



CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

Who is this policy for?	All staff including admin, volunteers, parents and others
Date of this review:	August 2026
Date of next review:	August 2027
Who is responsible for monitoring and evaluating this policy?	Headteacher
Governor Review	August 2026

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Side by Side policies: Allegations made against - Concerns raised in relation to teachers and all staff, Allegations made against other pupils, Anti-Bullying Policy, Attendance Policy, Children Missing Education Policy, Data Protection Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Manual Handling Policy, SEN Disability Access Plan, Special Educational Needs Policy, Physical Contact and Intimate Care Policy, Retention Policy, Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy, Safety of Children and Adults on Educational Visits, Online Safety Policy, Sickness, First Aid and Emergencies Policy, Uncollected Child Policy, Restrictive Interventions Policy and Mobile Phone Policy

The aims of this policy are:

- To give staff clear guidelines as to how to recognise signs of potential abuse
- Staff must remain vigilant and have the attitude of “It could happen here” with respect to safeguarding issues.
- To explain our procedure for dealing with disclosures of abuse
- To explain our procedure for following up and reporting concerns about children
- To ensure staff are reminded of their specific responsibilities with respect to the Prevent Strategy, radicalisation, FGM, exploitation and children missing from education.
- Learning disabled children are statistically more likely to be abused. Staff to be fully aware of this, particularly in our setting at Side by Side.
- To ensure on-line safety is monitored and maintained

Children, young persons or vulnerable adults with disabilities have exactly the same human rights to be safe from abuse and neglect, be protected from harm and achieve the same outcomes as non-disabled children. Thus those with disabilities require greater staff vigilance.

Introduction

This policy has been updated and takes into account the “Keeping Children Safe in Education” (KCSIE) 2026, which comes into force on 1 September 2026”. Early Years Inspection Handbook 2025, Information Sharing: Safeguarding (2025). Equalities Act 2010 and relevant updates, The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) – (for further details, see appendices), The Children and Social Work Act 2017 as well as The Care Act 2014 and Statutory Guidance issued under the Act. The Care Act 2014, which came into force on 1st April 2015, is the most significant legislation on care and support in England. The Care Act promotes the wellbeing of individuals, and is underpinned by the principle that professionals must always recognise that each person’s needs are different and respond accordingly. The statutory guidance for this setting falls within the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. What to do if you are Worried a child is being Abused – a Guide for Practitioners (March 2015). Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2026).

The purpose of the Safeguarding Policy at SBS is to ensure that every child in our school is safe and protected. This policy will give clear direction to staff, volunteers, visitors and parents about expected behaviour and responsibilities when managing safeguarding concerns.

Our school fully recognises its responsibilities to protect children from harm, and to support and promote their welfare. The key elements of our policy are prevention, protection and support.

Whilst many aspects of this policy are relevant whether the student is a child, young person or vulnerable adult, for those who fall into the category of ‘vulnerable adult’, we will ensure that all relevant policies are adhered to, we are aware of the risks and the appropriate agencies are contacted, which may be different to those of children’s services.

DEFINITIONS

Children:- As in the Children’s Acts 1989 and 2004 a child is anyone who has not yet reached his/her 18th birthday.

Young Person:- A young person is aged between 16 and 18

Vulnerable Adult:- The Department of Health defines a vulnerable adult as a person aged 18 or over who may need community care services because of a disability (mental or other), age, or illness. A person is also considered vulnerable if they are unable to look after themselves, protect themselves from harm or exploitation or are unable to report abuse.

Scope of the Policy

- Whilst this policy talks about our volunteers, staff, Trustees and visitors, to make a real difference, safeguarding has to be everyone’s responsibility. We are therefore committed to passing the concepts contained in this document, where appropriate, to the wider community. We have also ensured that everyone who works with adults or is in a position of trust is checked through our safer recruitment procedure and this is reflected in our everyday practices.

- This document sets out Side by Side's policy on safeguarding. It gives details of safeguarding definitions and types of abuse. The practices and procedures that must be followed are in the appendix.
- Whilst this document is specifically designed to set out our policy in relation to safeguarding we will, where individuals do not fall within this policy but are in difficulty, point them in the direction of other services which we hope will be able to provide the help they require. Further, we recognise at all times that adults, with capacity, have the right to make their own choices. Volunteers, staff and Trustees will always proceed with that in mind.

This document applies to all Side by Side staff, including supply staff and trainee teachers, trustees, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

We will endeavour to safeguard children, young persons and vulnerable adults by:

- Valuing them, listening to them and respecting them.
- Involving them in decisions which affect them.
- Making sure all staff and volunteers are aware of and committed to our Safeguarding Policy.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies that need to know and involving children and their parents/carers appropriately.
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made – Refer to the Side by Side Safer Recruitment Policy.
 - Qualified Teachers will be checked against prohibition to work
 - Staff in senior management positions or a governor/trustee of the school will be checked against the Section 128 list.
- Adopting a code of conduct for all staff and volunteers to follow.
- Providing effective management through induction, support and training.
- Ensuring staff and volunteers understand about 'whistle blowing'.
- Child on Child abuse is identified this is dealt with accordingly.
- Dealing appropriately with allegations / concerns about staff or volunteers, in accordance with government guidance.
- Ensuring that safeguarding training also addresses disabled children's needs and experiences.

Where Side by Side places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school remains responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil. The school will satisfy itself that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place, maintain appropriate communication with the provider and continue to monitor the pupil's welfare, attendance and progress. Any safeguarding concerns arising during the placement will be managed in accordance with this policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Chair of Trustees is currently the named Trustee to be responsible for safeguarding at board level. The Chair will scrutinise and support the safeguarding function within the school including filtering and monitoring. In addition, there is a safeguarding sub-committee that meets to ensure all aspects of safeguarding are supported within the school.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mr Gerald Lebrett (Headteacher), where he is not available the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs Mandel – Nursery Manager) for students up to 18 years of age, or Mrs Junger – Head of SEN for students above 18 years of age, Crèche (Mrs Prizant – Crèche Manager) should also be informed.

The school will ensure that robust safeguarding cover arrangements are in place whenever the Designated Safeguarding Lead is unavailable due to illness, leave or other circumstances. Arrangements will ensure that safeguarding concerns continue to be received, monitored and acted

upon without delay, including through appropriate access by the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads to safeguarding records and reporting systems.

All senior leaders at Side by Side have the responsibility to ensure safeguarding policy and practices are in place and working effectively.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead:

- Refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating authorities
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise within the educational establishment
- Recognise how to identify signs of abuse and when it is appropriate to make a referral
- Have a working knowledge of the relevant local safeguarding partnership arrangements and local procedures for the local authorities in which Side by Side pupils reside and be able to attend and contribute to these sessions.
- Ensure that there are links to partner organisation within the statutory and voluntary sectors as required.
- Ensure that all staff have access to and understand the school's Safeguarding Policies
- Ensure that all staff have induction training.
- Keep detailed, accurate and secure written records and /or concerns
- Ensure that there are clear records including the rationale for making decisions.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses at least every two years
- Ensure that the Safeguarding Policy is updated and reviewed at least annually.
- Ensure that parents are made aware of the Safeguarding Policy which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the establishment in this to avoid conflict later
- Ensure that children feel confident to approach the DSL and/or Deputy DSL if they are worried or feel unsafe.
- Ensure that off-site services have appropriate safeguarding policies and process in place when these facilities are used.

The Guidance broadly describes the real life meaning of these six principles as follows:

PRINCIPLE	HOW THE PRINCIPLE MAY SOUND IN PRACTICE
Empowerment People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and with informed consent.	"I am asked what I want the outcomes to be from the safeguarding process and these directly inform what happens."
Prevention It is better to take action before harm occurs.	"I receive clear and simple information about what abuse is, how to recognise the signs and what I can do to seek help."
Proportionality The least intrusive response should be identified and must be appropriate to the risk presented.	"I am sure that the professionals will work in my interest and they will only get involved as much as needed."
Protection Support and representation for those in greatest need.	"I get help and support to report abuse and neglect. I get help so that I am able to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want."
Partnership Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.	"I know that staff treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary. I am confident that professionals will work together and with me to get the best result for me."

Accountability Being accountable and transparent about the safeguarding practices that are used to support people.	“I understand the role of everyone involved in my life and so do they.”
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Training

When staff join our school they will be informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. Our introduction procedure will inform staff about signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, how to record information, and who to pass information on to. All staff, including those who do not work directly with children, will be provided with and expected to read Part One of the current Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance. Safeguarding and child protection updates will be provided regularly and at least annually. They will also be provided with a copy of our school’s Safeguarding Policy and will be told who the designated safeguarding lead and deputy are. Supply Staff has the same responsibilities with all aspects of safeguarding. All regular visitors and volunteers to our school will be made aware of the policy is kept and will be given a set of Safeguarding Procedures.

Trustees will also receive appropriate training when they join the organisation and have regular updates. This will enable them to fulfil their statutory duties of monitoring and scrutiny.

Partnership with Parents

Side by Side is committed to keeping children safe from harm and having their welfare promoted. We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We respect parents’ right to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission **or** in the situation where we have a legal duty to share information in in order to protect and safeguard a child.

Side by Side will share with parents any concerns we may have about their child unless to do so may place a child at risk of harm. We encourage parents to discuss any concerns they may have with their child’s Class Teacher or Head Teacher.

Side by Side has legal responsibility to refer child protection incidents to Hackney Social Services (or the social work team in the Local Authority in which the child is resident) in those cases where a judgement is made that the incident or disclosure is of a serious enough nature. Parents will always be informed if a referral is to be made, except where doing so would place the child/children at an increased risk of harm. We will work with our statutory ‘Safeguarding Partners’ to ensure all relevant teams are informed and work together to protect children including were relevant the police.

Information Sharing

Information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding. The school will share relevant information with safeguarding partners and other agencies where this is necessary and proportionate to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child. Decisions about information sharing will take account of the nature and level of risk to the child and others. Data protection legislation does not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Decisions to share, or not to share, information and the reasons for those decisions will be appropriately recorded.

Identifying Children, Young Persons and Vulnerable Adults Who May Be Suffering Significant Harm

Teachers and other adults in school are well placed to observe any physical, emotional or behavioural signs, which indicate that a child may be suffering significant harm. Relationships between staff, pupils, parents and the public which foster respect, confidence and trust can lead to disclosures of abuse, and/or school staff being alerted to concerns. SBS will be aware of the increased risk of violence occurring against women and girls (**VAWG**).

Defining abuse or neglect is complex and depends on many factors. The term “abuse” can be subject to wide interpretation. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, or it may occur where a person is persuaded to enter into a financial or intimate transaction to which they have not consented, or cannot consent to.

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple, and affect one person or more. Professionals and others should look beyond single incidents or individuals to identify patterns of harm. Repeated instances of poor care may be an indication of more serious problems and of what we describe as organisational abuse. In order to see these patterns, it is important that information is recorded and appropriately shared.

Abuse or neglect may be the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance. Exploitation can be a common theme in the experience of abuse or neglect. Whilst it is acknowledged that abuse or neglect can take different forms, the Care Act guidance identifies the following types of abuse or neglect (Refer to Side by Side Safeguarding Appendices for additional details and information):

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and modern slavery and understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside the school, inside and outside the home, and online. Safeguarding issues can overlap, and children may experience multiple forms of harm at the same time.

Harm means ill treatment or impairment of health and development, including for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another.

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

Health includes physical and mental health. The new guidance emphasises the importance of staff being aware that changes in a child’s mental health can impact on the child’s welfare as well as a possible trigger relating to safeguarding.

Ill treatment includes all forms of ill-treatment, including those which are not physical.

Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation are forms of mistreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or more rarely by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children. This can include the impact of domestic abuse including where they see, hear or experience its effects.

Physical Abuse may involve acts including hitting, shaking, throwing 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 (Munchausen’s Syndrome).

Psychological/Emotional Abuse 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 of developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's development capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Sexual/Intimate Abuse involves forcing or enticing a child, young person or adult to take part in intimate activities. These may also include non-contact activities such as exposing children to unsuitable images on the computer or internet. Grooming a child with intent to abuse in any form including on-line. Intimate abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit these offenses as can other children. ??

Financial or material abuse involves theft, fraud, internet scamming, and coercion concerning an adult's financial affairs, including issues related to wills, inheritance, or transactions, and the misuse of property or benefits.

Modern slavery encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced and compulsory labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Discriminatory abuse includes discrimination on the grounds of race, faith or religion, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation and political views, along with racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist comments or jokes, or comments and jokes based on a person's disability or any other form of harassment, slur or similar treatment

Organisational abuse is the mistreatment, abuse or neglect of an adult by a regime or individuals in a setting or service where the adult lives or that they use. Such abuse violates the person's dignity and represents a lack of respect for their human rights.

Neglect and acts of omission is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Self-neglect entails neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. It is also defined as the inability, intentional or unintentional, to maintain a socially and culturally accepted standard of self-care with the potential for serious consequences to the health and wellbeing of the individual and sometimes to their community

Prevent Duty and Radicalisation is where children are identified as being at risk of being influenced in a way that could lead to acts of terrorism and/or other forms of extremism.

FGM is where a girl has been identified at risk of FGM. FGM is abuse and is illegal in the UK irrespective of cultural and/or religious background. Culturally this is not applicable in the Jewish community.

Domestic Abuse – This is now a separate category within the statutory guidance. We are aware that domestic abuse can occur in any community and train our staff to be on the lookout for any warning signs that may manifest in pupils at Side by Side. Staff are trained to identify concerns whether as part of a pattern of incidents or a single incident. Staff should also be aware that children may cause harm to other family members, sometimes referred to as child-to-parent or caregiver abuse. Mrs Wilhelm, our Safeguarding Trainer as attended training under the JWA (Jewish Woman's Association).

Children Absent from Education and unexplained and/or persistent absences from Education – this can be an indicator of wider safeguarding issues, this could be when a child is absent for an extended period (more than 10 days) with no reason offered or parents withdraw a child from the setting and you are unaware of them moving to another setting.

Child-on-Child Abuse (including harassment and violence) All staff should recognise that children can abuse other children and that child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and the alleged perpetrator. It can take place inside or outside school and online and can include bullying, physical abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, abuse within intimate personal relationships, sharing of intimate images, upskirting and initiation or hazing-type violence and rituals. It may also involve serious physical harm or threats involving weapons.

Side by Side has a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse. This does not mean that all incidents will be treated in the same way, but that inappropriate behaviour will never be dismissed as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or an inevitable part of growing up. All concerns must be reported to the DSL and will be considered from a safeguarding perspective, taking account of the needs, vulnerabilities and safety of all children involved.

(Please read in conjunction with the school's bullying policy)

Child Criminal Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation Staff should be alert to children being exploited by individuals, organised networks or gangs for criminal, sexual or financial purposes. Exploitation may occur in person or online and may constitute modern slavery. Children may not recognise themselves as victims and may identify with, or feel loyalty towards, individuals or groups exploiting them. Staff should also recognise that children who are victims of exploitation may themselves become involved in criminal activity as a result of coercion or control. Any concerns must be reported immediately to the DSL.

Mental Health All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns, including where there is self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. Mental health difficulties may also be an indicator that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff should be alert to changes in pupils' presentation, behaviour or emotional wellbeing and report safeguarding concerns in the normal way. The school will promote positive mental wellbeing, seek to identify concerns at an early stage, provide or arrange appropriate support and, where necessary, liaise with or refer to specialist services.

Serious Violence

All staff should be aware of indicators which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. Staff should remain alert to changes in behaviour, increased absence from school, changes in friendship groups or relationships with older individuals or groups, signs of self-harm, unexplained injuries, significant changes in wellbeing, or unexplained gifts or possessions. Any concerns must be reported to the DSL.

Taking Action to ensure that children are safe at school and at home

It is not the responsibility of school staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and maintain an open mind. Accordingly, all concerns regarding the welfare of pupils will be recorded and discussed with the DSL. In an emergency or exceptional circumstances staff members can speak directly to the LA FAST team. (Staff are able to directly contact the FAST team if they feel the school hasn't take appropriate action – routes of referral are displayed in all classrooms)

- Where there are abuse allegations relating to a disabled child the safeguarding needs of any siblings living in the family home also need to be considered.
- Where there are allegations of abuse and a disabled child is the alleged perpetrator, investigations need to be handled with particular sensitivity. A duty of care should be shown to both the victim and the alleged perpetrator.
- Any enquiries planned or undertaken will be carried out with sensitivity and an informed understanding of a disabled child's needs and disability. This includes taking into consideration matters such as the venue for the interview/s; the care needs of the disabled child; whether additional equipment or facilities are required; who should conduct the interview and whether someone with specialist skills in the child's preferred method of communication needs to be involved.

Staff must immediately report:

- Any suspicion that a child is injured, marked or bruised in a way that is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play
- Any explanation given which appears inconsistent or suspicious
- Any behaviours which give rise to suspicions that a child may have suffered harm (e.g. worrying drawings or play)
- Any concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect
- Any significant changes in a child's presentation, including not attendance
- Any hint or disclosure of abuse from any person
- Any concerns regarding person(s) who may pose a risk to children (e.g. living in a household with children present).
- Any concerns regarding FGM.

This is not an exhaustive list.

Responding to disclosure:

Disclosures or information may be received from pupils, parents or other members of the public. We recognise that those who disclose such information may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak thus building trusting relationships with the children is important for staff to build. Accordingly, all staff will handle disclosures with sensitivity and **strictest confidentiality (see paragraph below)**. Staff will always act in the interest of the child.

In the event of a disclosure or a concern, staff must immediately communicate with the designated safeguarding lead. Any relevant information disclosed can never remain confidential, and staff must not give any assurances of confidentiality before information is disclosed. They must not discuss their concerns or any information received with any other member of staff. If the information received is in any way distressing and staff need support separate arrangements will be made by the school management to support the member of staff for example, accessing counselling.

Principles related to disclosure

Staff will not investigate but will, wherever possible, listen to and make the child feel confident to speak about their concerns and provide enough information to pass on to the designated person in order that she/he can make an informed decision of what to do next.

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. Anybody can make a referral if they have exhausted any avenue through school policy. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration. Concerns should always lead to help for the child.

Staff will:

- Be aware that children are not always aware or ready to tell someone they are being abused. They will be in tune with the children and bring any concerns to the DSL.
- Listen to and take seriously any disclosure or information that a child may be at risk of harm
- Try to ensure that the person disclosing does not have to speak to another member of school staff
- Clarify the information
- Try to keep questions to minimum and of an 'open' nature, e.g. 'can you tell me what happened?' rather than 'did x hit you?'
- Try not to show signs of shock, horror or surprise
- Do not express feelings or judgments regarding any persons alleged to have harmed the child
- Explain sensitively to the person that they have a responsibility to refer the information to the nominated safeguarding children's advisor
- Reassure and support the person as far as possible
- Explain that only those who 'need to know' will be told
- Explain what will happen next

Governing bodies, proprietors and school leadership will ensure the child's feelings and needs are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect individual children through ensuring there are systems in place for children to express their views and give feedback.

Action taken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Following any information raising concern, the designated person will consider together with the Head Teacher.

- Any urgent medical needs of the child
- Discussing the matter with any agencies involved with the family
- Consulting if necessary with Hackney/Haringey (or other LA where the child resides) Social Care

- Contact the relevant law enforcement agencies where appropriate
- The child's wishes

Then decide

- Wherever possible, to talk to parents, unless to do so may place a child at risk of significant harm, impede any police investigation and / or place the member of staff or others at risk
- Whether to make a child protection referral to social care because a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm and if these needs to be undertaken immediately OR
- Not to make a referral at this stage
- If further monitoring is necessary
- If it would be appropriate to undertake an assessment or make a referral to other services

All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented.

Action following a child protection referral

The designated person will:

- Make regular contact with the social worker involved to stay informed
- Ensure that all the relevant inter-agency plans are shared and kept informed to ensure joined up working and support for the child and their family.
- Wherever possible, contribute to the strategy discussion
- Provide a report for, attend and contribute to any subsequent Child Protection Conference
- If the child or children are placed on the child protection register, contribute to the Child Protection Plan and attend Core Group Meetings and Review Child Protection Conferences
- Where possible, share all reports with parents prior to meetings
- Where a child on the child protection register moves from the school or goes missing, immediately inform the key worker in social care
- The school will inform the Local Authority where a child is absent from school with no reasonable explanation.

Reporting Low-Level Concerns

It is essential that all staff members actively contribute to safeguarding by reporting any concerns regarding a child's well-being, even when these concerns are not immediately linked to significant harm. It is the responsibility of every staff member to log concerns through CPOMS, ensuring that all incidents are properly documented and can be reviewed as part of an ongoing safeguarding process.

What constitutes a Cause of Concern?

A **cause of concern** refers to any situation or observation that raises suspicions about a child's well-being but does not immediately meet the threshold for significant harm. This could include, but is not limited to:

- Changes in behaviour or unexplained injuries.
- Persistent absence from school without reasonable explanation.
- Early signs of potential neglect, abuse, or exploitation.
- Low-level concerns about staff or adult behaviour that could undermine the safety culture (e.g., inappropriate comments or boundary-crossing actions not amounting to abuse).

Concerns or Allegations About Staff and Other Adults

Any safeguarding concern or allegation that a member of staff, supply staff member, trainee teacher, volunteer or contractor has harmed a child, may have harmed a child, or may pose a risk of harm to children must be reported immediately to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will consider whether an onward referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is required. Where the concern relates to the Headteacher, it must be reported to the Chair of Trustees. **The school's separate policy for managing allegations and concerns about staff must be followed.**

Reporting Process

All causes of concern must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and documented through CPOMs, ensuring that the issue is linked to the appropriate category. If there is any uncertainty about which category best fits the concern, staff should still report the issue and link it to the category that appears most relevant.

Early Action and Prevention

Addressing low-level concerns early is vital in preventing escalation and providing appropriate support to the child involved. In many cases, concerns will be addressed through internal monitoring and by engaging additional services such as Early Help. It is critical that staff remain vigilant and share concerns in a timely and accurate manner to ensure children receive the support they need.

Early Help – All staff should be alert to children who may benefit from early help and should identify emerging needs and seek support at the earliest opportunity. Support may be available through universal services and community-based early help or, where more targeted support is required, through Family Help. Staff should be particularly alert to the needs of vulnerable children, including children with SEND, children experiencing mental health difficulties, looked-after or previously looked-after children, young carers and other children whose circumstances may increase their vulnerability. Concerns should be discussed with the DSL so that appropriate support, assessment or referral can be considered.

RECORDING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

When is recording needed?

This might include:

- Physical presentation of the child
- Marks on a child's body
- Unusual / different behaviour (including academic functioning)
- Mood changes
- Statements, stories or drawings from the child
- Information from others, including other children
- Other concerns such as parental behaviour or non-school attendance which might indicate possible abuse
- Direct disclosures or allegations made by child

What kind of information should be recorded?

We will keep a log of information for any child where there are child protection concerns. Any member of staff who has a concern about a child should make a written record which should be passed to the designated safeguarding lead. Concerns should be logged through CPOMS. When referring to the LA Safeguarding/MASH Team, use the appropriate form from the child's local authority which will be downloaded, for this purpose. These forms (usually on-line referral process) will be made available from the nominated children's LA safeguarding team.

How should notes and reports be made?

- A record should be made as soon as possible, certainly within 24 hours of the incident giving rise to concern
- Information should be recorded in factual, non-emotive, non-judgemental terms, with notes of the date, time and context. It is important that information/disclosure are not 'interpreted'
- Professional opinions are acceptable but only if there is a statement about the facts or observations upon which the opinion is based
- It is not always possible to determine at the time of making a child protection record who will eventually have access to it or when. It may be consulted months or even years after it was written. Always bear in mind that someone from another agency may need to read your record at some state in the future.
- The source of the information should be identified e.g. "Mrs Bell, a playtime supervisor, informed me that ..." Information should be factual or based on fact. Record what you saw, heard, etc. and try not to be vague or woolly e.g. 'Jenny was crying and rocking' rather than 'Jenny was upset'
- Make a note of what you have done with the information e.g. 'I consulted the head teacher and she said that she would...'

All notes and reports must contain the following:

- Date of the incident
- Date and time of the record being made
- Name and date of birth of the student[s] concerned
- A factual account of what happened. A record of what was seen and heard
- Use the child's own words where possible
- The location where the incident or disclosure took place
- A note of any other people involved e.g. As witness
- Action taken and any future plans, e.g. Monitor and review
- Any other agencies informed
- Printed name of the person making the record
- Signature of the person making the record
- Job title of the person making the recording

Do all concerns need to be reported?

Not all child protection information will result in a referral. A record should be made of any information, including hearsay and 'nagging doubts', clearly indicating whether they are fact or opinion, which give cause for concern about a child. This information should be passed to the safeguarding lead in the school so that all information can be kept together. Much of this information may not appear to be very significant on its own, but could only contribute to a wider picture when added together with additional information that may already be held.

Where will child protection records be held and who will access them?

Child protection records will be kept securely and separately away from the Childs main school records. Where a child protection concern exists relevant staff will be made aware, as such access to the information on the child protection files will be strictly on a need-to-know basis and who has access to this file will be decided on a case-by-case basis. It is very unlikely that every member of the staff needs to know details of a case. Generally speaking, the closer the everyday contact with the child, the more likely the need to know an outline of the case.

Guidance from the Learning Trust and Hackney and City Safeguarding Board stipulates that copies of child protection information will be kept by the school until the child's 24th birthday. Where the law stipulates longer relation e.g. adopted children the records will be kept as long as required by law.

Contextual Safeguarding

Contextual Safeguarding is an important aspect for schools to understand and respond to, young people and vulnerable adults' experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people and vulnerable adults form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people and vulnerable adults' experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships. Therefore, **all** professionals have the responsibility to recognise and engage with individuals and sectors who do have influence over/within extra-familial contexts, and recognise that assessment of, and intervention with, these spaces are a critical part of safeguarding practices. We will share information and work with relevant agencies should a concern be raised within the school.

Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children – Previously looked after children as they are more vulnerable and at risk. Our designated LAC representative for this group of children is the Headteacher, although in some cases especially in the nursery the Nursery Manager or SENCO would normally lead on this. In addition, the Head of the LA Virtual School will have responsibilities to ensure the children are safe and recognise that they will also review other aspects of the children's education including attendance records, progress, attainment alongside the allocated social worker and other professionals.

Use of Reasonable Force and Restrictive Interventions

There may be circumstances in which the use of reasonable force or another restrictive intervention is necessary to safeguard a child or others from harm. Any restrictive intervention must be necessary, reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances and should be used for the shortest possible period.

Side by Side will have regard to the Department for Education guidance Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools. Staff must follow the school's relevant Behaviour, Restrictive Interventions, Manual Handling and Physical Contact policies and procedures, including requirements for recording, reporting, reviewing and learning from incidents.

I.T. (INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY) ADDITIONAL SAFEGUARDING PRACTICES AND SCHOOL ETHOS

Online safety is an integral part of the school's safeguarding arrangements. Staff should be aware that online risks can be categorised into four broad areas:

- **Content** – exposure to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material, including racism, misogyny, antisemitism, self-harm or suicide content, radicalisation, extremism, extreme violence, misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories.
- **Contact** – harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications, including grooming, exploitation, peer pressure and harmful commercial interaction.
- **Conduct** – online behaviour that increases the likelihood of harm, including online bullying and making, sending or receiving explicit images, including images generated or manipulated using AI.
- **Commerce** – risks including inappropriate advertising, online gambling, phishing and financial scams.

The school recognises that developments in technology, including generative artificial intelligence, create both opportunities and safeguarding risks. The school will ensure that its use of technology and AI takes appropriate account of safeguarding, data protection, privacy and information-security requirements.

It is not acceptable to use personal mobile phones, digital cameras and any other electronic equipment on Side by Side premises to photograph children. If photos need to be taken of children as evidence of work done, for education purposes or school PR/advertising, cameras are available in each classroom. Parents need reminding not to use mobile phones in the Side by Side building.

The school operates as a mobile phone-free environment for pupils during the school day. Pupils should not have access to personal mobile phones during lessons, transitions, breaktimes or lunchtimes unless an individual exception has been agreed by the school, for example where this is necessary to meet a pupil's medical, SEND or other specific needs.

Staff may not use available computers for their own personal purposes during school hours. E.g. ordering online or searching the web or sending personal emails unrelated to their teaching. In break time, this is only permitted in staff areas, not in classrooms.

Password security is maintained by the schools IT provider. They have also set up password renewal protocol to prevent misuse, unapproved access and maintain the security of data held electronically. IT Manager at Head Office is responsible for changing internet passwords.

In addition to the requirement of "Keeping Children Safe" guidance, Side by Side's Ethos in relation to tznius is guided by the Vaad Harabonim. Where there are queries that relate to the school's safeguarding and religious ethos, the safeguarding officer will seek Halachic advice.

Any images, video clips etc. must depict children in an appropriate way and conforming to the Halochoh of tznius. Effective filters are in place to prevent staff or children from accessing Halachically prohibited, harmful and inappropriate online content. . The effectiveness of these arrangements will be reviewed at least once every academic year by the site manager responsible for filtering and monitoring, with support from the DSL and the school's IT support provider. Reviews will include appropriate checks that filtering is operating effectively on internet-connected devices and in relevant locations, and a record of these checks will be maintained. The Trustee Board will maintain appropriate oversight of the school's filtering and monitoring arrangements.

Should parents, carers or visitors wish to use personal cameras within the setting, authorisation must be obtained from the head or senior member of staff. Specific guidelines for the use of such technologies must be followed.

Refer to Side by Side Online Safety Policy for further information.

Preventing Radicalisation – Prevent Duty

This will be continuously monitored by staff and members of the Senior Management Team. Where there are any concerns these will be followed up immediately in consultation with the Local Authority and other relevant Statutory Services.

This policy links with other Side by Side policies including “Dealing with allegations against Teachers and other members of Staff” and “Child Missing Policy”. All other relevant Policies can be found in the main policy file.

The Head and Deputy Headteacher has undergone Safer Recruitment training to ensure only suitable staff are employed.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults in Education

We now have provision for Vulnerable Adults in Education at Side by Side. This group includes young people over the age of 18 years who may require additional support and protection due to various factors such as disabilities, mental health conditions, or circumstances that make them particularly susceptible to harm or abuse. Recognising the unique needs and challenges faced by these individuals, we have taken decisive steps to ensure their well-being and security within the educational environment.

To this end, we have ensured that key staff members who are directly involved in the care, support, and education of vulnerable adults have undergone training in Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults, achieving the necessary guidance to equip them with the knowledge and skills required to effectively protect and advocate for this group. The training encompasses a wide range of topics, including recognising signs of abuse or neglect, understanding the legal and ethical considerations specific to vulnerable adults, and learning strategies for creating a safe and inclusive learning environment.

Our policy mandates a proactive approach to safeguarding, insisting on vigilance, and responsive action to any concerns or incidents that may arise. We are committed to adhering to all recommended statutory areas of safeguarding, which include but are not limited to, protection from abuse and neglect, prevention of bullying and harassment, and ensuring physical and emotional well-being, providing an environment free from harm and discrimination. We pledge to maintain and continually update our practices to reflect the latest in safeguarding standards and research, ensuring that our policies are not only compliant with current legislation but also embody the best practices in the field.

The MCA 2005 was enacted to protect individuals and their freedoms. It empowers individuals to retain freedom of choice and, when choices cannot freely be made, it seeks to make sure that

decisions are taken in the individual's best interests. Any decision taken on behalf of an individual who lacks capacity to make a specific decision must be based on their wishes so far as is possible. Best interest rules must be followed when making decisions for an adult who lacks capacity.

Management of Third Parties and External People

In line with KCSIE, the school recognises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and applies this principle to all third parties who have contact with children or vulnerable adults, whether on the school premises or away from the premises. Third parties include contractors, health or social care workers, external professionals, volunteers, visitors, trainee teachers and other placement students, and any other person not directly employed by the school. Overall responsibility for safeguarding arrangements relating to third parties sits with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The school takes reasonable and proportionate steps to ensure the suitability of third parties, based on the nature of their role and level of contact with pupils. This includes obtaining appropriate assurance regarding DBS and safeguarding checks where required, providing relevant safeguarding information and reporting procedures, and ensuring clear expectations around professional conduct and boundaries. Visitors and contractors are managed through sign-in procedures, identification requirements and controlled access to pupils.

All contact between third parties and children or vulnerable adults is risk assessed and appropriately supervised. Third parties are not left alone with pupils unless this forms part of an agreed professional role and appropriate checks and oversight are in place. Where third parties work with pupils away from the school premises, such as during work experience or off-site provision, safeguarding responsibilities are clarified in advance and suitable arrangements are confirmed.

Any safeguarding concern or allegation involving a third party is reported immediately to the DSL and managed in accordance with statutory guidance and the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Where a third party is employed by an external organisation and has access to their own DSL, concerns will also be reported in line with that organisation's safeguarding procedures, as appropriate, while ensuring the school's DSL maintains oversight.

"Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.

Organisations should always promote the adult's wellbeing in their safeguarding arrangements. People have complex lives and being safe is only one of the things they want for themselves. Professionals should work with the adult to establish what being safe means to them and how that can be best achieved. Professionals and other staff should not be advocating "safety" measures that do not take account of individual well-being, as defined in Section 1 of the Care Act. "

Taken directly from the Care and Support Statutory Guidelines
Issued under The Care Act 2014 from the Department of Health and Social Care

Child Safeguarding Statement



Side by Side School

Our organisation has completed
a CHSCP Self-Assessment.



Nature / Type of Organisation and Services Provided:

Side by Side Special School is a community school offering a unique environment for all its pupils. It is located in the London Borough of Hackney primarily attracting local families, although we welcome everyone irrespective of their locality. The school is registered under the Department for Education to offer education to children from the age of 2 to 19.

Our commitment to safeguarding children:

At Side by Side, we are fully committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of every child and vulnerable adult in our care. We acknowledge our duty to protect them from harm and create an environment where they can flourish.

We will ensure that all staff are aware of their safeguarding and child protection responsibilities, equipped to identify children and young people at risk, and trained to manage concerns effectively while prioritising the welfare of children and young people. Staff and pupils alike will be encouraged to raise any issues they have with any member of our team, and we guarantee that all concerns will be treated with the utmost seriousness and confidentiality.

Recognising that some pupils may find it challenging to verbally disclose concerns, our staff will maintain a vigilant approach and demonstrate professional curiosity to offer appropriate support. There will always be a Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy DSL) available on site or reachable by phone, ensuring they possess the necessary training and understanding to manage safeguarding concerns effectively, always prioritising the welfare of children and

Risk that children might face (1)

Risk of staff/volunteers rough handling or shouting at/chastising children to the extent that it causes harm

How are we mitigating this risk? (1)

Use of following procedures/policies:

- Safer Recruitment, Complaints, Managing Behaviour,
- Staff Training and Induction
- Child Safeguarding, Reporting, Child Safeguarding Training, Vetting,
- Code of Conduct for Staff/Students/Volunteers and
- Allegation of Abuse Against

Risk that children might face (2)

Wide age range of pupils poses risks, including possible risk of older pupils harming younger ones

How are we mitigating this risk? (2)

- Risk Assessment in place
- Supervision and monitoring
- Age-appropriate grouping
- Staff training
- Individual Support Plans
- Clear policies and procedures
- Use of Child Protection and Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

Risk that children might face (3)

Visits to the school by external people or professionals pose risks to student safety

How are we mitigating this risk? (3)

- Visitor registration
- Supervised access
- Staff awareness
- Use of Security and Lockdown Policy

Risk that children might face (4)

Risk of harm from peer to peer abuse including acts of bullying, especially with students who have SEN

How are we mitigating this risk? (4)

- Behaviour plans in place
- Emotional Wellbeing support to avoid escalation of incidents

Use of:

- Anti-bullying Procedure/Policy
- Complaints Procedure/Policy
- Allegations made against other pupils Policy

Risk that children might face (5)

Administration of Medication or First Aid

How are we mitigating this risk? (5)

Use of:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Managing the Administering of Medication and PEG Policy
- Medical Needs Policy
- Sickness First Aid and Emergencies Policy

The following legislation, policies, procedures and guidance also support and inform our intention to safeguard children while they are accessing our service(s). These documents are available upon request.

- Hackney Wellbeing Framework
- London Child Protection Procedures
- Working Together to Safeguarding Children
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused
- Information Sharing Guidance for Practitioners
- Hackney Education Whistleblowing Policy
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Educational and Skills Setting Sept 2022
- Equalities Act 2010
- The MCA 2005
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2022)
- The Care Act (2014)

The final draft of this safeguarding statement has been agreed for submission by the individual with overall responsibility for the organisation. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Please confirm



Name Gerald Lebrecht

Job Title Headteacher

For queries, please contact: school@sidebyside.org.uk

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Procedures are available to the public here:

<http://www.sidebyside.org.uk/information/policies/>

LA SAFEGUARDING CONTACT INFORMATION:



Children or Young Person

Hackney Children and Families Services Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on **020 8356 5500** or email MASH@hackney.gov.uk

Vulnerable Adults

adultsafeguarding@hackney.gov.uk



Emergency Duty Team Tel: 020 8489 0000



Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on **020 8359 4066**