of all emails, phone calls and conversations related to the concern
- details of any follow up action taken, decisions reached, the rationale for those decisions and the outcome for each concern
- all day-to-day email, phone calls and documentation related to any pupil about which a concern has been raised or is about to be raised
- all email, phone calls and documentation related to any meetings with safeguarding partners
- all email, phone calls and documentation related to any meetings with those individuals or organisations providing support

If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) but in the interim record the matter in CPOMs/MyConcern.

16. Confidentiality and sharing information

Child protection issues necessitate a high level of confidentiality. Staff should only discuss concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Headteacher or Chair of Governors/Chair of Trustees.

16.1 Sharing information

16.1.1 The DSL will normally obtain consent from the pupil and/or parents to share child protection information. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL may share information without consent and will record the reason for deciding to do so.

16.1.2 Information sharing will take place in a timely and secure manner and only when it is necessary and proportionate to do so and the information to be shared is relevant, adequate and accurate.

16.1.3 Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share.

16.1.4 The UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 do not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child. If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the Trust Data Protection Officer: Judicium Consulting Limited, Lead Contact: Craig Stilwell. Address: 98 Theobalds Road, London, WC1X 8WB. Email: dataservices@judicium.com. Web: www.judiciumeducation.co.uk. Telephone: 0345 548 7000/Option 1 then 1.

16.1.5 The Trust Data Protection policy and privacy notices are available to view online. The Trust Records Retention and Destruction policy is available to parents and pupils on request.

16.2 Storing information

16.2.1 Child protection information will be stored separately from the pupil's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held. It will be stored and handled in line with the Trust Records Retention and Destruction Policy.

17. Child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence)

17.1 Child-on-child abuse (children harming other children) is unacceptable and will be taken seriously; it will not be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or 'X being X'. Child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the pupil who has been harmed and the pupil who has allegedly harmed, and it is preventable: timely, evidence-based support can help prevent children from going on to commit abuse or violence.

17.2 All staff should be clear about the school's separate policy and procedures for addressing child-on-child abuse.

17.3 All staff must maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'.

17.4 Child-on-child abuse can take many forms, including:

- physical abuse such as shaking, hitting, biting, kicking or hair pulling
- serious physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon
- bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- sexual violence and harassment such as rape and sexual assault or sexual comments and inappropriate sexual language, remarks or jokes. Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 describes in detail what is meant by child-on-child sexual violence and harassment
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- upskirting, which involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their knowledge for the purposes of sexual gratification or to cause humiliation, distress or alarm. Upskirting is a sexual offence under the Voyeurism Act for which a perpetrator can be prosecuted
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (including images generated using AI), also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery, including pressuring others to share sexual content
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers (also known as teenage relationship abuse) such as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, including stalking

- initiation/hazing used to induct newcomers into sports teams or school groups by subjecting them to potentially humiliating or abusive trials with the aim of creating a bond

Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with child-on-child abuse, for example girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence. All staff recognise that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place but is not being reported.

17.5 Minimising risk

We take the following steps to minimise or prevent the risk of child-on-child abuse:

- promoting an open and honest environment where children feel safe and confident to share their concerns and worries
- using assemblies to outline acceptable and unacceptable behaviour
- using RSE and PSHE to educate and reinforce our messages through stories, role play, current affairs and other suitable activities
- ensuring that the school is well supervised, especially in areas where children might be vulnerable

17.6 Investigating allegations

17.6.1 All allegations of child-on-child abuse should be passed to the DSL immediately who will investigate and manage the allegation as follows:

- **Gather information** – children and staff will be spoken with immediately to gather relevant information. Where a child is identified as the possible pupil who has been harmed of child-on-child abuse within the school community, it will be important to consider if other children may also be pupil who has been harmed of the same pupil who has allegedly harmed, and whether any other children may be witnesses
- **Decide on action** – if it is believed that any child is at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made to children's social care. The DSL will then work with children's social care to decide on next steps, which may include contacting the police. In other cases, we may follow our behaviour policy alongside this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- **Inform parents** – If a pupil is accused of a serious child on child abuse incident e.g. *upskirting/downblousing* or *youth-produced sexual imagery*, the school **must call the parents/carers before any discussion with the accused pupil** so they have the option to attend. However, our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil, so if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to a child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police before parents are contacted
- **Record** – all concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, will be recorded in writing, kept confidential and stored securely on the school's child protection and safeguarding systems and/or in the child's separate child protection file. The record will include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, and a note of the action taken, decisions reached, the rationale for those decisions and the outcome
- The recording of child-on-child abuse will be on both pupils' records (both the harmed and doing the harm)

17.6.2 Where allegations of a sexual nature are made, the school will follow the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Partnership's policies and procedures. There are different procedures to follow for different types of abuse. This could lead to referrals to two or more local authorities if the children live in different boroughs.

17.6.3 Children can report allegations or concerns of child-on-child abuse to any staff member and that staff member will pass on the allegation to the DSL who will record it onto CPOMS/My Concern. To ensure children can report their concerns easily, each school has a clear system in place for children to confidently and easily report abuse.

17.6.4 Supporting those involved: our staff reassure all pupils who have been harmed 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.

17.6.5 Abuse that occurs online or outside of school will not be downplayed and will be treated equally seriously. We recognise that sexual violence and sexual harassment occurring online can introduce a number of complex factors, including widespread abuse or harm across a number of social media platforms.

17.6.6 The support required for the pupil who has been harmed will depend on their particular circumstances and the nature of the abuse. The support we provide could include counselling and mentoring or some restorative justice work.

17.6.7 Support may also be required for the pupil that caused harm, as they could be the subject of harm themselves. We will seek to understand why the pupil acted in this way and consider what support may be required to help the pupil and/or change behaviours. The consequences for the harm caused or intended will be addressed.

17.6.8 All staff recognise that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place but is not being reported.

18. Serious violence

18.1 All staff are made aware of indicators that children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime.

18.2 All staff are made aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence

18.3 Staff must report any concern about a child carrying or using a weapon (or expressing intent to do so) directly to the DSL (or a deputy). The DSL will assess the risk to both the individual pupil and to others in the school, taking account of any wider information or concerns, and will take appropriate action, drawing on evidence-based resources such as the Youth Endowment Fund.

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

19.1 Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity. This can be committed or facilitated by an organised network or gang. This power imbalance can be due to a range of factors, including:

- Age
- Gender
- Sexual identity
- Cognitive ability
- Physical strength
- Status
- Access to economic or other resources

19.2 The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. They can be one-off occurrences or a series of incidents over time and may or may not involve force or violence. Exploitation can be physical and take place inside or outside the home and online. Where CCE or CSE may constitute modern slavery, a relevant child protection and modern slavery referral will be made, in line with the Modern Slavery statutory guidance.

19.3 Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

19.3.1 CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing, being forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

19.3.2 Children can become trapped by this exploitation as perpetrators can threaten pupils and their families, with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or carry a knife for a sense of protection.

19.3.3 Children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

19.3.4 It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys, and both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

19.4 CCE Indicators

CCE indicators can include children who:

- appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- misuse drugs or alcohol
- go missing for periods of time or regularly return home late
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education

19.5 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

19.5.1 CSE is a form of child sexual abuse which may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration or non-penetrative acts. 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.

19.5.2 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.

19.5.3 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.

19.5.4 Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to child trafficking.

19.6 CSE Indicators

19.6.1 The above indicators can also be indicators of CSE

19.7 We include the risks of criminal and sexual exploitation in our RSE and PSHE education curriculum. It is often the case that the child does not recognise the coercive nature of the exploitative relationship and does not recognise themselves as a pupil who has been harmed.

19.8 All staff are aware of the indicators that children are at risk of or are experiencing CCE or CSE. All concerns are reported immediately to the DSL. Staff must always act on any concerns that a child is suffering from or is at risk of criminal or sexual exploitation.

20. County lines

20.1 County lines exploitation can occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child. This power imbalance can be due to the same range of factors set out at Section 19 of this policy.

20.2 Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations, including schools and colleges. Indicators of county lines include those indicators set out at Section 19 of this policy, with the main indicator being missing episodes from home and/or school.

20.3 Additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited include children who:

- go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from home
- have been the pupil who has been harmed or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime)
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs
- are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection
- are found in accommodation with which they have no connection or in a hotel room where there is drug activity
- owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing

20.4 All staff are aware of indicators that children are at risk from or experiencing criminal exploitation. The main indicator is increased absence during which time the child may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs or money.

21. Sharing nudes and semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery)

21.1. Sharing nudes and semi-nudes means the sending or posting online of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by young people under the age of 18. This also includes pseudo-images that are digitally altered or wholly computer (or AI) generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video.

21.2 The term 'nudes' is used as it is most commonly recognised by young people and more appropriately covers all types of image-sharing incidents. Other terms used in education include 'sexting', 'youth produced sexual imagery' and 'youth involved sexual imagery'.

21.3 The motivations for taking and sharing nudes and semi-nudes are not always sexually or criminally motivated. Such images may be created and shared consensually by young people who are in relationships, as well as between those who are not in a relationship. It is also possible for a young person in a consensual relationship to be coerced into sharing an image with their partner. Incidents may also occur where:

- children and young people find nudes and semi-nudes online and share them claiming to be from a peer
- children and young people digitally manipulate an image of a young person into an existing nude online, including using AI
- images created or shared are used to abuse peers, e.g. by selling images online or obtaining images to share more widely without consent to publicly shame

21.4 All incidents involving nude or semi-nude images — whether consensual or non-consensual, and whether or not AI-generated — require a safeguarding response and will be managed as follows:

- Staff will note the overview guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety and will never view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery themselves, or ask a child to share or download it — this is illegal. If the imagery has been viewed by accident this will be referred to the DSL immediately
- Any incidents involving nude or semi-nude images will be referred to the DSL immediately and the DSL will discuss it with the appropriate staff. If necessary, the DSL may also interview the children involved

- Parents will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put a child at risk of harm
- At any point in the process, if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm, we will refer the matter to the police and/or children's social care

21.5 The UK Council for Internet Safety's advice for managing incidences of sharing nudes and semi-nudes remains the reference point. The school and its staff will have regard to this advice when managing these issues.

22. Online safety

22.1 It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. As well as educating children about online risks, we have appropriate and effective filtering and monitoring systems in place to limit the risk of children being exposed to inappropriate content, subjected to harmful online interaction with other users (including generative AI applications that simulate interaction), and to ensure their own personal online behaviour does not put them at risk.

22.2 A named senior leader is responsible for filtering and monitoring at each school, working with the DSL and IT support. That review must take place at least once every academic year and include checks that filtering is working appropriately on all internet-connected devices in all relevant locations, with a record kept of these checks. The systems block harmful and inappropriate content, and we take care to ensure they do not unreasonably impact on teaching and learning.

22.3 We tell parents and carers what filtering and monitoring systems we use, so they can understand how we work to keep children safe. We will also inform parents and carers of what we are asking children to do online, including the sites they need to access, and with whom they will be interacting online.

22.4 All staff are aware of the '4C risks – content, contact, conduct, commerce - risk areas and should report any concerns to the DSL.

22.5 All staff must receive annual online safety training and this policy should be read alongside the Trust Online Safety Policy, which is reviewed and updated annually and reflects DfE guidance on the safe and effective use of Generative AI in education, including relevant product safety expectations.

22.7 This policy ensures that, as a multi-academy trust, we operate in line with our values and within the law in terms of how we use online devices, programmes and software, including artificial intelligence.

23. Domestic abuse

23.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduces a legal definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. If any of our staff are concerned that a child has witnessed domestic abuse, they will report their concerns immediately to the DSL.

23.2 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. It includes people who have been or are married, are or have been civil partners, have agreed to marry one another, or each have or have had a parental relationship in relation to the same child. It can include psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse.

23.3 Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. This means children can also be perpetrators of domestic abuse, including in their own intimate relationships (sometimes known as teenage relationship abuse).

23.4 Where police have been called to a domestic violence incident where children are in the household and experienced that incident, the police will inform the DSL (Operation Encompass). This ensures that the school has up-to-date safeguarding information about the child.

24. Honour-based abuse

24.1 So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses actions taken 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.

24.2 Abuse committed in the context of preserving 'honour' often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. Our staff are aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors and we take them into consideration when deciding what safeguarding action to take.

24.3 If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

24.4 Female Genital Mutilation

24.4.1 FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

24.4.2 FGM is carried out on females of any age, from babies to teenagers to women. Our staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators, including concerns expressed by girls about going on a long holiday during the summer break. If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of FGM or who has suffered FGM, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead. Teachers are also under a legal duty to report to the police where they discover that FGM has been carried out on a child under 18. In such circumstances, teachers will personally report the matter to the police as well as informing the designated safeguarding lead.

24.4.3 Where FGM has taken place, there is a mandatory duty placed on teachers under Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015). This places a statutory duty upon teachers in England and Wales to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the pupil who has been harmed or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. We will provide guidance and support to our teachers on this requirement.

24.4.4 Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out and discuss any issues with the safeguarding lead and children's social care. The duty does not apply to at-risk or suspected cases.

24.5 Forced Marriage

24.5.1 A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure or abuse.

24.5.2 Forced marriage is illegal. It is also illegal to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

24.5.3 Our staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators, which may include being taken abroad and not being allowed to return to the UK.

24.5.4 Forced marriage is not the same as arranged marriage, which is common in many cultures.

24.5.5 If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of forced marriage, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

25. Radicalisation and extremism

25.1 The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children's services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (see ['The Prevent Duty'](#)).

25.2 Young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views, in particular via the internet and other social media, and may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Schools can help to protect children from extremist and violent views in the same way that they help to safeguard children from drugs, gang violence or alcohol.

25.3 Extremism is defined as the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others, undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights, or intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve those results. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

25.4 Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Our staff are trained to identify those at risk of being radicalised or drawn into extremism. If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of radicalisation or being drawn into extremism, they must speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

25.5 Where there is an immediate concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include the police or Channel or the local authority children's social care team.

26. Concerns about mental health

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. Staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action by following the steps in Section 9. Any child or young person who self-harms or expresses thoughts about this or about suicide must be taken seriously and appropriate help and intervention should be offered at the earliest point.

All staff should refer to the guidance and steps in the self-harm toolkit following taking immediate steps as outlined in Section 9. The toolkit outlines how to support students who self-harm and/or at risk of suicide

The indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of taking actions to harm themselves or attempt suicide can cover a wide range of life events such as bereavement, bullying at school or a variety of forms of cyberbullying (often via mobile phones), homophobic bullying, mental health problems including eating disorders, family problems such as domestic abuse or any form of child abuse, as well as conflict between the child and parents.

The signs of distress a child may be under can take many forms, including:

- Cutting behaviours
- Other forms of self-harm, such as burning, scalding, banging, hair pulling
- Self-poisoning
- Not looking after their needs properly, emotionally or physically
- Direct injury such as scratching, cutting, burning, hitting yourself, swallowing or putting things inside
- Staying in an abusive relationship
- Taking risks too easily

- Eating distress (anorexia and bulimia)
- Addiction, for example to alcohol or drugs
- Low self-esteem and expressions of hopelessness

Where concerns arise in these circumstances staff will follow the procedures in Section 9. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is not also a safeguarding concern, they will speak to the DSL to agree a course of action.

See Appendix Four for contacts and support for families and children.

27. Special circumstances

27.1 Looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The school ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority's virtual school head for children in care.

27.2 Children who have a social worker

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Local authorities will share this information with us, and the DSL will hold and use this information to inform decisions about safeguarding and promoting the child's welfare, as a matter of routine.

27.3 Work experience

Where relevant, the school has detailed procedures to safeguard pupils undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise pupils on work experience, in accordance with statutory guidance. Where the person supervising a pupil aged 16 or 17 on work experience would otherwise fall within the definition of regulated activity (i.e. teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising a child frequently, on more than 3 days in a 30-day period, or overnight), the school will consider whether an enhanced DBS check is appropriate for the child concerned, noting that a DBS check cannot be requested for an under-16.

27.4 Children staying with host families

27.4.1 The Trust's schools may make arrangements for pupils to stay with host families, for example during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. When we do, we follow the statutory guidance to ensure hosting arrangements are as safe as possible. Where the school arranges the homestay (including via a company on the school's behalf) and could terminate the arrangement, the host adults will be engaging in regulated activity for the period of the stay, and the school will obtain an enhanced DBS certificate with children's barred list information for them.

27.4.2 Schools cannot obtain criminal record information from the Disclosure and Barring Service about adults abroad. Where pupils stay with host families abroad, we will agree with the partner schools a shared understanding of the safeguarding arrangements. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure the arrangements are sufficient to safeguard our pupils and will include ensuring pupils understand who to contact should an emergency occur, or a situation arise which makes them feel uncomfortable. We will also make parents aware of these arrangements.

27.4.3 Some overseas pupils may reside with host families during school terms, and we will work with the local authority to check that such arrangements are safe and suitable.

27.5 Private fostering arrangements

27.5.1 A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative care for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16, or under 18 if the child is disabled. By law, a parent, private foster carer or other person involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible.

27.5.2 Close relatives are defined as step-parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts (whether of full blood, half blood or by marriage). Great grandparents, great aunts, great uncles and cousins are not regarded as close relatives.

27.5.3 The law requires that the relevant local authority should be notified if anyone is looking after someone else's child for 28 days or more. The purpose of the council's involvement is to support the child and private foster family (and wherever possible the biological parent(s)) with any issues arising.

27.5.4 Where a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement, they will tell the DSL and the school will notify the local authority of the circumstances.

27.5.5 If we become aware of a child in a private fostering arrangement within Southwark or any other local authority, we will notify the relevant council's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub. See Appendix Three for current contact details.

28. Staff/pupil relationships

28.1 Staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that it is a criminal offence for them to engage in any sexual activity with a pupil under the age of 18.

28.2 We provide our staff with advice regarding their personal online activity, and we have clear rules regarding electronic communications and online contact with pupils. It is considered a serious disciplinary issue if staff breach these rules.

28.3 Our Staff Code of Conduct sets out our expectations of staff and is signed by all staff members, including trainee teachers, supply staff and volunteers as relevant.

29. Safeguarding concerns and allegations made about staff, trainee teachers, supply staff, contractors and volunteers

29.1 If a safeguarding concern or allegation is made about a member of staff, trainee teacher, supply staff, contractor or a volunteer, or relates to incidents that happened when an individual or organisation was using Trust premises for the purposes of running activities for children, our set procedures must be followed. Our safeguarding concerns and allegations made about staff, supply staff, contractors and volunteers policy and procedure can be accessed via the Trust website, and the full procedure for managing such allegations or concerns is set out in Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. Where a concern or allegation relates to a trainee teacher, we will work with the initial teacher training provider to ensure appropriate joint handling, in the same way as we would with a supply agency.

29.2 Safeguarding concerns or allegations made about staff who no longer work at the school will be reported to the police.

30. Whistleblowing if you have concerns about a colleague

30.1 It is important that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about a colleague's practice. All such concerns should be reported to the headteacher, unless the complaint is about the headteacher, in which case the concern should be reported to the Trust CEO.

30.2 Staff may also report their concerns directly to children's social care or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action.

30.3 The Trust's whistleblowing policy allows staff to raise concerns or make allegations and for an appropriate enquiry to take place.

31. Staff and governor/trustee training

31.1 **All** staff must read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 in full each September.

31.2 Our staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, which will also include training on online safety and the Prevent Duty. In addition, all staff receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates to ensure they are up to date and empowered to provide exceptional safeguarding to our pupils.

31.3 New staff receive training during their induction which covers this Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and our staff code of conduct. They are also briefed on how to report and record concerns and information about our Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy DSLs.

31.4 Volunteers will receive a briefing during their induction on this policy, the staff code of conduct and details of how to report concerns and will be made aware of whether their role places them in regulated activity (see Section 32).

31.5 Staff induction will also ensure that they understand the school's behaviour policy and are aware of the Trust whistleblowing policy and procedure.

31.6 Our governors/trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction, which equips them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge and to test and assure themselves that there is an effective whole Trust approach to safeguarding. This training is updated at least annually.

31.7 Our safeguarding trustee receives additional training to empower them to support and challenge the Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead and support the delivery of high-quality safeguarding across the Trust.

31.8 Our safeguarding link governor receives additional training to empower them to support and challenge the school Designated Safeguarding Lead and support the delivery of high-quality safeguarding in the school.

31.9 At least one member of any recruitment interview panel (for staff or governance volunteers) is required to have completed up-to-date safer recruitment training within the past two years.

32. Safer recruitment

32.1 The Trust board and the Trust executive team are responsible for ensuring we follow recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might harm children. When doing so we check and verify the applicant's identity, qualifications and work history in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the local safeguarding partner arrangements.

32.2 All relevant staff (involved in early years settings and/or before or after school care for children under eight) are made aware of the disqualification from childcare guidance and their obligations to disclose to us relevant information that could lead to disqualification.

32.3 Volunteers

- Any volunteer who will be teaching, training, instructing or supervising children frequently, on more than 3 days in a 30-day period, or overnight, is in regulated activity and requires an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information before starting, regardless of whether another checked adult is supervising them
- Where a volunteer meets this threshold across more than one setting, the Trust will coordinate with the other setting(s) to agree who obtains the check, and the volunteer will supply that information to each setting
- Volunteers may join the DBS Update Service (free for volunteers) to allow the portability of a check across settings
- For volunteers who fall outside regulated activity, the school will complete and record a written risk assessment considering the nature of the role, what is known about the volunteer, and whether a lower level of DBS check (or none) is appropriate. No unchecked volunteer will be left unsupervised or permitted to work in regulated activity

- Existing volunteers who are newly brought into regulated activity as a result of the Crime and Policing Act 2026 will have their children's barred list status checked (via a standalone barred list check or a full enhanced DBS check with barred list information) ahead of 1 September 2026

32.4 We check the identity of all contractors working on site and request DBS checks where required by Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised during the school day.

32.5 When using supply staff, we will obtain written confirmation from supply agencies or third-party organisations that the staff they provide have been appropriately checked and are suitable to work with children. This will include staff who are providing education on the school's behalf via online delivery.

32.6 Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained confirming their suitability to work with children. Where a concern or allegation is later raised about a trainee teacher, this will be handled jointly with the training provider in the same way as for supply staff (see Section 29).

32.7 The Trust maintains the single central record of recruitment checks undertaken in each of our schools, including the volunteer checks described above. All staff involved in recruitment must be aware of the Trust recruitment policy and procedures.

33. Site security

33.1 Visitors are asked to sign in at the school reception and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. If visitors have undergone the appropriate checks, they can be provided with unescorted access to the school site. Visitors who have not undergone the required checks will be escorted at all times.

33.2 New staff and volunteers receive a briefing during their induction which covers this Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and our staff behaviour policy, how to report and record concerns, and information about our Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy DSLs.

33.3 Single-sex toilets, changing rooms and overnight accommodation

Our schools must not allow a child access to toilets designated for the opposite biological sex (from age 8) or changing rooms/showers designated for the opposite biological sex (from age 11), and must not allow children to share boarding or overnight accommodation with a child of the opposite biological sex. This applies regardless of any decision made about supporting a child's social transition (see Section 8).

Where a school provides mixed-sex toilets in addition to single-sex toilets, it will assess the safeguarding risks and plan accordingly — for example, mixed-sex toilets should be in individual, lockable rooms that open directly onto a public area such as a corridor. Where a child does not wish to use the facility for their biological sex, the school will consider a suitable alternative (such as a self-contained, lockable individual facility, or access at a different time) without compromising single-sex provision for other children, and will keep a clear record of the arrangement, communicate it appropriately, and review it regularly.

Appendix One — Four categories of abuse

It is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead. It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns.

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

1. Physical abuse

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

Indicators of physical abuse

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, bites, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- an injury that is not consistent with the account given
- symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning
- inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance
- violence or aggression towards others including bullying
- isolation from peers

2. Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling or name-calling, as well as not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Indicators of emotional abuse

- the child consistently describes him/herself in negative ways
- over-reaction to mistakes
- delayed physical, mental or emotional development
- inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies
- self-harm
- drug or solvent abuse
- running away
- appetite disorders – anorexia nervosa, bulimia
- soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis

3. Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Indicators of sexual abuse

- sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge
- aggressive behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation
- reluctance to undress for PE or swimming
- anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching
- bruises or scratches in the genital area
- reluctance to go home
- refusal to communicate
- depression or withdrawal
- isolation from peer group
- eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia
- self-harm
- substance abuse
- acquiring gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends'

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

Indicators of neglect

- constant hunger or stealing, scavenging and/or hoarding food
- frequent tiredness
- frequently dirty or unkempt
- poor attendance or often late
- poor concentration
- illnesses or injuries that are left untreated
- failure to achieve developmental milestones or to develop intellectually or socially
- responsibility for activity that is not age appropriate, such as cooking, ironing, caring for siblings
- the child is left at home alone or with inappropriate carers

Appendix Two — Related safeguarding policies

- Acceptable Use of Technology Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour / Positive Discipline Policy
- Child-on-Child Abuse Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices
- Grievance and Disciplinary Policies
- Intimate Care Policy
- Mobile and Remote Working Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Photography and Images Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Restrictive Interventions Policy
- Safeguarding Concerns and Allegations Made About Staff, Trainee Teachers, Supply Staff, Contractors and Volunteers Policy
- SEND Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Trust Records Retention and Destruction Policy
- Trust Self-Harm Toolkit
- Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure

Appendix Three: Safeguarding contacts

The Charter Schools Educational Trust		
Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Cassie Buchanan (CEO)	cbuchanan@tcset.org.uk
Chair of Trustees	Jonathan Slater	chair@tcset.org.uk
Trustee Responsible for Safeguarding	Karen Robinson	krobinson@tcset.org.uk
Trust DSL - Primary	Lucy Ellis	lellis@tcset.org.uk
Trust DSL - Secondary	Gary Phillips	gphillips@tcset.org.uk
School Designated Safeguarding Leads		
Charter School North Dulwich	Anna Pitts	apitts@charternorthdulwich.org.uk
Charter School East Dulwich	Carolyn Ankrah	cankrah@chartereastdulwich.org.uk
Charter School Bermondsey	Patrick Haverty	phaverty@charterbermondsey.org.uk
Charles Dickens Primary School	Michael Eggleton	meggleton@charlesdickens.southwark.sch.uk
The Belham Primary School	Ally Sprakes	asprakes.210@lqflmail.org
Dulwich Hamlet Junior School	Claire Purcell	cpurcell5.210@lqfl.org.uk
Lyndhurst Primary School	Tom Turnham	tturnham@lyndhurst.southwark.sch.uk
Loughborough Primary School	Graziella Williams	gwilliams@loughboroughprimarylambeth.org.uk
Streatham Wells Primary School	Sarah Wordlaw	swordlaw@streathamwells.org.uk
Local Authority Safeguarding Contacts		
Southwark Safeguarding - MASH	020 7525 1921 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) 020 7525 5000 (out of hours) mash@southwark.gov.uk	
Southwark Schools Safeguarding Coordinator	Apo ÇAĞIRICI	020 7525 2715/07946 453527 Apo.Cagirici@southwark.gov.uk
Southwark Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Eva Simcock	020 7525 0689 Eva.Simcock@southwark.gov.uk
Southwark Children Safeguarding Partnership		www.safeguarding.southwark.gov.uk sscp@southwark.gov.uk
Lambeth Safeguarding	Lambeth Integrated Referral Hub Senior safeguarding manager: Deborah Carter	020 7926 3100 (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm) 020 7926 5555 (after office hours) helpandprotection@lambeth.gov.uk DCarter@lambeth.gov.uk 07935 602437
Lambeth Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Edward Snelgar LADO@lambeth.gov.uk	020 7926 4679
Lambeth Children Safeguarding Partnership	www.lambethsaferchildren.org.uk	saferchildren@lambeth.gov.uk
Lewisham Safeguarding	mashagency@lewisham.gov.uk	020 8314 6660
Lewisham Children Safeguarding Partnership	www.safeguardinglewisham.org.uk/lscp	safeguardingpartnership@lewisham.gov.uk
Bromley Safeguarding - MASH	mash@bromley.gov.uk	020 8461 7373
Bromley Children Safeguarding Partnership	www.bromleysafeguarding.org	BSCP@bromley.gov.uk
Police	Southwark Safer Schools Team	020 232 7273

Appendix Four: Mental health services and support: England and UK

These services are available UK-wide. All are free to the young person or family at the point of use.

For children and young people in crisis

Service	Contact	Notes
Childline	0800 1111 childline.org.uk	Free, 24/7. For under-19s. Phone, online chat and email.
Samaritans	116 123 samaritans.org	Free, 24/7. All ages. Listening service.
Papyrus HOPELINE247	0800 068 4141 Text 88247 Professionals: pat@papyrus-uk.org papyrus-uk.org	Free, 24/7. For people under 35 at risk of suicide, and anyone concerned about a young person.
Shout	Text SHOUT to 85258 giveusashout.org	Free, 24/7, UK-wide text support. Good for young people who find phone calls difficult.
NHS 111 option 2	111 (then press 2) 111.nhs.uk	24/7 mental health triage. Connects to local mental health crisis services.
Emergency services	999	For immediate risk to life.

Specialist information and support

Service	Contact	Notes
YoungMinds	Parents' helpline: 0808 802 5544 (Mon-Fri, 9.30am-4pm) youngminds.org.uk	Information for young people, parents and professionals. Extensive self-harm content.
Harmless	info@harmless.org.uk harmless.org.uk	User-led self-harm charity. Support, training, information.
LifeSIGNS	lifesigns.org.uk	User-led self-harm information and peer support online.
Self-Injury Support	0808 800 8088 (Tue/Wed 7-9.30pm) selfinjurysupport.org.uk	Women and girls. Self-harm and self-injury.
Anna Freud Centre	annafreud.org	Evidence-based mental health resources for schools, families and young people.
Charlie Waller Trust	charliewaller.org	Training, resources and helplines for young people's mental health and for schools.
Mind	0300 123 3393 (Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm) mind.org.uk	Information, local branches, community support.
The Mix	0808 808 4994 (4pm-11pm) themix.org.uk	Information and crisis messenger for under-25s.

Statutory and safeguarding

Service	Contact	Notes
NSPCC Helpline	0808 800 5000 Or help@nspcc.org.uk	For adults concerned about a child.
CEOP	ceop.police.uk	Online child sexual abuse and exploitation reporting.
Report Harmful Content	reportharmfulcontent.com	Online Safety Tech body for reporting harmful online content.

Local directory: London-wide

Services and partnerships that cover both Lambeth and Southwark, and in most cases wider London.

Crisis services

Service	Contact	Notes
SLaM CAMHS Crisis Line	020 3228 5980	9am-11pm, seven days. Covers Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, Croydon. For under-18s in mental health crisis.
South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust	020 3228 6000 slam.nhs.uk	Main trust switchboard. Access CAMHS services for the four boroughs.
NHS 111 (London)	111 option 2	London-wide mental health crisis triage.

Digital support and counselling

Service	Contact	Notes
Kooth	kooth.com	Free, online, out-of-hours counselling for 10-25s. Commissioned in both Lambeth and Southwark. Open evenings and weekends until 10pm.
Qwell (for parents)	qwell.io	Free online counselling and community for adults. Supports parents of children in crisis.
Good Thinking	good-thinking.uk	Pan-London wellbeing resource funded by the NHS.

Safeguarding partnerships

Service	Contact	Notes
London Safeguarding Children Procedures	london safeguarding children procedures .co.uk	8th edition, March 2026 update. The single source for pan-London practice.
London's Violence Reduction Unit	london.gov.uk/vru	Early help, targeted work on violence and vulnerability.

Training and learning

Service	Contact	Notes
Charlie Waller Trust (London)	charliewaller.org	Free mental health training for education professionals.
Anna Freud in Schools	annafreud.org/schools-in-mind	Programme and networks for London schools.
MindEd (HEE)	minded.org.uk	Free e-learning. Modules on self-harm for educators.

Local directory: Lambeth Safeguarding

Service	Contact	Notes
Lambeth MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub)	020 7926 3100 helpandprotection@lambeth.gov.uk	Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm. Safeguarding referrals and advice.
Lambeth Emergency Duty Team	020 7926 5555	Out of hours and weekends.
Lambeth LADO	020 7926 4679 lado@lambeth.gov.uk	Allegations against professionals.
Lambeth Safeguarding Children Partnership	lambethsaferchildren.org.uk	Local procedures, training, learning reviews.

CAMHS and mental health

Service	Contact	Notes
Lambeth CAMHS Single Point of Access (SPA)	0800 090 2456 LambethSPAReferrals@slam.nhs.uk	Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm. All CAMHS referrals. Schools can self-refer with parent/carer consent.
Lambeth Mental Health Support Team (MHST)	020 3228 7370 lambethcamhsreferrals@slam.nhs.uk	School-based. For mild-to-moderate mental health difficulties in schools that are part of the MHST cohort.
Lambeth Early Help	020 7926 2985 earlyhelp@lambeth.gov.uk	For families below the Children's Social Care threshold but needing targeted support.
SLaM CAMHS Crisis Line	020 3228 5980	9am-11pm. Out of hours: NHS 111 option 2.

Early help and community support

Service	Contact	Notes
Lambeth Family Hubs	lambeth.gov.uk/family-hubs	Walk-in and booked support for families. Parenting, early years, wellbeing.
Young Lambeth Cooperative	younglambeth.org	Youth services and activities commissioned across the borough.
Black Thrive Lambeth	blackthrive.org	Mental health equity partnership focused on Black communities in Lambeth.
Lambeth Community Pharmacy (First Contact)	Via local pharmacies	Can signpost to GPs and mental health services.

Education

Service	Contact	Notes
Lambeth Education Welfare Service	attendance@lambeth.gov.uk	Attendance and statutory education matters.
Lambeth Educational Psychology Service	eps@lambeth.gov.uk	Consultation, critical incident response, training.
Lambeth SENDIASS	020 7926 3545 sendiass@lambeth.gov.uk	Independent advice for parents of pupils with SEND.

Local directory: Southwark Safeguarding

Service	Contact	Notes
Southwark MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub)	020 7525 1921 MASH@southwark.gov.uk	Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm. Safeguarding referrals and advice.
Southwark Emergency Duty Team	020 7525 5000	Out of hours and weekends.
Southwark LADO	020 7525 0689 lado@southwark.gov.uk	Allegations against professionals.
Southwark Safeguarding Children Partnership	safeguarding.southwark.gov.uk	Local procedures, training, learning reviews.

CAMHS and mental health

Service	Contact	Notes
Southwark CAMHS	020 3228 7370 southwarkcamhsreferrals@slam.nhs.uk	Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm. All CAMHS referrals. Schools refer with parent/carer consent.
Southwark Mental Health Support Team (MHST)	Via CAMHS referral route above	School-based. For mild-to-moderate mental health difficulties in schools that are part of the MHST cohort.
Southwark Early Help	020 7525 1921 (via MASH)	For families below the Children's Social Care threshold but needing targeted support.
SLaM CAMHS Crisis Line	020 3228 5980	9am-11pm. Out of hours: NHS 111 option 2.

Early help and community support

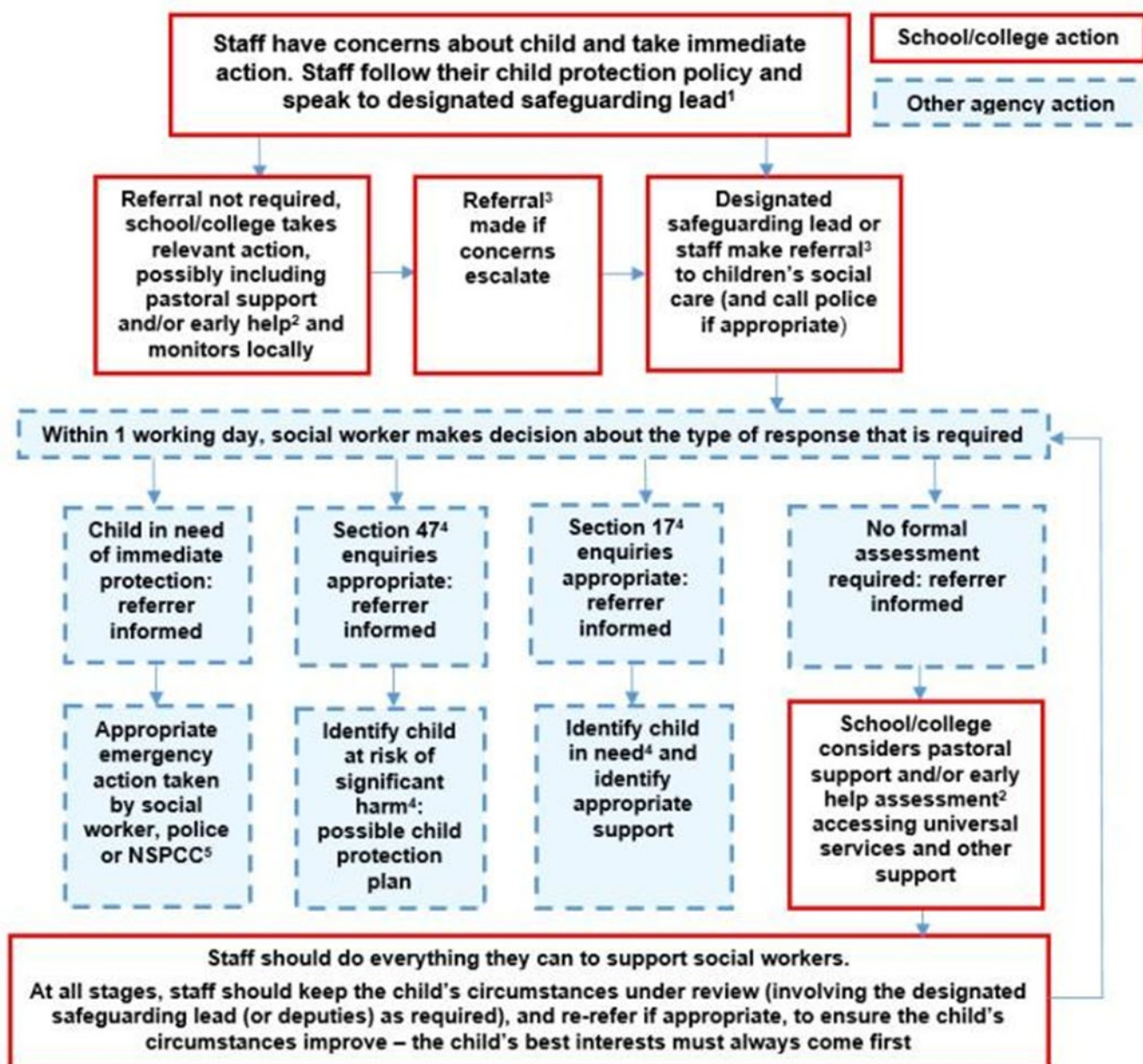
Service	Contact	Notes
Southwark Family Hubs	southwark.gov.uk/family-hubs	Walk-in and booked support for families. Parenting, early years, wellbeing.
Southwark Young Advisors	southwarkyoungadvisors.org	Peer-led youth engagement and early help.
The Nest (Southwark) - young people's wellbeing	thenestsouthwark.org.uk	For 11-25s with emerging mental health needs.
Blackfriars Settlement / Time and Talents / Cambridge House	Various	Community organisations delivering early help, family support and youth work in Southwark.

Education

Service	Contact	Notes
Southwark Education Welfare Service	educationwelfare@southwark.gov.uk	Attendance and statutory education matters.
Southwark Educational Psychology Service	eps@southwark.gov.uk	Consultation, critical incident response, training.
Southwark SENDIASS	020 7525 3104 sendiass@southwark.gov.uk	Independent advice for parents of pupils with SEND.

Appendix FIVE — Child protection procedures flow chart

Actions where there are concerns about a child



Appendix SIX — Sources of further information and guidance

(This appendix should be reviewed and each link checked/updated at the point of publication; the categories below are unchanged from the 2025-26 policy save for the additions marked NEW.)

Abuse

- Supporting practice in tackling child sexual abuse – [CSA Centre of Expertise](#)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – [DfE advice](#)
- Domestic abuse: various information/guidance – [Home Office](#)
- Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy – [Home Office policy paper](#)

Online safety and Generative AI (NEW references)

- Generative artificial intelligence in education – [DfE guidance on safety considerations and legal responsibilities for schools choosing to use Generative AI](#)
- Generative AI: product safety expectations – [DfE guidance on how filtering and monitoring requirements apply to Generative AI in education](#)
- Understanding and responding to AI-generated child sexual abuse material – [online safety advice](#)
- Financially motivated sexual extortion – [online safety advice](#)
- [UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings – updated to reflect AI-generated imagery](#)

Gender questioning children (NEW — now within KCSIE itself)

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Part One, paragraphs 251–282 — [the primary statutory reference, superseding the 2023 standalone draft guidance](#)

Serious violence

- Serious violence strategy – [Home Office](#)
- Youth Endowment Fund – [evidence on preventing serious violence](#)
- Tackling violence against women and girls strategy – [Home Office](#)

Sexual violence, harassment and harmful sexual behaviour

- [Barnardo's](#), [Lucy Faithfull Foundation](#), [Marie Collins Foundation](#), [NSPCC](#), [Rape Crisis](#), [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)
- Contextual Safeguarding Network – [Beyond Referrals \(Schools\) self-assessment toolkit](#)