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Blackheath Conservatoire

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

2026-27

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Executive Summary

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

The Conservatoire's Safeguarding Policy contains information about how we keep children and vulnerable learners safe.

The Policy includes details of:

- The checks that we undertake for new recruits and existing staff, tutors and volunteers
- Our mandatory training for staff, tutors and volunteers
- Record keeping and data security
- Operational controls such as pick-up and drop-off arrangements
- Descriptions and identification of the different types of abuse
- [Making a Report](#)

Everyone has a right to be safeguarded and safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Immediate Action

If you believe a vulnerable person is in danger and imminent risk of significant harm, phone the police on 999.

To report a Safeguarding concern, there is an [online safeguarding report form](#), or you can [download a PDF](#) and email to safeguarding@conservatoire.org.uk.

Policy Statement

The Blackheath Conservatoire of Music and the Arts Ltd (the Conservatoire) in common with other organisations taking care of children, is required by law to have a written policy on Safeguarding & Child Protection.

It is important to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. We must maintain professional curiosity and act promptly on our concerns. Abuse can occur anywhere at any time.

All Conservatoire staff, tutors and volunteers have a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

The care of all our guests is integral to the work of the Conservatoire and this policy stands within the context of legislation relating to children and vulnerable adults. In addition to covering the care of all children (those under the age of 18), we include those over 18 who are deemed vulnerable or as an 'adult at risk' e.g. adults with a disability or mental health difficulties.

The Conservatoire is committed to safeguarding all children, young people and adults at risk taking part in its activities – from abuse and harm and ensuring their wellbeing. We recognise that the safety, welfare and needs of children, young people and adults at risk are paramount and that any person, irrespective of their age, disability, race, religion or belief, marital status, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or social status, has a right to protection from discrimination, victimisation and abuse. We also recognise that working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

The Conservatoire is a place where people come first. A community where volunteers and staff are given genuine opportunities to make a difference to the people they serve. It's a place where people feel that they matter to us. The Conservatoire recognises that **everyone** has the right to be safeguarded and we must **all** take responsibility to ensure it.

Objectives of the Policy

- To formalise the responsibilities of the Conservatoire and its staff, trustees, volunteers, contractors and all others working under the jurisdiction of the Conservatoire in respect of protecting and safeguarding vulnerable learners.
- To support the procedures for safer recruiting of employees, tutors and volunteers in accordance with the relevant legislation and guidance.
- To support the promotion of a safe working environment and a culture of care in which the rights of all learners, staff and tutors are protected and respected.
- To provide an overview of the legislation surrounding vulnerable learners which sets the context within which people are expected to work.

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

- valuing them, listening to them and respecting them;
- adopting safeguarding & child protection guidelines through procedures;
- recruiting staff safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made;
- ensuring that there is a Designated Safeguarding Lead with the necessary skills and training who will take the lead (with support) in dealing with all safeguarding concerns;
- responding swiftly and appropriately to all complaints and concerns about poor practice or suspected abuse;
- sharing information about safeguarding, child protection and good practice with children, parents, teachers and staff;
- sharing information about concerns with agencies that need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately;
- ensuring that all information regarding safeguarding referrals is stored securely and confidentially;
- providing effective management through supervision, support and training;
- regularly reviewing our safeguarding procedures and practices in the light of experience, to take account of legislative, social or technological changes, as required.

Responsibilities

Within the Conservatoire the persons with formal responsibility for Safeguarding are:

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Patrick Holden	Executive Director	safeguarding@conservatoire.org.uk	020 8852 0234
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Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mairéad Sheerin	Artistic Director	safeguarding@conservatoire.org.uk	020 8852 0234
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Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Dee De Bellotte	Operations Director	safeguarding@conservatoire.org.uk	020 8852 0234
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Trustee Safeguarding Lead

Emma Smillie	Trustee	board@conservatoire.org.uk	020 8852 0234
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Vulnerable Learners

For the purposes of this policy, all learners under the age of 18 are automatically deemed vulnerable. Some adults over the age of 18 may also be vulnerable.

Both groups may benefit from early help, but staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for universal services and community-based Early Help, or the targeted early help level of Family Help for a learner who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- has a mental health need
- 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 or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- has been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiple suspensions, is on a part-time timetable, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- is at risk of exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking, including criminal or sexual exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised into terrorism
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- 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 alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of honour or faith-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child

All staff should recognise that children may experience prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-based prejudice, and other forms of discrimination (Section 17 of KCSIE). Such experiences may affect a child's welfare, wellbeing, mental health, and willingness to seek help. Staff should be alert to the signs and impact of prejudice-based harm and ensure that concerns are considered within safeguarding practice where appropriate.

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This could include self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. They could also be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation (Section 47 of KCSIE).

SEND Learners and Visitors

Learners with special educational needs and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges because:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration,
- these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children,
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges risks that they do not understand that what is happening to them is abuse
- the need for intimate care or that these children are isolated from others
- that these children are more likely to be dependent on adults for care, and
- these children may have issues over cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.

LGBT Learners and Visitors

A child or young person being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender is not in itself a risk factor for harm; however, they can sometimes be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are. Schools and colleges should consider how to address vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying and take steps to prevent it, including putting appropriate sanctions in place

Gender Questioning

It is common for children to engage in activities that are less typically associated with their sex. Staff should remain aware of the potential vulnerabilities of children who are questioning their gender, including the possibility of complex mental health and psychosocial needs, for example relating to relationships with family, peers or their broader social environment, including discriminatory bullying.

For the purposes of this policy document, the above groups shall, together, be termed "vulnerable learners".

Use of “Victim” and “Perpetrator” Language

Key legislative and guidance documentation, e.g. *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, uses the terms “victim”, “perpetrator(s)” or “alleged perpetrator(s)” as these are widely recognised and understood terms.

Not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way. Staff and tutors should be prepared to use any term with which the child is most comfortable, especially when speaking in front of children.

In some cases, the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well.

Key Conservatoire Safeguarding Policies

1. The Conservatoire requires all those working with vulnerable learners to treat Safeguarding as being of paramount importance. All those working within the Conservatoire are expected to work within the framework of this Policy and Code of Practice and other related Policies (specifically the Code of Conduct and Complaints Policy).
2. Employment contracts, contracts for services and volunteer agreements will include the requirement to adhere to the Safeguarding Policy, the Online Teaching Policy, the Code of Practice and the Code of Conduct.
3. All Conservatoire staff, tutors and volunteers must read at least Part One of the most recent version of KCSIE annually:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Designated Safeguarding Lead

4. The Conservatoire designates the Executive Director to be the *Designated Safeguarding Lead* (DSL). The DSL has overall accountability for safeguarding within the organisation and, as such, oversees processes, documentation, training, reporting and evaluation. The DSL is supported by deputy officers, the Deputy Safeguarding Leads.
5. To ensure continuity of safeguarding responsibilities, the Conservatoire implements cover arrangements for periods when the DSL is unavailable due to illness, leave, or other circumstances. This includes a confidential shared mailbox to ensure that safeguarding concerns are received, monitored, and acted upon without delay. Safeguarding reports should be sent to **safeguarding@conservatoire.org.uk**.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

6. All who work for or on behalf of the Conservatoire, including volunteers aged 18+, who will be teaching or instructing children more than 3 days in any 30-day period, or overnight, will be subject to an Enhanced DBS check with Children's Barring List check in order to work at the Conservatoire.
7. Equivalent checks will be required of staff where there has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more.
8. Those who do not have unsupervised access to vulnerable learners (for example trustees) will have an enhanced DBS check and a Section 128 check only. Everyone must have a valid DBS check within the last three years, and this should be checked every three years after this. The Conservatoire will pay for DBS checks for staff, tutors, teaching assistants, holiday course tutors, volunteers and trustees.

9. During the time that a DBS check is being done, the individual concerned and their manager should ensure they do not have any unsupervised one to one contact with young people or vulnerable adults.
10. All parties have a duty to disclose any incidents that would otherwise appear on a DBS check if they occur during a period of employment or volunteering.
11. If a staff member or tutor in a regulated activity is dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns the Conservatoire will make an automatic referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Visiting Professionals and Guest Instructors

12. **Scope:** The Conservatoire frequently enriches its curriculum by inviting professional musicians, artists, and guest speakers to conduct masterclasses, workshops, or short-term demonstrations. This policy applies to all such external visitors.
13. **Vetting Requirements:**
 - a. **Vetted Visitors:** Any visiting professional who will be teaching or instructing children more than 3 days in any 30-day period, or overnight, must undergo an **Enhanced DBS check with a barred list check** through the Conservatoire prior to commencement, or provide a valid check via the DBS Update Service alongside proof of identity.
 - b. **Unvetted Visitors:** Any guest instructor who does not hold the required Enhanced DBS check for this setting is strictly classified as an "unvetted visitor".
14. **Mandatory Supervision Protocol (Unvetted Visitors):** Unvetted guest instructors are **strictly prohibited** from having unsupervised access to children. They must be accompanied, sighted, and supervised by a fully vetted, permanent member of Conservatoire staff at all times. This includes:
 - a. During instructional sessions.
 - b. Moving through hallways, waiting areas, or communal zones.
 - c. Escorting students to or from the facilities.
15. **Pre-Session Briefing:** Prior to entering any instructional space, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or senior management will brief the visiting professional on the Conservatoire's Safeguarding Policy, emergency procedures, and strict physical/digital boundaries with learners.
16. **Single Central Record (SCR):** The names, dates of visit, and specific supervision arrangements of all visiting professionals will be recorded on the Conservatoire's Single Central Record for compliance purposes.

Training

17. The Conservatoire is committed to training all staff, tutors and volunteers in Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, and the accompanying Code of Practice, as part of the induction process. All staff, tutors, volunteers and trustees must undertake safeguarding training annually – whether through the Conservatoire or another organisation.
18. The Conservatoire keeps a record to ensure all staff and volunteers complete the training at the point of employment and annually thereafter by the end of October each year.

Misogyny, Misandry, Sexist and Racist Language

19. **Zero-Tolerance Culture:** The Conservatoire operates a strict zero tolerance approach for sexism, racism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, sexual violence/harassment, derogatory behaviour or other forms of physical violence and conflict. Comments, jokes, or derogatory remarks targeting gender or race will not be tolerated under any circumstances.
20. **Rejection of "Banter":** Staff must never dismiss derogatory, sexually charged or racist comments between students as "banter", "just a laugh", or "peer group behaviour". Dismissing such actions creates an unsafe environment. Staff and tutors must challenge every instance of sexist or racist language immediately and log it as a behaviour/safeguarding concern.

Bullying

21. We know that bullying has a detrimental impact on young people's mental health and their ability to thrive at school and college. Bullying can affect a child's attainment and wellbeing. We are clear that all forms of bullying, for whatever reason, are unacceptable. We take a strong, proactive stand against all forms of bullying at the earliest opportunity to prevent it from escalating.

Contact with vulnerable learners outside the Conservatoire

22. Other than in exceptional circumstances and only with the full permission of the Executive Director, a tutor or others working within the Conservatoire must not make visits to the home of any vulnerable learner. Should such a visit be deemed necessary, then it should usually be made with another senior member of the Conservatoire in attendance. Such visits must only be made once the permission of the parent/carer/guardian of the vulnerable learner has been received in writing.
23. Staff and tutors should not give a learner a lift in a vehicle except in exceptional circumstances with another adult present.
24. There should be no direct contact with learners under the age of 18 via any method including email, text message or social media.
25. No photography or filming should be carried out without parental and Conservatoire permission. It is essential to follow the Code of Conduct on images of learners.
26. The use of mobile phones, laptops, iPads etc should be limited and no personal devices should be used to capture any images.
27. The Conservatoire has a Safeguarding Register where any disclosures from a vulnerable learner will be recorded.

E-Safety

28. There are many risks identified in the online environment which can be categorised under the following four headings:

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

Artificial Intelligence and Deepfakes

Nudes and semi-nudes, including where generated by AI - For the purposes of this guidance, the term 'making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes' refers to the creation, sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images by young people under the age of 18. The term 'images' includes all visual content, such as photographs, videos and livestreams. We use the term 'nudes' because it is the most widely understood by young people and best captures the full range of image-sharing behaviours covered in this guidance. Images may be taken by the child themselves (sometimes referred to as 'self-generated imagery') or taken or created by another person. They may also be digitally altered or wholly generated using artificial intelligence, including what are sometimes described as 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes'

29. AI and Generative Media

- a. **Permissible Use:** The Conservatoire recognizes that generative AI tools can be valuable instruments for music composition and digital art creation. However, AI tools must only be accessed via Conservatoire-approved platforms and under the direct supervision of a tutor during scheduled session times.
- b. **Prohibited Data Input:** Learners and staff are strictly prohibited from uploading personal data, identifying information, or images/audio recordings of any student, staff member, or visitor into any external AI generation tool or software.
- c. **Copyright and Intellectual Property:** All digital art and music created on Conservatoire premises must respect intellectual property rights. Tutors will monitor AI-assisted outputs to ensure they do not replicate copyrighted material or breach safety guidelines regarding explicit content.

30. Prevention of Deepfakes and Synthetic Media Abuse

- a. **Definition:** 'Deepfakes' and synthetic media refer to any image, video, or audio recording that has been digitally altered or generated using AI to convincingly misrepresent someone's likeness, voice, or actions.
- b. **Zero-Tolerance Policy:** The Conservatoire operates a zero-tolerance policy towards the creation, possession, or distribution of deepfakes or digitally manipulated media depicting any student, staff member or volunteer.
- c. **Safeguarding Escalation:** The creation or sharing of any harmful, sexualised, defamatory, or bullying synthetic media will be treated as a severe child protection issue (child-on-child abuse). Such incidents will be escalated immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and, where appropriate, reported to the police or local authority safeguarding partners.
- d. **Image Capture Restrictions:** To prevent the unauthorized gathering of source material for digital manipulation, no student or visitor may take photos, videos, or audio recordings of others without explicit permission from management and the relevant parents/carers.

Cyber Security and Network Infrastructure Safety

- a. **Network Controls:** The Conservatoire utilizes robust content filtering, firewalls, and monitoring software on all internet networks. Learners accessing the guest Wi-Fi or Conservatoire devices must agree to the Acceptable Use Agreement.
- b. **Personal Devices (BYOD):** Learners bringing personal devices (e.g., tablets for digital art, smartphones) must keep them stored away unless explicitly required for the workshop. Staff are strictly prohibited from connecting personal external drives (e.g., USBs) containing student data to unencrypted or personal networks.
- c. **Reporting Breaches:** Any suspected cyber security incident - including phishing attempts targeting student data, malware infections on tuition computers, or unauthorized network access - must be reported immediately to the Operations Manager and the DSL to protect against data loss and potential grooming vulnerabilities.

31. Online Misogyny and Digital Peer Harm

- a. **The Harm Continuum:** The Conservatoire recognizes that exposure to radicalizing online content, hostile digital subcultures (e.g., "incel" ideology), and extreme online misogyny directly impacts real-world peer behaviour.
- b. **Prohibited Digital Materials:** Learners are strictly prohibited from using the Conservatoire network or personal devices on-site to display, share, or stream audio/visual content that promotes violence against women and girls (VAWG), sexual harassment, or gender-based hostility.
- c. **Group Chat Safeguarding:** Tutors must be alert to peer dynamics in group settings (e.g., ensemble groups, shared art tables) where digital content or harmful online trends are discussed or used to socially exclude or harass other learners.

32. URL Filtering and Certifications

- a. Publicly accessible WIFI and all Conservatoire devices have appropriate URL filters. The Conservatoire WIFI networks are certified by the *Friendly Wifi* certification scheme on an annual basis.
- b. The system of URL filtering is itself monitored on a monthly basis and approved by the Board annually.

Mobiles policy

33. The Conservatoire operates a no mobile phone usage policy for under 18's during lessons. Tutors should utilise phones only when needed for taking class registers, taking notes or if integral to a class, for example when creating animations. Parents are requested not to take photos during performances or classes.

Off-Site Activities

Planning and Organisation

34. All off-site activities will be risk assessed from both a Safeguarding and Health & Safety perspective. The Conservatoire's Safeguarding and other relevant policies will apply to any off-site activities.
35. A method of communication will be in place between the offsite activity leaders and the Conservatoire main office.

Running off-site activities

36. Activity leaders should avoid all situations where they and an individual learner are unobserved.
37. When physical touching is required (e.g. when demonstrating how to hold an instrument or coaching a dance posture) permission should be sought from the child and the activity conducted openly – ideally with other staff present.
38. Comfort or reassure a distressed child or young person in an age-appropriate way, whilst maintaining clear professional boundaries.
39. Follow reporting procedures if a child or young person makes a disclosure of abuse or if anything of concern is observed.

Online and At-Home Learning

Online

40. Lessons must use an approved platform
41. Staff and students must be visible on camera unless otherwise agreed
42. Camera positioning must show an appropriate teaching environment
43. No private text chat with under 18s
44. Lessons should not be recorded without explicit consent
45. Parents/carers must have visibility of online lessons for children

At Home

This section sets out **clear, practical safeguarding procedures** for all parties involved in teaching at home: parents/carers, tutors, and administrative staff. It applies to all teaching delivered in private domestic premises.

- 40. Staff have an explicit **right to stop or leave** if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable. Safeguarding takes precedence over continuity of service
- 41. An adult must be present in the home for lessons involving under 18s
- 42. Tutors should not be asked to supervise siblings or undertake non-teaching activities
- 43. Tutors are never required to place themselves in an unsafe or uncomfortable situation
- 44. Any behaviour that makes a tutor uncomfortable must be addressed immediately
- 45. Any concern, however minor, should be reported to the DSL immediately

Operations

- 53. *Vulnerable learners use of Practice Rooms* – All learners under the age of 16 who wish to use a practice room or studio must be accompanied by an adult.
- 54. *Learners travelling unaccompanied* – Learners may travel unaccompanied to or from the Conservatoire depending on their school year:
 - Yr 5 or under - Must be accompanied by a known parent/guardian
 - Yr 6 - Can arrive or leave alone with prior written permission from a parent or guardian
 - Yr 7 - Can travel unaccompanied
- 55. *Parental accompaniment* – The majority of term time classes for under 5s require a parent in attendance. Ukulele group courses and holiday classes may expect children to attend unaccompanied.
- 56. *Court orders restricting access to learners* – If we have received notification of court orders restricting access (e.g. to estranged parents or other persons) these are noted on our system and identified on the class register. In these rare cases, tutors and their deputies will be informed to ensure learners are picked up by the appropriate adult only.
- 57. *Learners left in reception* – Learners may only be left in reception in exceptional emergencies.
- 58. *Unaccompanied learners* – In general, learners below Yr7 are not permitted to wait unaccompanied, for example between or after classes.
- 59. *Changing and Toilet Facilities* – Separate biological-sex, or single occupancy, self-contained toilet facilities are provided for all learners.
- 60. *Changing and Toilet Facilities*– Single Occupancy, self-contained toilet spaces are provided for gender questioning learners. Any arrangement made for a gender-questioning learner will be recorded, communicated to relevant staff and the learner's parent/carer as appropriate, and reviewed regularly by the DSL to ensure it continues to meet the learner's needs without compromising the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the learner or of any other learner.

Restraint & Reasonable Force

61. There are very limited circumstances when it may appropriate for staff to use 'reasonable force' to safeguard children, for example to separate children from harm. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions that might be used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a child needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is necessary for the least amount of time', the application of which depends on the circumstances.
62. The decision on whether or not to use 'reasonable force' to control or restrain a child is down to the professional judgement of the staff concerned.

Continuity and Record Keeping

63. Staff and student records will be kept for the statutory minimum period for the type of record in question. Class and tutor registers will be kept for 50 years.
64. Should the Conservatoire cease operations, these records will be transferred to the LB Lewisham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

Support Before Intervention

Any child may benefit from support before statutory intervention, including from universal services and community-based Early Help, or the targeted early help level of Family Help. All school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for additional support for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- has a mental health need
- 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 or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- has been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiple suspensions, is on a part-time timetable, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- is at risk of exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking, including criminal or sexual exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised into terrorism
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- 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 alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of honour or faith-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage, and
- is a privately fostered child.

Making an Early Help Referral

Targeted early help services delivered through Family Help are coordinated by a local authority and/or their partners to address specific concerns within a family. Examples of these include parenting support, mental health support, youth services, youth offending teams and housing and employment services. Targeted early help may be appropriate for children and families who have multiple and or complex needs. It is a voluntary approach, requiring the family's consent.

Please discuss your concern with the DSL who can make an appropriate referral.

Types of Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects.

Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse.

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap. The following behaviours and indicators can be signs that children are at risk:

- drug taking and/or alcohol misuse
- unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education
- serious violence, criminal exploitation (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation, and
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes

In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL or a deputy.

Physical Abuse

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.

Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and 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.

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

the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing, causing or inciting a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, such as acts of penetration, whether that is with part of a person's body or an object (e.g. rape or assault by penetration), and non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching over clothing.

Sexual abuse may also include noncontact 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 can take place online as well as offline, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. Children can be sexually abused within the family, an institution or a community setting, and are more likely to know their abuser than not. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their organisation's policy and procedures for dealing with it. There are specific offences for children under 13, who can never provide valid consent to sexual activity and there are specific offences which make clear that sexual activity with a child under 16 is an offence, regardless of whether they agreed to that activity.

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)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

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

Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal or sexual activity.

It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. This can be committed or facilitated by an organised network or gang, and the victim may identify as being part of this group.

CCE and CSE can affect children, both male and female, and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. This may constitute modern slavery, and further information is available in the Modern Slavery statutory guidance. In accordance with this guidance, a relevant child protection and modern slavery referral should be completed where a potential victim of CCE or CSE is identified.

They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, having a physical or learning disability, or being neurodivergent, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation where children:

- appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions which could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal and sexual exploitation
- associate with other children involved in exploitation
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- misuse alcohol and other drugs
- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education

Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help keep them in education. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:

- have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- suffer from sexually transmitted infections
- display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development
- become pregnant

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

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

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. Children who are criminally exploited should have their vulnerabilities recognised by adults and professionals (particularly older children) and should be treated as victims. It is not possible for a child to consent to be exploited, abused or trafficked, and they may not recognise that it is happening to them.

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

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing.

It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge, for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. This can be committed by an individual or an organised network and most sexual abuse is committed by those previously known to the victim.

Some children do not realise they are being exploited and may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship. As with CCE, victims are not always recognised and can be criminalised for actions they take whilst under coercion. This remains a significant concern, as professionals continue to encounter cases where children are manipulated, groomed, and exploited without fully understanding the abuse they are experiencing.

If colleagues have concerns about any learners at risk of CSE, they should ensure that their concerns are passed promptly on to the DSL so that a referral is made to the appropriate agency.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, and ability to learn.

Children and young people witnessing domestic abuse

Witnessing domestic abuse can cause serious harm and in itself constitutes child abuse. Children living in a home where domestic abuse is happening are at risk of other types of abuse too. Children can experience domestic abuse or violence in lots of different ways. They might:

- see the abuse
- hear the abuse from another room
- see a parent's injuries or distress afterwards
- be hurt by being nearby or trying to stop the abuse

Mental Health

Mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into or indicate a safeguarding concern. This could include self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide, and may also be a sign that a vulnerable learner has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to diagnose a mental health problem. Staff and tutors are, however, well placed to notice day-to-day changes in a learner's presentation. Potential warning signs include:

- significant changes in behaviour
- ongoing difficulty sleeping
- withdrawing from social situations
- not wanting to do things they usually enjoy
- physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves

Not every learner who shows these signs is at risk, but staff who notice them should raise it with the DSL (or a deputy) rather than deciding for themselves whether it constitutes a safeguarding concern.

If a learner is in immediate danger, call 999 or arrange for them to be taken to A&E. If a learner needs help urgently but it is not an emergency, staff can contact NHS 111 online or by phone and select the mental health option.

Serious violence

Serious violence is a continuing safeguarding concern. It may involve physical assault, carrying, threatening with, or using weapons, often in the context of peer conflict or bullying, and it can also be associated with criminal exploitation.

Staff should report any concerns about a child carrying or using a weapon (or expressing intent to do so) to the DSL (or a deputy). The DSL should assess the risk to both the individual pupil and others in the Conservatoire, considering wider information or concerns, and take appropriate action. Depending on the risk, they should put in place a safety and support plan, and where relevant, consider action to de-escalate peer conflict.

Schools play a key role in protecting children from violence, safeguarding victims, as well as those who may be at risk of, or are involved in committing violence (who may also be victims themselves). Staff should be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of or involved in serious violence. These risks are higher for children with disrupted education (e.g. suspensions, permanent exclusions, time in alternative provision) or a history of offending.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

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

FGM affects girls particularly from north African countries, including Egypt, Sudan, Somalia and Sierra Leone. It is illegal in the United Kingdom to allow girls to undergo Female Genital Mutilation either in this country or abroad. People guilty of allowing FGM to take place are punished by fines and up to fourteen years in prison.

Staff and tutors have a personal, legal duty to report concerns about girls at risk of FGM to the police and social services.

In cases where it is deemed likely that discussing preliminary concerns with the family may put a child(ren) at risk of any kind, we may not discuss this with parents/carers before reporting to the relevant authorities.

Forced Marriage/Honour-Based Abuse

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. 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. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices to coerce a person into marriage. Staff should be aware that family and community pressures can result in multiple perpetrators.

Preventing Radicalisation

Children may be susceptible to radicalisation into extremism or terrorism.

- Radicalisation is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.
- Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Possible indicators of radicalisation include:

- Displaying feelings of grievance and injustice
- Feeling under threat
- Searching for identity, meaning and belonging
- A desire for status amongst their peers
- Showing empathy for extremist causes
- Glorifying violence, especially other faiths or cultures
- A desire for excitement and adventure
- Displaying a need to dominate and control others
- A susceptibility to indoctrination
- Displaying a radical desire for political or moral change
- Susceptible to opportunistic involvement
- Family or friends involved in extremism
- Susceptible to being influenced or controlled by a group
- With relevant mental health issues
- Secretive behaviour
- Advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups

The Prevent Duty

The Conservatoire is subject to a duty under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) and other senior leaders in education settings should familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance. Further information is available from The Home Office:

- [Prevent awareness e-learning offers an introduction to the Prevent duty](#)
- [Prevent referrals e-learning supports staff to make Prevent referrals that are robust, informed and with good intention](#)

Child-on-Child Abuse (including harassment and violence)

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. All staff should be clear as to the Conservatoire's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in their setting it does not mean it is not happening. It may be the case that abuse is not being reported. As such it is important that when staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to their DSL (or a deputy).

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature. Examples of which are listed below. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

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

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

Note - Sexual Assault Definition

A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (NOTE - Sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault).

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)

The umbrella term 'harmful sexual behaviour' (HSB) is widely used in child protection and applies to behaviour occurring online, face-to-face, or both. HSB should always be considered within a child protection context.

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive or violent. Behaviour that is problematic, abusive or violent is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage.

When assessing HSB, the ages and developmental stage of the children involved is critical. Sexual behaviour between children may be considered harmful if there is a significant age difference, typically more than two years' difference or if one is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child may also abuse an older child, especially if they hold power over them, e.g., due to a disability or physical size.

HSB can, in some cases, progress on a continuum. Early intervention in inappropriate behaviour such as misogyny can help to prevent escalation to more serious abuse such as sexual harassment and sexual violence. Children who display HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important that they are offered appropriate support

Whilst any report of HSB, sexual harassment or sexual violence should be taken seriously, staff should be aware it is more likely girls will be the victims of sexual harassment and sexual violence and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys. Children with disabilities are also three times more likely to be abused than their peers.

Sexting

In cases of 'sexting' we follow guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) published in August 2016: 'Sexting in schools and colleges, responding to incidents, and safeguarding young people'.

Online safety in schools and colleges: Questions from the Governing Board - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Disclosures and Reporting

Where a learner makes a disclosure:

Staff may have a concern about a child / young person's wellbeing, based on:

- Something the learner/carer has told you
- Something you have noticed about the learner's behaviour, health, or appearance
- Something another professional said or did

There will be occasions when you suspect that a child may be at serious risk, but you have no 'real' evidence. The child's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre or you may have noticed other physical but inconclusive signs. In these circumstances, you should try to give the child the opportunity to talk. The signs you have noticed may be due to a variety of factors and it is fine to ask the child if they are okay or if you can help in any way.

Even if you think the concern is minor, the DSL may have more information that, together with what you know, represents a more serious worry about a child. It is never your decision alone how to respond to concerns – but it is always your responsibility to share concerns, no matter how small. Under no circumstances should you ask a vulnerable learner to remove an item of clothing to show you a bruise or other injury that is not visible.

Following a disclosure

There are four key steps to follow to help staff identify and respond appropriately to possible abuse and/or neglect.

1. Be alert
2. Question behaviours
3. Ask for help
4. Refer

It may not always be appropriate to go through all four stages sequentially, if a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, the DSL must refer to police or social care without delay, so it is important staff share any concerns in a timely manner to ensure children are safe.

If a vulnerable learner makes a disclosure, the following guidelines should be followed:

- React calmly so as not to frighten or worry the learner
- Allow the vulnerable learner to make the disclosure at their own pace and in their own way
- Avoid interruption, except to clarify what the vulnerable learner is saying
- Under no circumstances should you probe for information that is not offered voluntarily.
- Treat any allegations extremely seriously and act towards the child as if you believe what they are saying
- Tell the child that they are right to tell you
- Reassure the child that they are not to blame

- Be honest about your position, who you have to tell and why
- Tell the child what you are doing and when, and keep them up to date with what is happening
- Wherever possible, record the key elements of the disclosure

The person receiving the disclosure should not:

- Panic
- Allow their shock or distaste to show
- Probe for more information than is offered
- Speculate or make assumptions
- Make negative comments about the alleged abuser
- Approach the alleged abuser
- Interrogate the child. It is the job of the experienced police and social services to investigate the situation
- Cast doubt on what the child has told them, interrupt or change the subject
- Say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse

Staff or tutors should not agree to any request to 'keep secrets' in the course of a disclosure. They should make clear that some information may need to be shared if they believe the learner, or others, are at risk.

It is not up to staff or tutors to decide whether a vulnerable learner is suffering from harm as a result of neglect or abuse, but they must report any concerns as soon as possible to the DSL (or a deputy). It is not wrong to be concerned about the well-being of a vulnerable learner and staff and tutors should adopt a "better to be safe than sorry" approach. The important factor is how responsible adults react and respond.

Reporting of Child-on-Child Abuse (including harassment and violence) and Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)

- Equal Seriousness:** Any report of a child abusing another child—whether verbally, physically, or sexually—will be handled as a critical safeguarding priority rather than a routine discipline issue. Staff must never assume that short weekly interactions mean peer-on-peer abuse cannot occur on the premises.
- Victim-Centred & Empathetic Response:** In line with statutory expectations, any learner who discloses peer abuse or sexual harassment will be met with immediate empathy. Staff will recognize the significance of being selected as a trusted confidant and prioritize comforting and protecting the victim over administrative logging.
- Non-Consensual Image Sharing:** The non-consensual sharing of intimate images, peer "upskirting", or the digital creation of sexualized images of peers via AI is recognized as a criminal offence and a severe form of child-on-child abuse. Any suspected incidents will be escalated immediately to the DSL and reported to the police.

Reporting procedure for staff

Staff and tutors should report suspicions or disclosures of abuse to either:

- Executive Director (Designated Safeguarding Lead),
- Artistic Director (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead)
- Operations Director (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead)

It is vitally important that any disclosure made in confidence is recorded factually, accurately and as soon as possible on the day of the incident.

The Executive Director will then use appropriate reporting systems for the situation. This may be reporting the matter to social services or the police. Report forms are freely available in Reception or can be downloaded from the Conservatoire Website. Completed forms will be signed by the Chair of the Board and stored safely to ensure confidentiality.

If it is thought that returning the learner home would put them in immediate danger, advice will be sought from social services.

Making a Report

Those making a report should make their best effort to complete forms as accurately and completely as possible. They should not attempt to interpret what has been said or give their own opinion. Reports should record the learner's own words wherever possible.

Staff should make a written record **as soon as possible after an incident and always within the same day it occurred**, noting:

- The nature of the allegation
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred. Please indicate on the body map in Appendix 4.
- Witnesses to incident
- The date and time of what has occurred
- The names of people involved
- What was said or done by whom
- Any action taken by the group to gather information and refer on
- Any further action e.g. suspension of a volunteer
- Where relevant, reasons why there is no referral to a statutory agency
- Names of person reporting and to whom reported

Report Forms are available from Front of House in electronic or paper format. Alternatively, you can submit a report using this link: [Safeguarding Report Form – Fill out form](#)

The DSL or deputy will take the report forward as necessary and keep the reporting member of staff updated with any action taken.

Confidentiality in Reporting

In the event of any member of staff or tutor becoming aware of or expressing concern about a learner's welfare and well-being, the member of staff or tutor *must* immediately inform the DSL. The Conservatoire recognises that all matters relating to safeguarding vulnerable learners is confidential.

All those who perform services on behalf of the Conservatoire should only receive and/or circulate personal information about a vulnerable learner on a need-to-know basis.

All those who perform services on behalf of the Conservatoire must be aware that they cannot promise to keep any disclosure made by a vulnerable learner a secret as this may compromise the person's safety or well-being of that learner or another.

Case Escalation

If the child is in danger, or at risk of harm, then staff should contact the police immediately. Do not wait for others to do so.

All submitted Safeguarding cases will be escalated to the DSL who will review with the Trustee Lead for Safeguarding. There are clear guidelines in KCSIE for further escalation to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Following these guidelines, cases will be escalated to the LADO in the following instances:

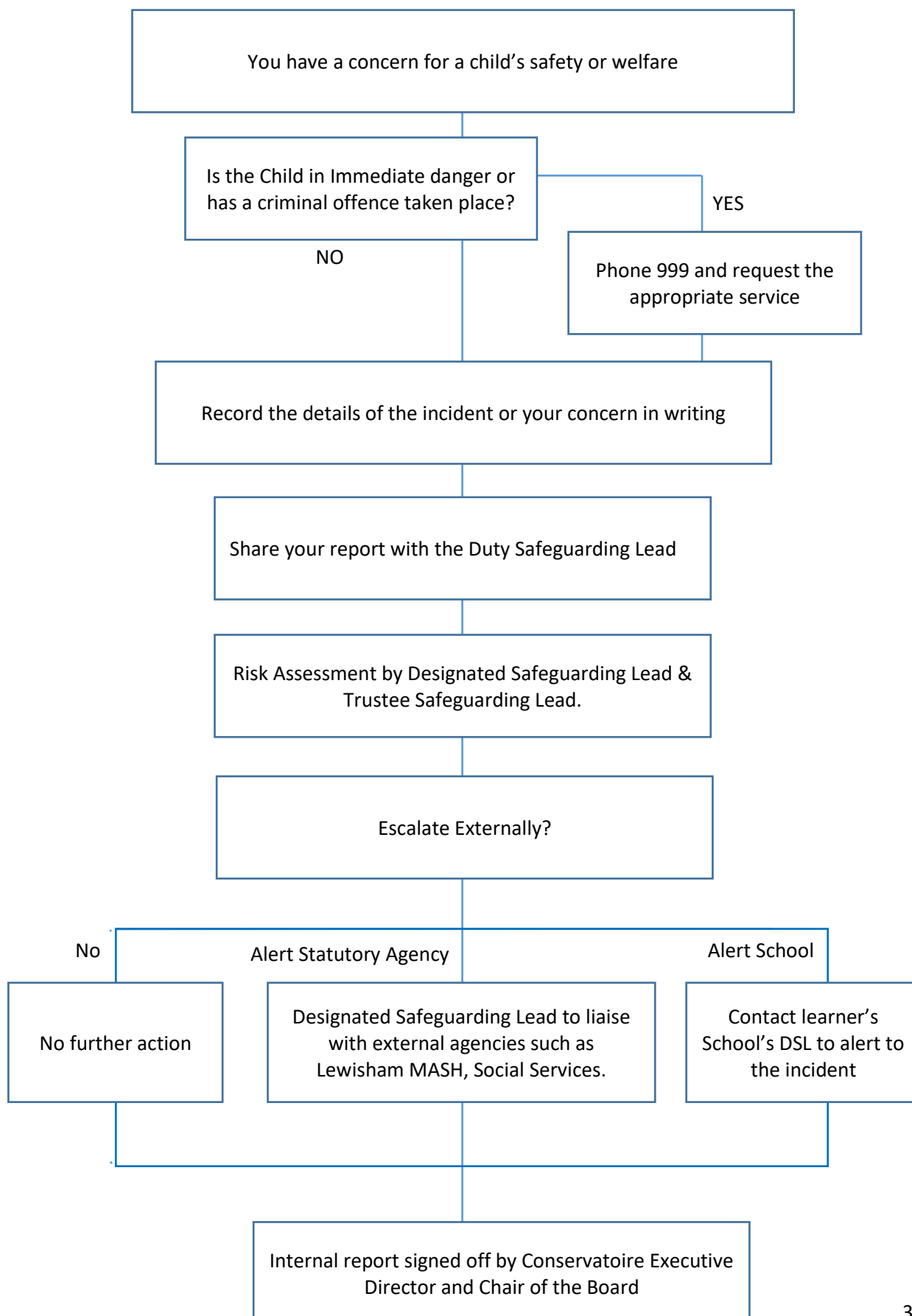
- A police investigation of a possible criminal offence
- Section 47 – Children suffering, or likely to suffer, from harm.
- Section 17 – Children in Need
- Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action
- Whether action in regards to the person making the allegation should be considered where the allegation has no foundation and may be malicious

Early Help and Targeted Family Help Pathways

- a. **Continuum of Support:** The Conservatoire recognizes that safeguarding is not limited to crisis intervention. We operate along a continuum of care that bridges universal services (our standard inclusive music and art provision) with community-based early help and targeted Family Help pathways.
- b. **Identifying Early Needs:** Because learners attend our setting for short weekly sessions, staff must remain highly vigilant to subtle changes in presentation, attendance, or behaviour. Tutors will document and report any emerging vulnerabilities—such as sudden financial distress affecting lesson fees, signs of neglect, or extreme changes in family dynamics—to the DSL.

- c. **Multi-Agency Cooperation:** Where a student is identified as requiring additional support, the DSL will collaborate with local authority Family Help teams, schools, and community networks to ensure our short-term interactions reinforce the family's broader, multi-agency support plan.

Safeguarding Reporting Flowchart



Whistle-blowing

It is difficult to expect vulnerable learners to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. Therefore, all staff, tutors, volunteers and others working within the constructs of the Conservatoire should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of a colleague. If necessary, they should speak to the DSL or a deputy.

All incidents of whistle-blowing will be treated as confidential. If, however, upon investigation it is found that allegations made via this route are malicious, the Conservatoire reserves the right to take action against the person making a malicious or mischievous allegation.

Allegations against staff, tutors, volunteers or others working within the Conservatoire

Conservatoire staff, tutors, volunteers, trustees and others, should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with any learners whether designated vulnerable or otherwise.

The Conservatoire understands that a vulnerable learner may make an allegation against a member of staff, volunteer or other. If such an allegation is made to the Conservatoire, the member of staff receiving the allegation shall immediately inform the DSL or a deputy if the DSL is not present. If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Executive Director, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of the Board, who will consult the Local Authority or the Police, as appropriate.

Following any allegation, the Executive Director, in consultation with the Chair of Trustees, shall decide whether it is appropriate to suspend the member of staff, tutor, volunteer or other, from all work and any contact with learners and staff at the Conservatoire whilst the allegation is being investigated. The investigation will be carried out by the Executive Director or Second Designated Person who will interview any relevant individuals. The Executive Director will inform the Chair of the Board of the outcome of the investigation and, where the allegations are found to be partially or wholly substantiated, shall decide what further actions should be taken against the individual concerned. If appropriate, this could include informing the Police and the Disclosure and Barring Service. The person making the allegation and any appropriate parent/carer/guardian will be informed of the outcome of the investigation.

Any member of staff, tutor, volunteer or trustee being convicted of a criminal offence of a nature which impacts on the appropriateness of them working with vulnerable learners has a legal obligation to immediately notify the Executive Director who, after consultation with the Chair of the Trustees, will consider whether the said employee, contractor or volunteer should continue their involvement with the organisation. The Conservatoire reserves the right to withdraw offers of employment with immediate effect.

If any of the following incidents should occur, you should report them immediately to the DSL or one of the deputies and make a written note of the event. Parents, guardians and carers should also be informed of the incident:

- if you accidentally hurt a learner
- if he/she seems distressed in any manner
- if a learner appears to be sexually aroused by your actions

Safer Recruitment

The Conservatoire recognises that sometimes people who want to cause harm to vulnerable learners actively seek employment that provides them access to young people. We will protect our learners from having to come into contact with people with the propensity to cause harm by thorough and rigorous scrutiny of all applications.

We make use of the Safer Recruitment Consortium and our policy is based on the *Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who work with Children in Educational Settings*.

We will:

- Verify applicant's identity
- Check applicant's qualifications/experience/employment history
- Carry out online searches for all shortlisted candidates
- Obtain professional and character references
- Check applicant's health and physical capacity to undertake the job
- Hold a face-to-face interview for all candidates with at least one member of the Conservatoire's panel who has attended safer recruitment training
- Ensure all adults in regulated activity with the children have been DBS checked and barred list checked
- Make staff aware of their contractual, legal, administrative and pastoral responsibilities. A key document to support staff's understanding in this area is KCSIE which is made available to all staff.

In recruiting and appointing staff and volunteers, the Conservatoire's Executive Director and Board have key responsibilities to create a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, adopt recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse vulnerable learners.

Advertising / Shortlisting / Interviews

We ensure that the advertisement makes clear the Conservatoire's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All job descriptions make reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All person specifications include specific reference to suitability to work with children. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that online searches will be undertaken as part of the Conservatoire's due diligence checks. We ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete. If a candidate for a teaching post is not currently employed as a tutor or teacher, we will check with the most recent employer to confirm details of their employment and their reasons for leaving.

We will always seek at least two references to obtain objective and factual information to support our appointment decisions. These will be scrutinised and any concerns need to be resolved satisfactorily, before the appointment can be confirmed.

We endeavour to seek references on all shortlisted candidates, including internal ones, before interview, so that any issues of concern they raise can be explored further with the referee, and taken up with the candidate at interview. We will always request references directly from the referee and

employers and will not rely on open references, for example in the form of 'to whom it may concern' testimonials.

On receipt, references will be checked by the Executive Director or another senior member of staff to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily. The referee should be contacted to provide further clarification as appropriate: for example if the answers are vague. They should also be compared for consistency with the information provided by the candidate on their application form. Any discrepancies will be taken up with the candidate. Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered carefully when assessing the applicant's suitability for the post. We verify that the successful applicant has all the academic or vocational qualifications claimed. We check his or her previous employment history and experience. We conduct a face-to-face interview that explores the candidate's suitability to work with children as well as his or her suitability for the post. We verify the successful applicant's identity, when they arrive for an interview.

Offer of appointment

An offer of appointment to a successful candidate, including one who has lived or worked abroad, will be conditional upon satisfactory completion of our pre-employment checks. Before new staff are appointed, we will:

- Verify a candidate's identity from current photographic ID and proof of address
- Obtain a certificate for an enhanced DBS check with a barred list information where the person will be engaging in regulated activity
- Obtain a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Check that a candidate to be employed as a tutor is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State
- Verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities

Recording DBS information

- The DBS document number and date of issue (and date of check if on the Update Service) is to be recorded under the tutor information section on the Single Central Record.
- ID documents are stored as e-copies on the Conservatoire's Sharepoint server. Scans or paper copies of the DBS are not stored long-term in any format.
- Our agency usually produces DBS checks within one or two days but occasionally DBS checks can take several weeks to complete, which can make it difficult to ensure that this is done before someone starts working. Any contract of employment or for services will be subject to a valid DBS check being completed before starting work. A risk assessment will be carried out and appropriate action to mitigate risks will be taken.

Additional checks on individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK

Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK must undergo the same checks as all other staff. In addition, we will make any further checks we think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered.

We will verify the person's right to work in the UK. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, we will follow the guidance on the GOV.UK website.

All statutory schools have a statutory duty under the new Home Office guidance issued on 6 April 2017, which states that:

All employers have a duty under Home Office guidance to consider additional checks, including obtaining a Certificate of Good Conduct, where a prospective member of staff has ever lived or worked abroad. This applies to all applicants for the Skilled Worker visa route (which replaced the Tier 2 (General) route in December 2020) working in specified education, health or social care sectors, and to anyone who has lived or worked outside the UK for more than 12 months, either in total or continuously, within the previous 10 years.

The requirement is applicable to all Tier 2 (General) staff from any country (excluding the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland), where an individual has lived or worked for more than 12 months either in total or continuously as well as within the previous 10 years.

We will risk assess all prospective employees, volunteers and trustees who declare that they have lived or worked outside the UK, within the last ten years, for more than 12 months either in total or continuously since the age of 18 years, to determine the level of additional checks required. This must check be done for each separate country where the person has spent more than 12 months.

Deputies

Tutors are responsible for ensuring that their deputies have an Enhanced DBS document with a Children's Barring List check no older than three years. These must be provided to Reception and a scan taken and sent to the Programme Manager before deputies can teach.

Overseas Checks for Deputies

All staff will be requested to confirm if they have, since the age of 18 years and within the last ten years, lived or worked outside the UK for more than 12 months, either in total or continuously. The deputy will be asked to provide police checks for all countries that fulfil the above criteria.

Where an overseas check cannot be completed for a deputy in a timely manner, we will risk assess cases on an individual basis and take mitigating steps to ensure learners are safe. This may include chaperoning staff or moving classes so they can be monitored.

Single Central Record

We keep a Single Central Record for the Conservatoire's staff, tutors and volunteers. This document records whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which the checks were completed:

- identity check
- barred list check
- enhanced DBS check
- prohibition from teaching check where possible
- further checks on people living or working outside the UK where possible
- checks of professional qualifications
- check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom

The single central record will cover the following people:

- Staff (including tutors and supply staff)
- Others who work in regular contact with children at the Conservatoire including volunteers
- Trustees

In order to comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act, we will not retain a copy of the individual's Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Certificate. However, copies of other documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity, right to work and required qualifications will be kept on their personnel file.

Data protection laws, meaning the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK GDPR and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, do not prevent the sharing of information for the purpose of keeping a learner safe. Fears about sharing information must never be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of a vulnerable learner. If in doubt, staff should speak to the DSL (or a deputy).

Volunteers, including Parents/Carers and Work Experience Students

Volunteers or work experience students in respect of whom no checks have been obtained will not be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

We will obtain an enhanced DBS certificate with barred list check for all volunteers in regulated activity who will regularly teach or look after children on an unsupervised basis or provide personal care on a one-off basis. The Conservatoire does not routinely request a check of the barred list but may still choose to request one as deemed necessary.

If a volunteer is not engaging in regulated activity and is supervised at all times, e.g. a parents accompanying their children on a trip, the Conservatoire will undertake a risk assessment to decide whether to seek an enhanced DBS check. A barred list check is legally not allowed under these circumstances.

Trustees

Governing bodies must apply for an enhanced criminal records certificate DBS and Section 128 check for any trustee who does not already hold one. They must do this within 21 days of appointment. All new trustees will be asked to declare their overseas history and where necessary, we will complete a risk assessment and check as required, in line with our procedures.

External Contractors

Letter of Assurance

Where services or activities are provided separately by an external organisation, contractor or body, assurances will be sought in writing that the third party has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection and there are arrangements to liaise with the Conservatoire on these matters where appropriate. Anyone person coming onto the Conservatoire site and working with children has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check and safer recruitment.

Other Measures

Safeguarding mitigating measures will include any or all of the following depending on the outcomes identified by the Conservatoire in their security risk assessment:

- Segregate - To avoid contact between contractors and learners as far as possible. This may include scheduling work at times where there are no learners on site, for example during closed periods.
- Supervise - To supervise any contact that does take place with a member of staff or a suitably vetted volunteer
- Code of Conduct - To require contractors to observe a code of conduct
- Regulate Access - To regulate access to the premises by way of ID checks
- Checks - To undertake checks where appropriate

“Contact” in this context shall be taken to mean any opportunity for contractors’ staff to converse with learners or to communicate with them in any other way, e.g. by passing messages, without a member of staff or suitably vetted volunteer being able to monitor the contact and intervene where necessary.

Planning of Works

The safeguarding measures should be determined and agreed with any contractor well in advance of any planned works starting on site. This will enable sufficient time for Conservatoire staff to be briefed on the supervision required and on the access arrangements agreed with contractor and also enable checks where necessary to be completed and in place before works start.

Appendix 1 – Safeguarding Code of Conduct for staff, tutors, trustees and others working within the Conservatoire

Any Conservatoire staff, tutor, volunteer, trustee or contractor working on behalf of the Conservatoire should observe the following guidelines as a matter of course, and in order to protect themselves from false allegations.

Everyone should recognise that their actions both inside and outside of the Conservatoire can impact on both their own and the Conservatoire's public reputation.

The general expectations of conduct are as follows:

- Treat learners with respect and understand the difference between friendliness and familiarity
- Act as a role model of good and appropriate professional behaviour
- Respect the learner's right to personal privacy
- Ensure that physical contact is appropriate and kept to a minimum
- Never touch a vulnerable learner in a way which could be misunderstood or misconstrued
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour
- Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers learners to share in the decision-making process
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Recognise the developmental needs and capacity of young learners
- Have an awareness of any medicines being taken by participants, or existing injuries
- Refuse to allow learners to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Refuse to allow bullying of one learner by another to go unchecked
- Wear ID badges in the venue

Specifically,

- Ensure an adequate ratio of tutor/staff to vulnerable learners which is appropriate to the activity being undertaken and to take account of gender differences. For group classes for learners under 18, the maximum number of young learners to tutors will be 8:1.
- Learners taken ill – where a vulnerable learner is taken ill, the tutor should accompany them to Reception, if taking an individual lesson, where their carer should be called. If the learner is in a group class, the tutor should contact Reception and arrange for the learner to be taken there.
- Learners under the age of eight should be supervised on the way to the toilet when there are other members of the public in the building. Tutors to exercise discretion for older learners who may need additional supervision. Parents are asked to ensure that their children have visited the toilet ahead of their class starting.
- All tutors should ensure vulnerable learners are picked up from class by a known carer after the class. Where a learner is left after a class without being picked up by a carer, they should be taken to Reception by the tutor.
- Where a vulnerable learner is found unsupervised in the Creativity Garden, a member of staff should take them to Reception.

- Apart from one-to-one teaching situations in the music rooms of the Conservatoire, a tutor should endeavour never to be alone with a vulnerable learner and, should such a situation arise, every effort should be made to ensure that others can either see or hear the tutor at work.
- Emails regarding vulnerable learners should be sent to the parent/guardian from a Conservatoire email address.
- Staff and tutors should never become “friends” or communicate with learners on Facebook or other social networking sites.
- Staff and tutors should not give gifts to vulnerable learners.
- Be fair and balanced in their recognition of learners’ achievements and the use of praise.
- Dress appropriately, i.e. in a way that:
 - is unlikely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative;
 - does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding;
 - is absent of any political or contentious slogans;
 - is not considered to be discriminatory or culturally sensitive.
- Learners’ personal data must be kept secure.

Appendix 2 – Code of Conduct for Contractors and Sub-Contractors

Everyone has responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young persons under 18 years of age and adults at risk. As an external provider of services to the Conservatoire, you are asked to ensure that any person engaged on the contract, either directly employed by you or through subcontract arrangements, agrees to comply with the following:

1. To work safely and take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour
2. To avoid any contact with a child, young person under 18 years of age or vulnerable adult which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
3. Not be in contact with a child, young person under 18 years of age or adult at risk whilst on site, unless accompanied by a colleague
4. Not give their personal contact details (including mobile number) to children, young people under 18 years of age or adults at risk
5. Not to make contact via social network sites with children, young people under 18 years of age or adults at risk
6. To work and be seen to work in an open and transparent manner
7. To wear an approved means of identification which includes a photograph at all times
8. To remain within the agreed work area and/or access locations
9. To keep colleagues informed of their whereabouts
10. To not use profane or inappropriate language;
11. To dress appropriately, i.e. dress in a way that:
 - is unlikely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative
 - does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding
 - is absent of any political or contentious slogans
 - is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive

REMEMBER: Your actions, however well intended, could be misinterpreted. Be mindful to avoid placing yourself in vulnerable situations.

Appendix 3 – Safeguarding Incident Report Form

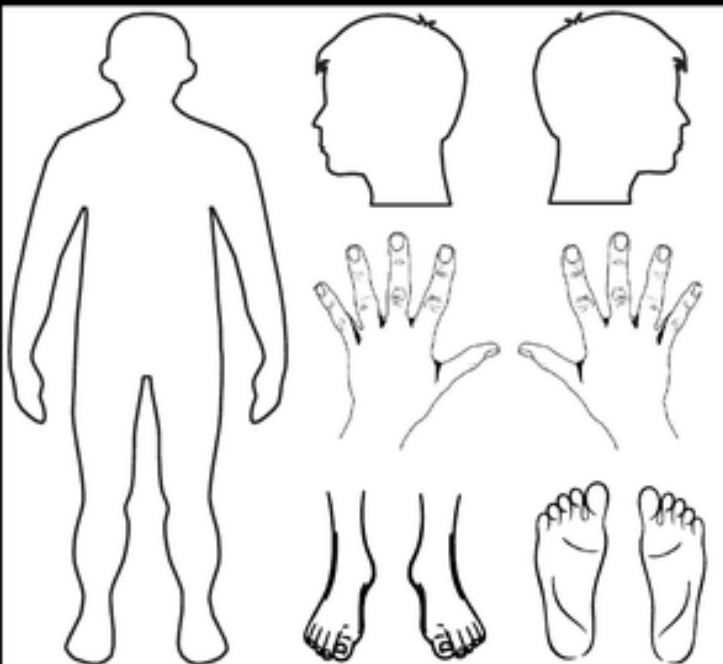
Your Name:
Your Position:
Child's Name
Child's Address:
Parent/Carer/Guardian Name and Address:
Child's School
Child's Date of Birth
Date and Time of any Incident
Your Observations
Exactly What the Child Said and What You Said (Record actual details. Continue on separate sheet if necessary)

Action Taken so far:	
External Agencies Contacted (Date & Time)	
Agency Name and Contact Number	Details of Communication
Agency Name and Contact Number	Details of Communication
Final Outcome:	
Signature: Print Name:	
Date:	

Signed.....
Patrick Holden, Executive Director

Signed.....
Chair of the Board

Appendix 4 – Disclosure Body Map

CHILD PROTECTION BODY MAP	
	Name of child:
	Date of birth:
	Staff member raising concern:
	Date recorded:
	Observations:

Contact Details

All incidents concerning child protection should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If this person is unavailable you should report to the Deputies.

Please see contact details below:

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Patrick Holden, Executive Director

safeguarding@conservatoire.org.uk

Tel: 020 8852 0234

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mairead Sheerin, Artistic Director

safeguarding@conservatoire.org.uk

Tel: 020 8852 0234

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Dee De Bellotte, Operations Director

safeguarding@conservatoire.org.uk

Tel: 020 8852 0234

Conservatoire Trustees

Trustee Safeguarding Lead - Emma Smillie

board@conservatoire.org.uk

Tel: 020 8852 0234

Support Services

POLICE

Police Station – Lewisham

Lewisham Police Station
43 Lewisham High Street
SE13 5JZ
Tel: 101
Tel: 0208 297 1212

Greenwich West Police Station (rarely manned)

Tel: 0208 649 3536
WestGreenwich.SNT@met.police.uk

LOCAL AUTHORITY CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

Greenwich Children’s Services – Child Protection team

Referral Team: 0208 921 3172
Tel: 020 8854 8888 Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team
Mash-referrals@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

Local Authority Safeguarding Contacts:

LADO, Caroline Aitken - Caroline.Aitken@lewisham.gov.uk

Lewisham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Tel 0208 314 6660
Out of Hours Emergency Team: 0208 314 6000

The Conservatoire is in Greenwich Borough and is deemed a school for safeguarding purposes and has had help and advice from Ken Palmer, Child Protection Co-ordinator – Schools

Tel: 020 8921 4438
Ken.Palmer@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

Childline: 0800 1111

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Further information

Abuse

Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse has introduced new resources to help education professionals identify and respond to [concerns of child sexual abuse and abusive behaviours](#).

[Signs and indicators of child sexual abuse | CSA Centre](#)

[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) – DfE advice

[Domestic abuse: Various Information/Guidance](#) – Home Office advice

[Faith based abuse: National Action Plan](#) – DfE advice

[Forced marriage resource pack](#)

[Disrespect NoBody campaign – GOV.UK](#) – Home Office website

[Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy](#) – Home Office policy paper

[Together we can stop child sexual abuse](#) – HM Government campaign

Bullying

[Preventing bullying including cyberbullying](#) – DfE advice

Children missing from education, home or care

[Children missing education](#) – DfE statutory guidance

[Children who run away or go missing from home or care](#) – DfE statutory guidance [Missing](#)

[Children and Adults strategy](#) – Home Office strategy

Children with family members in prison

The [Prisoners' Families Helpline](#) offers free, confidential support and advice for families in England and Wales who are in contact with the criminal justice system.

Child exploitation

[Modern Slavery: statutory guidance for England and Wales \(under s49 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015\) and non-statutory guidance for Scotland and Northern Ireland \(accessible version\) - GOV.UK](#) – Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance.

[Interim guidance for ICTGs](#) - Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship Service guidance

[Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked](#) – DfE and Home Office guidance

[Care of unaccompanied migrant children and child victims of modern slavery](#) – DfE statutory guidance

[Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims](#) – Home Office statutory guidance

[Child exploitation disruption toolkit](#) – Home Office guidance

[Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation](#) – The Children’s Society and Home Office
[County Lines Toolkit For Professionals](#) – The Children’s Society in partnership with Victim Support and National Police Chiefs’ Council

[Multi-agency practice principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm](#) – non-statutory guidance for local areas, developed by the Tackling Child Exploitation (TCE) Support Programme, funded by the Department for Education and supported by the Home Office, the Department for Health and Social Care and the Ministry of Justice
[What is county lines and child criminal exploitation? - Missing People](#) advice

[SafeCall - Missing People](#) - SafeCall is a national free, confidential and anonymous helpline and support service for young people and family members that are affected by missing, county lines and criminal exploitation. Confidential support and webinars are also available to professionals.

[County Lines Support and Rescue | Catch22](#) - A specialist support and rescue service for young people and their families who are criminally exploited through county lines. (The service currently operates from London, Merseyside, the West Midlands, West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester.)

Confidentiality

[Gillick competency Fraser guidelines](#) – Guidelines to help with balancing children’s rights along with safeguarding responsibilities.

Drugs

[From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives](#) – Home Office strategy

[Honest information about drugs](#) – Talk to Frank website

[Drug and Alcohol education – teacher guidance & evidence review](#) – PSHE Association

Honour or faith-based abuse, including FGM and forced marriage

[Female genital mutilation: information and resources](#) – Home Office guidance

[Female genital mutilation: multi agency statutory guidance](#) – DfE, Department for Health, and Home Office

[Forced marriage](#) – Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) resources

[Forced marriage](#) – Government multi-agency practice guidelines and multi-agency statutory guidance

[FGM resource pack](#) – HM Government guidance

Health and well-being

[Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience](#) – Public Health England

[Supporting pupils at schools with medical conditions](#) – DfE statutory guidance

[Mental health and behaviour in schools](#) – DfE advice

[Overview - Fabricated or induced illness](#) – NHS advice

Homelessness

[Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities](#) - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government guidance

Information sharing

[Government information sharing advice](#) – Guidance on information sharing for people who provide safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.

[Information Commissioner's Office: Data sharing information hub](#) – Information to help schools and colleges comply with UK data protection legislation including UK GDPR.

Online safety advice

[Childnet](#) – Provides guidance for schools on cyberbullying

[Educateagainsthate](#) – Provides practical advice and support on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation

[London Grid for Learning](#) – Provides advice on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements

[NSPCC E-safety for schools](#) – Provides advice, templates, and tools on all aspects of a school or college’s online safety arrangements

[Safer recruitment consortium](#) – ‘Guidance for safe working practice’, which may help ensure staff behaviour policies are robust and effective

[Searching screening and confiscation](#) – Departmental advice for schools on searching children and confiscating items such as mobile phones

[South West Grid for Learning](#) – Provides advice on all aspects of a school or college’s online safety arrangements

[Online Safety Audit Tool](#) – From UK Council for Internet Safety to help mentors of trainee teachers and newly qualified teachers induct mentees and provide ongoing support, development and monitoring

[Online safety guidance if you own or manage an online platform](#) – DCMS advice

[A business guide for protecting children on your online platform](#) – DCMS advice

[UK Safer Internet Centre](#) – Provides tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online

[Understanding and responding to AI-generated child sexual abuse material](#): guidance from the National Crime Agency's CEOP Education programme in collaboration with the Internet Watch Foundation.

[Financially motivated sexual extortion \(FMSE\)](#): guidance for education settings on FMSE from the National Crime Agency's CEOP Education programme.

Online safety relating to remote education, virtual lessons and live streaming

[Guidance Get help with remote education](#) – Resources and support for teachers and school leaders on educating pupils and students

[Departmental guidance on safeguarding and remote education](#) – Including planning remote education strategies and teaching remotely

[London Grid for Learning](#) – Guidance, including platform-specific advice

[National Cyber Security Centre](#) – Guidance on choosing, configuring and deploying video conferencing

[UK Safer Internet Centre](#) – Guidance on safe remote learning

Online safety – support for children

[Childline](#) – For free and confidential advice

[UK Safer Internet Centre](#) – To report and remove harmful online content

[CEOP Safety Centre](#) – to report online child sexual abuse

Online safety - parental support

[Childnet](#) – Offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, and to find out where to get more help and support

[Commonsensemedia](#) – Provides independent reviews, age ratings, & other information about all types of media for children and their parents

[Government advice](#) – About protecting children from specific online harms such as child sexual abuse, sexting, and cyberbullying

[Help your child stay safe online - Kids Online Safety](#) – includes practical information from trusted places to help parents feel more confident on the steps they can take to protect their child online.

[Internet Matters](#) – Provides age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls, and practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world

[How Can I Help My Child?](#) – Marie Collins Foundation – Sexual abuse online

[London Grid for Learning](#) – Provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including tips to keep primary aged children safe online

[Stopitnow](#) resource from [The Lucy Faithfull Foundation](#) – Can be used by parents and carers who are concerned about someone's behaviour, including children who may be displaying concerning sexual behaviour (not just about online)

[CEOP Education](#) – Provides information, guidance and resources for support for parents and carers, helping them to protect their child(ren) from online sexual abuse

[Parentzone](#) – Provides help for parents and carers on how to keep their children safe online

[Talking to your child about online sexual harassment: A guide for parents](#) – This is the Children's Commissioner's parental guide on talking to their children about online sexual harassment

2019 UK CMOs' advice - [UK CMO commentary on screen time and social media map of reviews](#) - GOV.UK

Private fostering

[Private fostering: local authorities](#) – DfE statutory guidance

Radicalisation

[Prevent duty guidance](#) – Home Office guidance

[The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation](#) - DfE advice

[Educate Against Hate website](#) – DfE and Home Office guidance

[Prevent for FE and Training](#) – Education and Training Foundation (ETF)

[Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Resources](#) – Resources by London Grid for Learning

[Managing risk of radicalisation in your education setting](#) – DfE advice

Serious violence

[Serious violence strategy](#) – Home Office strategy

[Factors linked to serious violence and how these factors can be used to identify individuals for intervention](#) – Home Office

[Youth Endowment Fund](#) – Home Office

[Gangs and youth violence: for schools and colleges](#) – Home Office advice

[Tackling and girls strategy](#) – Home Office strategy

[Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims](#) – Home Office guidance

Sexual harassment and sexual violence

Specialist organisations

[Barnardo's](#) – UK charity caring for and supporting some of the most vulnerable children and young people through their range of services.

[Lucy Faithfull Foundation](#) – UK-wide child protection charity dedicated to preventing child sexual abuse. They work with families affected by sexual abuse and also run the confidential Stop it Now! Helpline.

[Marie Collins Foundation](#) – Charity that, amongst other things, works directly with children, young people, and families to enable their recovery following sexual abuse.

[NSPCC](#) – Children's charity specialising in child protection with statutory powers enabling them to take action and safeguard children at risk of abuse.

[Rape Crisis](#) – National charity and the umbrella body for their network of independent member Rape Crisis Centres.

[UK Safer Internet Centre](#) – Provides <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-andresources> to children, young people, parents, carers and schools about staying safe online.

Harmful sexual behaviour

[Rape Crisis \(England & Wales\)](#) or [The Survivors Trust](#) – For information, advice, and details of local specialist sexual violence organisations.

[NICE guidance](#) – Contains information on, amongst other things: developing interventions; working with families and carers; and multi-agency working.

[HSB toolkit](#) – The Lucy Faithfull Foundation – designed for parents, carers, family members and professionals, to help everyone play their part in keeping children safe. It has links to useful information, resources, and support as well as practical tips to prevent harmful sexual behaviour and provide safe environments for families.

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation also run shorespace.org.uk which provides a safe and anonymous place for young people to get help and support to prevent harmful sexual behaviours.

[NSPCC Learning: Protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour](#) and [NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework](#) – Free and independent advice about HSB.

[Contextual Safeguarding Network – Beyond Referrals \(Schools\)](#) – Provides a school selfassessment toolkit and guidance for addressing HSB in schools.

[Preventing harmful sexual behaviour in children - Stop It Now](#) – Provides a guide for parents, carers and professionals to help everyone do their part in keeping children safe, they also run a free confidential helpline.

Support for victims

[Anti-Bullying Alliance](#) – Detailed information for anyone being bullied, along with advice for parents and schools. Signposts to various helplines and websites for further support.

[Rape Crisis](#) – Provides and signposts to a range of services to support people who have experienced rape, child abuse or any kind of sexual violence.

[The Survivors Trust](#) – UK-wide national umbrella agency with resources and support dedicated to survivors of rape, sexual violence and child sex abuse.

[Victim Support](#) – Supporting children and young people who have been affected by crime. Also provides support to parents and professionals who work with children and young people – regardless of whether a crime has been reported or how long ago it was.

[Childline](#) – Provides free and confidential advice for children and young people.

Toolkits

[NSPCC](#) – Online Self-assessment tool to ensure organisations are doing everything they can to safeguard children.

[NSPCC](#) – Resources which help adults respond to children disclosing abuse.

NSPCC also provide free and independent advice about HSB: [NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework](#)

[Safeguarding Unit, Farrer and Co. and Carlene Firmin, MBE, University of Bedfordshire](#) – Peer-on-Peer Abuse toolkit provides practical guidance for schools on how to prevent, identify early and respond appropriately to peer-on-peer abuse.

[Contextual Safeguarding Network](#) – Self-assessment toolkit for schools to assess their own response to HSB and levers for addressing HSB in schools.

[Childnet - STAR SEND Toolkit](#) – Equips, enables and empowers educators with the knowledge to support young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

[Childnet - Just a joke?](#) – Provides lesson plans, activities, a quiz and teaching guide designed to explore problematic online sexual behaviour with 9–12-year-olds.

[Childnet - Step Up, Speak Up](#) – A practical campaign toolkit that addresses the issue of online sexual harassment amongst young people aged 13-17 years old.

[NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework](#) – An evidence-informed framework for children and young people displaying HSB.

Farrer & Co: [Addressing child on child abuse: a resource for schools and colleges](#) – This resource provides practical guidance for schools and colleges on how to prevent, identify early and respond appropriately to child-on-child abuse.

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes

[London Grid for Learning-collection of advice](#) – Various information and resources dealing with the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

[UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#) – Advice for schools and colleges on responding to incidents of non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes.

Support for parents/carers

National Crime Agency's [CEOP Education Programme](#) – Provides information for parents and carers to help protect their child from online child sexual abuse, including [#AskTheAwkward - help to talk with your children about online relationships](#) – Guidance on how to talk to their children about online relationships.

Legal and Procedural Framework

1989 The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Ratified in the UK in 1991. Contains international rights protecting children from abuse and giving them the right to express their views.

2000 The Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act

Made it a criminal offence for individuals in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a person under 18.

2000 Criminal Justice and Court Services Act

Imposes mandatory disqualification orders to prevent individuals convicted of violent or sexual crimes from working with children.

2002 The Education Act

Section 175 requires local authorities, school governing bodies, and further education colleges to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

2003 The Sexual Offences Act

The primary criminal legislation outlining sexual offences against children and adults, including those with mental health disorders.

2005 Mental Capacity Act

Provides the legal framework for protecting and empowering individuals who lack the capacity to make their own decisions.

2006 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act

Established the statutory vetting and barring framework for protecting children and vulnerable adults, heavily amended by subsequent legislation.

2010 The Equality Act

Consolidated previous anti-discrimination laws (including the Disability Discrimination Act) into a single act to protect individuals from discrimination.

2012 Protection of Freedoms Act

Reformed the vetting and barring system, scaling back the scope of regulated activity and merging agencies to form the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

2014 The Care Act

Replaced "No Secrets" guidance. It put adult safeguarding on a strict statutory footing, defining the legal duties of local authorities to protect vulnerable adults.

2018 The Data Protection Act & UK GDPR

Replaced the 1998 Act. Regulates how organisations, schools, and charities process personal data, balancing privacy with essential safeguarding rules.

2021 Domestic Abuse Act

Introduced the first statutory definition of domestic abuse, explicitly recognising children as victims in their own right if they see, hear, or experience its effects.

2025 Data (Use and Access) Act

Modernised data standards alongside the DPA 2018; explicitly confirms that sharing personal data for child and adult safeguarding purposes is a lawful processing condition.

2026 Working Together to Safeguard Children

The primary multi-agency statutory guidance for inter-agency working, outlining how organizations must collaborate to protect children from harm.

2026 Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

Statutory safeguarding and safer recruitment guidance for all schools and colleges in England, in force from 1 September 2026.

Updated version 01/08/2026

Next Review – July 2027