



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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Chair of Governors: Mr S Fitz-Gerald

	Date	Name	Signature
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Chapter 1 Introduction and Background

The purpose of this document is to assist all staff to protect and safeguard children who are at risk of abuse or neglect. This policy and procedures should be read in conjunction with the relevant sections of the **London Safeguarding Children Procedures**. This policy also reflects the requirements of **Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018)** and **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020)**

The safeguarding of children is everyone's business and schools have a responsibility under **Section 175 of the Education Act 2002** to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Safeguarding incidents could happen anywhere and staff should be alert to possible concerns being raised in school.

This includes

- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

All staff may raise concerns directly with Children's Social Care.

The Children Act 1989, 2004 defines a child as being up to the age of 18 years; it also defines significant harm and the roles and responsibilities of Children's Social Care and the Police.

The following procedures outline the action to be taken if it is suspected that a child may be being abused, harmed or neglected. There are four categories of abuse:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

It is acknowledged that a child can be abused, harmed or neglected in a family, institution or community setting by someone known to them, or less commonly, by a stranger, this includes someone in a position of trust such as a teacher or other professional.

Safeguarding and the promotion of a child's welfare covers all aspects of the child's life and the school is committed to ensuring that all its actions in respect of a child are compatible with this aim. If there are concerns about a child's welfare that do not meet the thresholds of child abuse the school will consider whether the Common Assessment Framework approach should be considered.

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POLICY STATEMENT

We in Blackfen School for Girls are committed to practice which protects children from harm. Staff and volunteers in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm. We believe all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other children.

Aims:

We will aim to safeguard children by:

1. Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
2. Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents and carers, staff and volunteers.
3. Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.
4. Carefully following the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers.
5. Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through support, supervision and training.
6. We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.
7. We are committed to the safeguarding of students with Speech and Language difficulties. We recognise that because of the day-to-day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:
 1. Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are confident to talk, and are listened to.
 2. Ensure children know they can approach adults employed in the school if they are worried.
 3. Include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from harm or abuse.

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Background

Teachers and school staff play a key role in safeguarding. Child abuse is a distressing and difficult subject for even the most experienced professional worker and is one, which needs to be as fully understood as possible in order to help protect the child who might be at risk. School staff are in a unique position to help detect child abuse and also to monitor those young people about whom there is concern. This is because: -

- Teachers are trained in child development and are able to recognise behaviour, which is outside the “norm” (for children of particular ages and in particular situations) and can identify signs of distress. They are alert to changes in behaviour and can identify signs of distress in children.
- Children spend more time at school than anywhere else except home. After one term in school a teacher will have spent more hours observing and communicating with a child than any other professional.
- Teachers are in a relationship of trust with their students. A child will often target a teacher or another adult who works in a school to talk about a situation at home. Therefore, all staff need to be sensitive to child protection issues and know how to react to the child both on a personal level and in accordance with the school’s protection procedures.
- School is the natural focus for inter-agency work and child protection is a legitimate concern for all teachers and school staff.

We at Blackfen School are committed to practice which protects children from harm. Staff and volunteers in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm.

Any member of staff who has a concern about a student’s welfare should raise that concern to a Designated Safeguarding Lead or make a referral. Particular care should be taken with a student who:

- Is disabled or has specific additional needs.
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory EHC plan).
- Is a young carer
- Is frequently missing from home or care.
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse
- Has returned to their family from care

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Chapter 2 How will we safeguard the children in our care?

A fifteen-point checklist!

1 We recognise that ALL school staff who come into contact with children have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. We will promote an expectation that Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and includes identifying and actioning students who would benefit from early help. All staff are expected to read and action Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019) and will sign electronically to confirm they have done so.

2 Child Protection and Safeguarding INSET will take place in the Autumn term for all staff. A record will be kept of who has been trained and at what level. Safeguarding briefings will always take place at the beginning of the year and staff will receive child protection updates via email and staff meetings.

3 We will ensure that accurate DBS records are kept and that all new staff will have DBS checks before they come into contact with children.

4 All new staff will be made aware of policy and practice with regard to Safeguarding.

5 The Leadership Team regularly review our policy and procedures for Child Protection so that they are fit for purpose and understood by all; taking into account changes in legislation and lessons learned from precedent cases. The most recent review takes into account recommendations of the Munro Report, Serious Case Review Recommendations 2011, Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2020) and the latest London Safeguarding Procedures.

6 The school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead and a deputy to cover her absence. The school also has a nominated governor for child protection. Every member of staff knows the name of designated person for child protection.

7 We shall follow the Local Authority and Pan-London procedures for Child Protection.

8 We shall ensure all associate staff, catering, support and caretaking staff attend Safeguarding INSET.

9 We shall follow up all concerns raised by children or those adults who care for them.

10 We are aware that children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. This is because indicators of abuse may be assumed to relate to the child's disability without further exploration. Children with SEND may be more vulnerable to peer to peer bullying issues. There may be communication issues with children with SEND.

11 We shall attend all Case Conferences and contribute to Core Group Meetings and implement the recommendations made by Conference to the best of our ability. This includes notifying Children's Social Care if there is an unexplained absence of a student who has a child protection plan.

12 We shall maintain an accurate register of those students who have "Child Protection", 'Child In Need' or 'At Risk' status. These records are confidential and kept secure and separate from a student's school file. We maintain separate registers for all children who self-harm and a vulnerable children's register for children who have additional welfare needs but do not meet S17 and S47 thresholds.

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13 We shall apply Safer Recruitment and Selection Procedures to all posts to ensure that all those who work in a school environment are fully aware of our commitment to safeguarding children and are able to show competence and fitness for purpose in this area.

14 We will make this policy known and accessible to all stakeholders (students, parents, staff, visitors, Governors, LA) via our web-site. Hard copies will be made available to Department areas and on request.

15 We shall fulfil our statutory duties (DfE Sept.2016) with regard to children who are missing in education so that our school roll is accurate and that students who miss education are known and that vulnerability that comes from repeated or prolonged absence from school is reduced.

16. We shall use both curricular opportunities and assemblies to enable students to feel safe and adopt safe practices. For example, dedicated assemblies for e-Safety, anti-bullying, and road safety. As well as input from our PCSO's Lead on gangs, knife crime and public safety.

Chapter 3 Responsibilities

The Local Authority has a responsibility to ensure that there are child protection procedures in place and must appoint a Senior Lead as the designated Lead who will be responsible for co-ordinating borough policy and action.

The Head Teacher has the responsibility to ensure all staff are aware of the policy and procedures and will designate a senior member of staff as the school's Child Protection Lead. At Blackfen School the designated Safeguarding Lead is Ms S Cascarino. The Deputy Safeguarding Lead is Mrs Blatch.

THE DESIGNATION OF A CO-ORDINATING TEACHER SHOULD NOT BE SEEN AS DIMINISHING THE ROLE OF ALL TEACHERS IN BEING ALERT TO THE SIGNS OF CHILD ABUSE.

Aims of the Child Protection Policy:

1 To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of the need for child protection and their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of child abuse. It is crucial, therefore, that all staff (teaching and non-teaching) receive appropriate guidance and training through quality INSET provision, to ensure that their skills and expertise are up to date.

2 To provide an effective, systematic means of monitoring children thought to be at risk, keeping records of student's progress securely with due regard to confidentiality.

3 To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff, particularly the Designated Safeguarding Lead who has responsibility for child protection procedures within the school.

4 To develop a structured internal procedure to be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.

5 To promote understanding and build effective relationships with other agencies to work together to protect children at risk and to assist with their enquiries and cooperate as required in child protection matters including attendance at case conferences and core groups.

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6 To support the child's development in ways which will foster security, confidence and independence.

7 To integrate child protection issues within the existing curriculum allowing for continuity and progression through Key Stages. This means developing opportunities for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from harm or abuse. This may include teaching e-Safety in IT lessons and covering relevant safeguarding issues in extended tutor periods, sex and relationship education in RE and other safeguarding issues throughout the curriculum.

8 To develop a network of support for young people and adult members of the school community.

Chapter 4 What is Child Abuse? – Signs and Symptoms

These definitions are based on those from Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018) London Child Protection Procedures (2007) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2020).

“The term child abuse encompasses all forms of ill treatment or neglect of children by adult members of their family unit or other adult person or agency responsible for the care of the child.

It includes physical neglect including that which causes failure to thrive; emotional abuse or deprivation, and the various aspects of sexual abuse.

Harm usually falls within the following categories but staff should always be vigilant to any sign of stress in a child.

1 Physical Abuse is a physical injury to a child where there is definite knowledge, or a reasonable suspicion that the injury was knowingly not prevented. This includes for example, deliberate poisoning, attempted drowning or deliberate smothering. There are a number of injuries that are regarded with suspicion. These include:

- Bruises and abrasions round the face, particularly in younger children;
- Damage or injury around the mouth;
- Bilateral injuries such as two black eyes;
- Finger-tip bruising to the front or the back of the chest;
- Bite marks;
- Burns and scalds;
- Wheals suggesting beatings; and
- Small circular burns indicating cigarette stub marks

NB: In children of Afro-Caribbean descent, the skin especially on their back may have marks that appear as burns these are in fact spots and need to be distinguished from injuries as do other possible pigmentation markings.

There may be evidence of previous injuries. Each injury needs to be accounted for. The timing, the site, the spread of injuries, the age and mobility of the child must be compatible

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with the history given. Inadequate, discrepant or excessively plausible explanations, or if there has been a delay in seeking treatment for the child, should arouse suspicion.

Injuries such as bruises, lacerations, bite-marks and burns may be especially apparent when children change their clothes to participate in PE and sports activities. On the other hand, a reluctance to participate in PE or Swimming may also be an indication of child abuse.

2 Neglect is the persistent or severe neglect of a child which results in serious impairment of that child's health or development.

a) This may be by exposure to danger or by repeated failure to attend to the developmental needs of the child.

b) Non-organic failure to thrive may result from neglect of a child but always requires medical diagnosis.

Possible indications of physical neglect, such as inadequate, poor growth, hunger or deficient nutrition may be noticeable.

3 Emotional Abuse is the persistent or severe emotional breakdown of a child, which has a severe adverse effect on the background on the child's background and emotional development.

4 Sexual Abuse is the involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children, and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give their informed consent, that violate the social taboos of family life or which are against the law. (Department of Health & Social Security).

Sexual abuse takes many forms ranging from very serious to lesser criminal offences. Occasionally, it may include activity which may not in itself breach the law but will, nevertheless, have a disturbing effect on the child.

The extent of sexual abuse is still unknown but the rate of referral is increasing. Sources suggest that one person in ten of the adult population is sexually abused before reaching the age of 16 years. Sexual abuse need not occur as a single incident; the victims may have to endure abuse lasting for a period of between two and four years, sometimes longer. It is something that happens mainly in the context of a familiar relationship and offenders are often fathers, stepfathers or the mothers' male cohabitants. Few "strangers" are involved. Contrary to expectation some offences are committed by females. In some instances, clear signs and symptoms are overlooked either in error or in circumstances where the teacher is unwilling to believe what has been identified.

To assist, teachers should be aware of the symptoms which for sexual abuse, include:

- Bed wetting or wetting during the day;
- Abdominal pain;
- Sleep and eating disorders;
- Withdrawal;
- Inappropriate or explicit sexual play;
- Sexual precocity or knowledge of sexual activities inappropriate to the child's age;
- An abnormally high incidence of minor injuries, lethargy, tiredness; and

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- Sudden, unexplained change in behaviour.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive and it is recognised these symptoms may individually or jointly be signs of conditions unconnected with abuse.

Please refer to list of factors which may indicate that a child is being abused (Appendix 1).

Specific Safeguarding Issues

It is our expectation that all staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues. Staff should be aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger. Staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer to peer abuse. This could include bullying, cyberbullying, sexting and gender based violence/ sexual assault.

All staff should be aware of the possibility of peer on peer abuse. This may occur within the school or in a social setting. Allegations of peer on peer abuse must be managed in the same way as any other allegation. All staff must be clear that peer on peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. For details of specific response to bullying, harassment, coercion please refer to Anti-Bullying policy.

Other specific safeguarding issues that staff need to be aware of are bullying, cyberbullying children missing in education, children missing from home, child sexual exploitation, domestic violence, drugs, fabricated illness, faith abuse, Female Genital Mutilation, forced marriage, gangs and youth violence, violence against women and girls, preventing radicalisation, mental health, private fostering, trafficking and sexting

Chapter 5 What to do if Child Abuse is Suspected – a summary of procedures for referral

1 If any member of staff (teaching or non-teaching) including supply staff and volunteers, has concerns or suspicions that a student may be at risk of child abuse, they must report it immediately to the designated Safeguarding Lead (Ms Cascarino) or in her absence the (Deputy Safeguarding Lead (Mrs Blatch). Remember initial contact from a child will not usually involve Ms Cascarino but possibly a Form Tutor or subject teacher who is best placed in terms of intimacy /friendship to speak with the student. The role of this person is primarily to listen and then to share this concern with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Other options could include referral to Children's Social Care Specialist Services or early help services. Any member of staff may make a referral to Children's Social Care.

2 Once a concern is expressed to the designated Safeguarding Lead she will assume full responsibility for contacting the Specialist Services or the Social Services. No decisions on any course of action may be taken without the knowledge and agreement of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead is not an investigating Lead, but will speak with all staff who deal with the child in a strictly confidential and professional way, all being aware that nothing as yet has been objectively established. This information will be recorded. The designated teacher will then assess the information and make a decision quickly and carefully to establish a further course of action. The relevant contacts are:

The LADO is Sharon Ackbersingh (Bexley LADO)

020 8303 7777 x3861 or 0203 045 3861.

LADO@bexley.gov.uk, Sharon.Ackbersingh@bexley.gov.uk

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T: 020 3045 4553

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Matthew Brown (Head Teacher)

0208 303 1887

Mr Stuart Fitz-Gerald (Chair of Governors)

c/o Nicola Rogers 0208 303 1887

Bexley Safeguarding Children Service

0203 045 3260

Greenwich Social Care

020 8921 3172

NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline

0800 028 0285

Jan Blackburn, Safeguarding in Education Adviser

020 3045 4680

Police Child Abuse Investigation Team:

020 7230 3700

Disabled Children's Service:

01322 356336 Fax: 01322 351428

4 It is recognised that the teacher who first made the approach to the Safeguarding Lead is likely to have an on-going pastoral role to play in support of the child, with knowledge and support of the Safeguarding Lead.

5 On no account should members of staff investigate concerns beyond reassuring and supporting a child by creating an atmosphere where the child can talk freely. The member of staff concerned should not contact parents, nor should any enquiries be made of the child regarding parents or guardians. This will be done by the Safeguarding Lead who has determined that informing parents would not increase the risk of harm to the child or any other siblings in the family home.

6 The purpose of the procedures in school is to inform the statutory agencies who have the responsibility to carry out investigations which the school will support at all times. All professionals at Blackfen School are expected to adopt a child-centred focus in acting in the best interests of the child at all times.

7 Information regarding any allegations of or actual child abuse remains confidential and any records, correspondence or reports etc are to be kept separate from the student's file and will have restricted circulation. All members of staff are required to respect this confidentiality and only discuss the concerns and allegations with the designated Safeguarding Lead who will then inform other appropriate staff. The Designated Safeguarding Lead may ask the teacher who originally raised the concern to take an active role in any procedural follow up. Ms S. Cascarino is responsible for maintaining an accurate record of Safeguarding. This includes CP, Child in Need and At Risk Students.

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8 We also recognise the importance of 'early help'. This means staff identifying children who may benefit from an intervention as soon as the problem arises. Staff are expected to discuss this with external agencies and members of the Safeguarding team. Student Support Officers may manage and keep accurate records for early help cases including assessing if positive outcomes have been achieved.

9 If anyone other than the Safeguarding lead makes the referral they should inform the safeguarding lead as soon as possible. The Local Authority should make a decision within ONE working day of a referral being made about what course of action they are taking and should let the referrer know the outcome. School staff should follow up on a referral should that information not be forthcoming.

If (after a referral) the child's situation does not appear to be improving the designated safeguarding lead should press for reconsideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.

If early help is appropriate the designated safeguarding lead should help the staff member Student Support Officer in liaising with other agencies and setting up an interagency assessment as appropriate. Where early help is appropriate the case needs to be monitored carefully and consideration given to a referral to Children's Social Care if the child's situation does not appear to improve.

If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to Children's Social Care and/or the Police immediately. Anyone can make a referral. Where referrals are not made by the designated safeguarding lead, they should be informed as soon as possible.

If staff members have concerns about another staff member then this should be referred to the Head Teacher. Where there are concerns about the Head Teacher this should be referred to the Chair of Governors and the Local Authority Designated Lead (LADO). See also school Whistleblowing policy.

The seven golden rules of sharing information

1. Remember that GDPR (2018) and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is appropriately shared.
2. Be open and honest with the individual and their family where appropriate from the outset about why, what and how and with whom information will be shared and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.
4. Share with informed consent where appropriate and where possible respect the wishes of those who do not consent to have confidential information shared. You may still share information without consent if in your judgement there is good reason to do so. Such as the student's safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone be certain of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you have consent, be mindful that an individual might always not expect information to be shared.

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5. Consider safety and well-being. Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.

6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, timely and secure. Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate, up to date, is shared in timely fashion and is shared securely.

7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared with whom and for what purpose.

Chapter 6 Dealing with Disclosures – some Do's and Don'ts

A child will select the recipient of their disclosure very carefully. They will choose a person in whom they trust. The initiative for making a disclosure remains with the child. If a teacher is chosen and abuse is a possibility it is hoped these guidelines would prove helpful in handling what can be a difficult and traumatic experience.

DO:

- Read the School's Safeguarding Policy.
- Be alert to the signs of child abuse.
- Follow procedure – INFORM THE SAFEGUARDING LEAD.
- Believe the child.
- Try to create an atmosphere which accepts what the child is saying and values his/her no matter what the content of the communication. Record what has been said carefully (the exact words if possible).
- Be sensitive to the situation as the child sees it. The child should then feel more confident about sharing his/her problems.
- Reassure the child that he/she has taken the correct course of action and will be protected.
- Be sensitive to the possibility that following disclosure a child may not wish to be left alone.
- Be honest. Tell the child that you must refer the matter to someone who can help.
- Inform the Safeguarding Lead.

DON'T:

- Assume someone else is dealing with or has dealt with the information you have been given. Pass it on to the Safeguarding Lead immediately.
- Ask leading questions of the child.
- Question the child's honesty in making a disclosure.

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- Contact the family/guardians or discuss the matter with anyone other than the Safeguarding Lead /Head Teacher.
- Make any investigation. Our role is to inform.
- Promise confidentiality.

Please refer to “Dealing with Disclosures – Handling a One to One” (Appendix 2)

Please refer to Standard Operating Procedure for Social Services Referrals (Appendix 5)

Chapter 7

The Head Teacher’s / Designated Safeguarding Lead’s Responsibilities

1. In addition to the essential and immediate action required by all school staff in cases of suspected child abuse it is the Head Teacher’s responsibility to ensure that all teachers and support staff are fully familiar with the signs and symptoms of child abuse and the school’s Safeguarding Procedures. Copies of the document should be available to all staff and a poster displayed on the staffroom notice board. It is advised that staff keep the information in Appendices 1, 2 & 3 in a very accessible place e.g. Register, Mark Book, Planner etc.
2. To designate a senior member of staff as Safeguarding Lead having responsibility for co-ordinating action within the school and for liaison with other agencies.
3. When concern about a child is raised from whichever source it is the responsibility of the designated Safeguarding Lead or in her absence the Deputy Safeguarding Lead to contact Social Services to discuss the case.
4. Following discussion with Social Services it may be decided that a medical examination is necessary to determine the nature of the injury or neglect. It will be the responsibility of the Social Services to arrange this and the parents must be informed. If, however, the injury is so serious as to require urgent medical treatment the Head Teacher should arrange for the child to be taken to hospital.
5. The parent / carer and the Social Services must be informed immediately that this action has been taken.
6. After a case of suspected child abuse has been reported to Social Services a Case Conference may be called. The school should always be represented by the designated Safeguarding Lead in person or should ensure that written information is given to the conference in order to assist the decision making process. Children who are known to be, at risk, or absent where there has been concern in the past must be mentioned by the school. It is essential that these children are observed closely in school and that the Social Services are alerted immediately if there are any further concerns for the child. It is the Safeguarding Lead / Head Teacher’s responsibility to ensure this.
7. It is the Safeguarding Lead / Head Teacher’s responsibility to ensure that members of staff most directly involved with the child at risk are alert to the current situation and are particularly observant. The information must be regarded by those concerned as strictly confidential.
8. It is essential that when a child known to be at risk leaves the school for whatever reason, the Head Teacher contact the Head of the new school urgently to give details of the current situation and past concerns.

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9. Confidential Child Protection Records should be sent urgently and under separate cover with the permission of the case conference Chair.

10. If the Head Teacher is concerned about the management of an individual case or about the procedures the advice of the Principal Education Social Worker should be sought.

11. The specific role of the designated safeguarding Lead is outlined in Appendix 6 – Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Chapter 8 Safer Recruitment and Selection and the Management of Adults Who Work With Children

Blackfen School will adopt a consistent and thorough process of Safe Recruitment in order to ensure that those recruited are suitable. In order to ensure this, we shall take the following steps:

Advertisements and Information for Applicants

- We shall demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding and protecting children by ensuring that all recruitment advertising material contains a policy statement to this effect.
- All information given to interested applicants clearly shows the importance we place on safeguarding.
- The information should stress that the identity of the candidate, if successful, will need to be checked thoroughly and that a DBS check as well as Prohibition and Barred List checks will be sought straight away.
- The job description will set out the extent of the relationship with (and the degree of responsibility for) children with whom the person will have contact. We shall use Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019) guidance to determine 'regulated activity' and therefore the level of vetting prior to employment or being sub-contracted by the school.
- The application form should ask for: full personal information including any former names by which the person may have been known in the past; a full employment history both paid and voluntary since leaving school including any periods of further education or training; details of relevant academic and vocational qualifications; a declaration that the person has no convictions, cautions or bind over's or details in a sealed envelope.

References

- Applications forms should request both professional and character references. One of these should be from the candidate's current or most recent employer. Additional references may be requested where appropriate for example where the applicant is not currently working with children.
- Wherever possible references should be taken up prior to interview, so that any issue of concern raised by the reference can be explored further with the referee or the candidate during the interview.
- References should contain objective, verifiable information. A reference pro-forma with questions relating to the candidate's suitability to work with children should be provided.
- References should be asked to confirm whether the applicant has been subject to any disciplinary sanctions and whether the applicant has had any allegations made against him / her or concerns raised which relate to either the safety & welfare of children, or about the

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applicant's behaviour towards children. Details about the outcome of any concerns or allegations should be sought.

Where the applicant claims to have specific qualifications or experience relevant to working with children which may not be verified by a reference, the facts should be verified by making contact with the relevant body or previous employer.

Selection of Candidates – Short Listing

In order to ensure that the school has practices which support safer recruitment we shall additionally:

Check to ensure all applications are fully and properly completed. Incomplete applications will be queried and returned to the candidate for completion where necessary;

Scrutinise for any anomalies or discrepancies in the information provided;

Question with regard to any gaps, repeated changes or moves to supply work without clear and verifiable reasons;

All candidates should bring with them to interview documentary evidence of their identity, either a full birth certificate, passport or photo card driving licence with a document such as a utility bill that verifies the candidate's name and address; and

Candidates should bring original copies of documents confirming relevant professional and educational qualifications. Where they are unable to, written confirmation of his / her qualifications must be obtained from the awarding body.

Interviewing Short – Listed Candidates

We will ask questions to ascertain the candidate's attitude toward children and young people in general. Their commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in particular should be tested. At least one member of the panel should be trained in how best this can be done.

Offer of Appointment to Successful Candidate

An offer of appointment should be conditional upon pre-employment checks being satisfactorily completed including:

1. Enhanced DBS check with barred list check.

2. DfE List 99 and / or the Protection of Children Act (POCA) List/ Teacher Prohibition orders.

3. Verification of a candidate's identity.

4. Verification of candidate's mental and physical fitness.

5. Verification of professional status and whether any restrictions have been imposed by a regulatory body e.g. NCTL.

6. Verification that candidates from overseas are legally able to work in the UK and equivalent checks are made in their country of origin.

7. Check that people taking management positions are not subject to Sect 128 direction.

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- All checks should be confirmed in writing and retained on the candidate's personnel file together with documents / photographs to verify identity and qualifications. A record of DBS disclosures should retain the date of disclosure, the level of disclosure and the unique reference number.
- A record should be kept of evidence to show that such checks have been carried out on supply staff and volunteers (even if recruited through an agency).
- Satisfactory written references should be kept on the candidate's personnel file.
- Where information gained by the employer from either references or other checks calls into question his / her suitability to work with children or if the candidate has provided false information in support of application the facts should be reported to the police or relevant Department in the DfE.

Induction of Newly Appointed Staff

- Our induction of newly appointed staff will include an introduction to the Safeguarding Policy and procedures within the school. This will include being made aware of the identity and specific responsibilities of those staff designated with safeguarding responsibilities. This will happen on the new staff day in July and again where necessary throughout the year.
- New staff will be provided with information about safe practice and given a full explanation of their role and responsibilities and the standard of conduct and behaviour expected.
- Leadership Team will ensure that staff are adequately and appropriately supervised and that they have ready access to advice, expertise and management support in all matters to safeguarding and child protection.

Chapter 9 Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings

The information in this document is extracted from the Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings (February 2005), produced by The National Network of Investigation and Referral Support Co-ordinators (IRSC). The full document is available on Teachernet.

The guidelines apply to all adults working in education settings whatever their position, roles, or responsibilities.

Duty of Care

Adults should:

- Understand the responsibilities which are part of their employment or role, and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached.
- Always act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests.
- Avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour.

Exercise of professional Judgement

Where no specific guidance exists staff should:

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- Discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action, with a senior colleague. This will help to ensure that the safest practices are employed and reduce the risk of actions being misinterpreted.
- Always discuss any misunderstanding, accidents or threats with a senior manager.
- Always record discussions and actions taken with their justifications.

Power and Positions of Trust

Adults should not:

- Use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and / or a child's or family's detriment.
- Use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine students.
- Use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with children, which are of a sexual nature.

Confidentiality

Adults:

- Are expected to treat information they receive about children and young people in a discreet and confidential manner.
- In any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them should seek advice from a senior member of staff.
- Need to be cautious when passing information to others about a child /young person.

Propriety and Behaviour

Adults should not:

- Behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model.
- Make sexual remarks to a student (including email, text messages, phone or letter).
- Discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, students.
- Discuss a student's sexual relationships in inappropriate settings or contexts.
- Make (or encourage others to make) professional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate, or might be interpreted as such.

Dress and Appearance

Adults should wear clothing which:

- Promotes a positive and professional image.
- Is appropriate to their role.
- Is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative.
- Does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding.

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- Is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans.
- Is not considered to be discriminatory.

Gifts

Adults should:

- Ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared.
- Generally, only give gifts to an individual young person as part of an agreed reward system.
- Where giving gifts other than as above, ensure that these are of insignificant value and given to all children equally.

Infatuations

Adults should:

- Report any indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a student may be infatuated with a member of staff.

Social Contact:

Adults should:

- Always approve any planned social contact with senior colleagues, for example when it is part of a reward scheme or pastoral care programme.
- Advise senior management of any regular social contact they have with a student which may give rise to concern.
- Report and record any situation, which they feel, might compromise the school or their own professional standing.
- Staff should not give their mobile phone numbers or personal e-mail addresses to students.

Physical Contact

Adults should:

- Be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is describes.
- Never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent.
- Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny.
- Never indulge in horseplay, tickling or fun fights.

Schools should:

- Ensure they have a system in place for recording serious incidents and the means by which information about incidents and outcomes can be easily accessed by senior management.

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- Provide staff, on a “need to know” basis, with relevant information about vulnerable students in their care.
- Make staff aware of the DfE guidance in respect of physical contact with students and meeting medical needs of children and young people in school.

Physical Education and other activities which require physical contact

Adults should:

- Consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a student might misinterpret any such contact, perhaps involving another member of staff, if a less vulnerable student in the demonstration.
- Be familiar with and follow recommended DfE guidance.
- Always explain to a student the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take.

Showers and Changing

Adults should:

- Avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress.
- Avoid any visually intrusive behaviour and where there are changing rooms:
- Announce their intention of entering.
- Avoid remaining in the room unless student needs require it.

Adults should not:

- Change in the same place as children.
- Shower with children.

Students in Distress

Adults should:

- Consider the way in which they offer comfort to a distressed student.
- Always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed child.
- Record situations which may give rise to concern.

Behaviour Management

Adults should:

- Not use force as a form of punishment.
- Try to defuse situations before they escalate.
- Keep parents informed of any sanctions.
- Adhere to the school’s behaviour management policy.

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Care, Control and Physical Intervention

Schools should:

- Regularly acquaint staff with relevant school policy and DfE Guidance.
- Ensure that staff are provided with appropriate training.

This means that staff should:

- Adhere to the school's physical intervention policy.
- Always seek to defuse situations.
- Always use minimum force for the shortest period necessary.

Sexual Contact with Young People

Adults should:

- Not pursue sexual relationships with children and young people either in or out of school.
- Avoid any form of communication with a child or young person which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative i.e. verbal comments, letters, notes, electronic mail, phone calls, texts, physical contact.
- Not use student's personal mobile numbers in any circumstance (this includes as part of a WhatsApp group).

One to One Situations

Adults should:

- Avoid meetings with students in remote, secluded areas of school.
- Ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations.
- Inform other staff of the meeting beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by.
- Avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy.
- Always report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry to a senior colleague.
- Consider the needs and circumstances of the child / children involved.

Overnight Supervision and Examinations

- A full health and safety risk assessment should be undertaken.
- All members of the household should have the appropriate checks made.
- All arrangements should be made in partnership and agreement with the student and parents / carers.
- Arrangements involving one to one supervision should be avoided wherever possible.
- Staff should have regard to any guidance that exists.

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- As much choice, flexibility and contact with ‘the outside world’, should be incorporated into any arrangement so far as is consistent with appropriate supervision.
- Whenever possible, independent oversight of arrangements should be made.
- Any situation which gives rise to complain, disagreement or misunderstanding should be reported.
- Local Authorities and schools should ensure that all arrangements reflect a duty of care towards students and staff.

Transporting Children

Adults should:

- NOT take a student in a vehicle without another member of staff present and only in an emergency.
- Report the nature of the journey, the route and expected time of arrival to the DSL

Educational Visits and After School Clubs etc

Adults should:

- Always have another adult present in out of school activities, unless otherwise agreed with senior staff in school.
- Undertake a risk assessment.
- Have parental consent to the activity.
- Ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times.

First Aid and Administration of Medication

Adults should:

- Adhere to the school's safety policy.
- Adhere to the school's intimate care policy.
- Make other staff aware of the task being undertaken.
- Explain to the child what is happening.

Intimate Care

Adults should:

- Adhere to the school's intimate care guidelines.
- Make other staff aware of the task being undertaken.
- Explain to the child what is happening.
- Consult with colleagues where any variation from agreed procedure / care plan is necessary.
- Record the justification for any variations to the agreed procedure / care plan and share this information with parents.

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Curriculum

Adults should:

- Have clear written lesson plan.

Adults should not:

- Enter into or encourage inappropriate or offensive discussion about sexual activity.

Photography, Videos and other Creative Arts

Adults should:

- Be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs when the lesson / activity is concluded.
- Ensure that a senior member of staff is aware that the photography / image equipment is being used and for what purpose.
- Ensure that all images are available for scrutiny in order to screen for acceptability.
- Be able to justify images of children in their possession.
- Avoid making images in one to one situations.

Adults should not:

- Take, display or distribute images of children unless they have consent to do so.

Internet Use

Adults should:

- Follow the school policy on the use of IT equipment.

Whistleblowing

Adults should:

- Report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern.

Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents

Adults:

- Should be familiar with their school / service system for recording concerns.
- Should take responsibility for recording any incident, and passing on that information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of an individual in the school workplace.

Schools / services: Should have an effective, transparent and accessible system for recording and managing concerns raised by any individual in school or the workplace.

Responding to Allegations of abuse against a member of staff, other worker or volunteer

Please refer to guidelines: Allegations of abuse made against Staff- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019).

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Refer to Bexley LSCB procedures on allegations against school staff, other workers or volunteers for the detailed actions to be taken. In principle we at Blackfen School will:

- Identify a named Senior Manager responsible for managing allegations.
- Ensure the child's welfare is paramount.
- Ensure all reports or disclosures that indicate that an adult staff member or volunteer has:
 - Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child.
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
 - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children, are fully recorded and notified to Schools' HR and a consultation with the LADO is undertaken in all cases ensuring that the appropriate action is taken.
- Ensure that the adult about whom there are concerns is treated fairly and honestly and provided with support and provided with a named contact if they are suspended.
- Consider the safety and welfare of other children in the class/school.
- Remember that disciplinary action is the responsibility of the school but that any decisions should be made in consultation with the LADO and, if involved, the police; and
- Work with the LADO to keep the child and their family fully informed in relation to any investigation and subsequent action.

Chapter 10 Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation is a form of child abuse and as such is dealt with under the schools Safeguarding Policy. At Blackfen School, the Head Teacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead and Governors expect Safeguarding to be everybody's responsibility and all staff to adhere to and follow these policies. The school uses the World Health Organisation definition as written below.

Definition of FGM:

"Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or non-therapeutic reasons." (World Health Organisation-1997).

Government documents:

The school has taken information from several documents to write this appendix. These include, the Government Home Office guidelines and the Ofsted guidelines for "Inspecting Safeguarding".

The UK Government has written advice and guidance on FGM that states;

"FGM is considered child abuse in the UK and a grave violation of the human rights of girls and women. In all circumstances where FGM is practised on a child, it is a violation of the child's right to life, their right to their bodily integrity, as well as their right to health. The UK Government has signed a number of international human rights laws against FGM, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child."

"Girls are at particular risk of FGM during school summer holidays. This is the time when families may take their children abroad for the procedure. Many girls may not be aware that

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they may be at risk of undergoing FGM. UK communities that are most at risk of FGM include Kenyans, Somalis, Sudanese, Sierra Leoneans, Egyptians, Nigerians and Eritreans. However, women from non-African communities that are at risk of FGM include Yemeni, Kurdish, Indonesian and Pakistani women.”

Some of our students come from these ethnic groups and the purpose of our policy is to educate all students to recognise FGM for what it is – an abuse of the body and an abuse of human dignity so that they refrain from all such practices themselves and are able to identify and seek help for females within their families who are vulnerable to FGM.

Procedures School has in place:

- A robust attendance policy that does not authorise holidays, extended or otherwise.
- FGM awareness for Safeguarding leads and disseminated training for all staff at the front line dealing with families whose children may be at risk of witnessing FGM or maybe expected to support it.
- Comprehensive PSHE and Relationship and Sex Education delivered to all students which clearly states to our students that FGM is a criminal offence in this country and that as young men they should not in any way support the abuse of women in this or any other way.

It is important that the following key information is known by all of the school community.

Indications that FGM has taken place within the family:

- Prolonged absence from school with noticeable behaviour change – especially after a return from holiday.
- Spend long periods of time away from the class during the day.
- A child who has undergone FGM should be seen as a child protection issue. Medical assessment and therapeutic services to be considered at the Strategy Meeting.

Indications that a child is at risk of FGM:

- The family comes from a community that is known to practice FGM - especially if there are elderly women present.
- In conversation a child may talk about FGM.
- A child may express anxiety about a special ceremony.
- The child may talk or have anxieties about forthcoming holidays to their country of origin.
- Parent/Guardian requests permission for authorised absence for overseas travel or you are aware that absence is required for vaccinations.
- If a woman has already undergone FGM – and it comes to the attention of any professional, consideration needs to be given to any Child Protection implications e.g. for younger siblings, extended family members and a referral made to Social Care or the Police if appropriate. It is quite possible that a child returning from an extended holiday may disclose that a sister has undergone FGM whilst abroad.

Teachers must report any incidences of FGM that appear to have been carried out on a girl under 18 (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence). It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining students. Unless the

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teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate. However, all cases must be reported to the police.

If we have concerns that children in our school community are at risk of witnessing or victims of Female Genital Mutilation, then we refer to the Bexley Social Services.

If you suspect that a child is a victim of FGM you should speak with Ms Cascarino or in her absence Mrs Blatch. The person who reports it must refer to the police.

Chapter 11 Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism in our school.

The Blackfen School Prevent Strategy has been written in response to and in line with Government guidance and forms part of the Government's counter terrorism strategy (CONTEST).

Our aims are to:

- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and aspects of extremism and the threat faced from those who promote such views. We shall do this by using a range of curricular opportunities including RE, PPE, History, Drama and in our Challenge days.
- Provide practical help to prevent students from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support. We shall do this by making stakeholders such as parents, professional staff and students aware of the signs of possible interest in extremist views and radicalisation and what to do if a student presents as vulnerable and at risk of becoming involved in extremist activity.
- Work with a wide range of sectors where there are risks of radicalisation which need to be addressed including education, criminal justice, faith, charities the internet and health. We shall do this by attending inter-agency events including training that facilitate sharing good practice and cooperation between agencies.

INDICATORS OF VULNERABILITY TO RADICALISATION

1. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.
2. Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as:
Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.
3. Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as:
The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:
 - Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular Beliefs.
 - Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts.
 - Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts; or
 - Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.
4. There is no such thing as a 'typical extremist': those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.
5. Students may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social,

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personal and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that school staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.

6. Indicators of vulnerability include:

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

7. However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.

8. More critical risk factors could include:

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

All schools are required by law to teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral and cultural development of students and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

The purpose of the Blackfen’s Prevent strategy is to protect students from harm and to ensure they are taught in a way that is consistent with the law and British values. To this end it acts to:

- Raise awareness.
- Provide information.
- Enable learners to make a positive contribution.
- Safeguard young people.

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At Blackfen School all students have the opportunity to participate in a curriculum that promotes active learning and develop personal critical thinking skills. Students continue to experience British values of democracy through our very active and democratically elected student council; participation in voting for the UK Youth Parliament; engagement in mock elections on national issues of importance like the Scottish Independence and General Election campaigns.

The School actively promotes diversity and shared values between the school community, local community, the national and global community. This is evidenced by planned assemblies and dedicated community time to cultural diversity, gender equality, free speech and anti-bullying.

The School challenges all prejudices including Islamophobia and anti-Semitism and recognises any students at risk of isolation. The school challenges all right wing extremist views.

The emphasis on excellent pastoral care through the form tutor, Student Welfare Team, Behaviour for Learning policy, assemblies based on a range of welfare and safety issues and enrichment activities ensure that the school is a safe place to learn and that bullying or any form of prejudiced and hate based incident is rare and effectively dealt with.

Chapter 12 Children Missing Education

We believe that all children regardless of their circumstances are entitled to an efficient, full time education and will do our best to ensure that there are no children who miss out on education as this increases the significant risk of underachievement, being victims of harm, exploitation and radicalisation and becoming NEET in later life. To this end accurate record keeping, knowledge of our students and their families and effective information sharing between stakeholders is key to preventing poor outcomes for children.

Procedures to ensure that children do not miss education.

1. The school will maintain an accurate register of students on roll at Blackfen School and we shall enter new students on the admission register at the beginning of the first day that he is due to attend school. If a child does not arrive as expected, we shall contact the parent and the local authority to prevent the child from missing education. When a child is entered onto our register at a non-standard point we shall inform the local authority within five days along with information held within the register.
2. Parents of students at Blackfen School will be asked to provide two emergency contact numbers. Attendance is tracked at regular meetings with AAO (Attendance Advisory Officer) as well as pastoral staff within school. AAO makes home visits where there is cause for concern.
3. We will monitor students' attendance through our daily registers. Teachers are expected to register attendance for every lesson. Where attendance is low or irregular the issues causing poor attendance will be addressed with the child and parent. This would normally be done by the Student Welfare Team and Attendance.
4. Where attendance is low the local authority will be informed and the school will work with the Education Welfare Service and Fast Track to ensure the child attends school regularly.
5. The school working with the local authority and other agencies will make reasonable enquiries (see Children Missing Education 2016 (Point 37/Page 13) to ascertain the whereabouts of a child who should be in school.

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6. When a student leaves the school register we shall inform the local authority and supply the student's full name, parents' names, addresses and contact numbers (where the student will be living), destination school and start date, and the reason why their name is being deleted from the school's register.

7. We recognise that there are some groups of children who are especially vulnerable to missing education and the school will make a decision on an individual basis to highlight any contextual safeguarding information in relation to a child missing education.

8. From time to time there will be students for whom the school seeks alternative provision arrangements off site but still on the roll of our school. For these students, care will be taken to monitor attendance on a weekly basis, track student progress through assessment data, keep a record of the students' weekly timetable, be informed of any serious incidents of misconduct including exclusions and arrange a visit of a senior member of staff to the alternative provision.

Chapter 13 Knife crime

Knife crime is a term used commonly in the media to refer, primarily, to street based knife assaults and knife-carrying. However, there are many different criminal offences relating to knives. For example: v it is an offence to threaten or cause harm to a person with a bladed weapon v some bladed weapons are prohibited from being sold or purchased, including to anyone under the age of 18 v offences such as robbery or assault can be aggravated if a knife is involved v it is also an offence to carry a knife in a public place Gangs and Youth Violence Children who become involved in gangs are at risk of violent crime, access to weapons, violence against other gangs, knife crime, sexual violence and substance misuse. Staff should work together to clarify the risk locally, posed by local gangs and identify children at risk.

Chapter 14 County Lines

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns.

Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual.
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence.
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults.
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.
- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years.
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years.

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Chapter 15 Faith Abuse / Honour Based Violence

This term describes cultural justifications for violence and abuse. It can be used to justify violence and abuse against women, some men and children. Honour based violence is normally associated with cultures and communities from Asia, the Middle East and Africa as well as Gypsy and Traveller communities. If the individual concerned is under 18 existing Child Protection procedures should be instigated, using the appropriate procedures. This means making contact and / or a referral to Social Services. This encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community. This can include FGM, forced marriage and Breast ironing. All such concerns should be reported via the school's safeguarding procedures. Where FGM has taken place, there is a mandatory duty on teachers to personally report this to the police and they should liaise with DSLs in school in order to follow the correct procedures. All honour-based violence are forms of abuse.

Chapter 16 Upskirting

"Upskirting" typically involves taking a picture underneath a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence.

Chapter 17 Serious Violence

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved in serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

Chapter 18 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

Staff at Blackfen School are aware of the potential signs and indicators of CSE and concerns or suspicions are reported to the DSL who will contact Bexley Multi-Agency Hub (MASH) or duty social services in the relevant borough.

Chapter 19 Peer on Peer abuse

Where there is peer on peer abuse, support for the victim, resolution strategies and sanctions for the perpetrator should be put in place in line with the School's behaviour policy.

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However, the School acknowledges that the abuser may be a victim of abuse themselves. Advice can be sought from social services e.g. the MASH Team.

Chapter 20 Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. These can include: assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration. Students being more prone to peer group isolation than other children. The potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

To address these possible safeguarding issues, Blackfen School diligently monitor the SEN students as well as the students in the JIGSAW provision and may use targeted extra pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities.

Chapter 21 Contextual safeguarding

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

Chapter 22 Mental Health

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

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Appendix 1

FACTORS WHICH MAY INDICATE A CHILD IS BEING ABUSED

Possible Signs & Symptoms of Abuse

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered. This is not an exclusive list and many of the signs and symptoms could fall into more than one category. Guidance on recognising signs & symptoms of can be found in Chapter 4 of London Child Protection Procedures (2007). Also students with learning difficulties often exhibit some of these signs (e.g. reluctance to get undressed for P.E., constant tiredness) which are not necessarily signs of abuse but symptoms of their condition. However, it must also be remembered that disabled children are three times more likely to experience abuse or neglect than non-disabled peers.

Physical Abuse

- Unexplained and so called “accidental” injuries, burns or bruising.
- Improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries.
- Refusal to undress for PE.
- Self-destructive tendencies.
- Aggression towards others.
- Fear of physical contact - shrinking back if touched.
- Admitting that they are punished, but the punishment is excessive.
- Fear of suspected abuser being contacted.

Emotional Abuse

- Physical, mental and emotional development delays.
- Sudden speech disorders.
- Continual self-depreciation ('I'm stupid, ugly, worthless, etc').
- Overreaction to mistakes.
- Extreme fear of any new situation.
- Inappropriate response to pain ('I deserve this').
- Unusual attention seeking behaviour.
- Extremes of passivity or aggression.

Sexual Abuse

- Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child's age.
- Itchy or pain in the genital area.
- Other extreme reactions, such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia.

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- Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging.
- Being isolated or withdrawn.
- Inability to concentrate.
- Become worried about clothing being removed.
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures.
- Trying to be 'ultra-good' or perfect; overreacting to criticism.

Neglect

- Constant hunger.
- Poor personal hygiene.
- Constant tiredness.
- Poor state of clothing.
- Emaciation.
- Untreated medical problems.
- No social relationships.
- Compulsive scavenging.
- Destructive tendencies.
- Stealing food/money.
- Poor school attendance.
- Compulsive attention seeking.

ALWAYS SHARE YOUR CONCERN

Please keep this information sheet on your teacher planner or mark book where you have easy access to it.

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Appendix 2 DEALING WITH DISCLOSURES – HANDLING A ONE TO ONE

Receive

- Listen to the child. If you are shocked by what they tell you try not to show it. Take what they say seriously. Children rarely lie about abuse.
- To be disbelieved adds to the traumatic nature of the disclosing, Children may retract what they have said if they met with revulsion or disbelief.
- Allow the student to talk freely and accept what the child says. Be careful not to burden them with guilt by asking “Why didn’t you tell me before?”

Reassure

- Stay calm and reassure the child that they have done the right thing in talking to you. It’s essential to be honest with the child, so don’t make promises you may not be able to keep like “I’ll stay with you”.
- Don’t promise confidentiality – you have a duty to refer a child who is at risk to the designated teacher for Child Protection.
- Try to alleviate any feelings of guilt that a child displays. For example, you could say “you’re not to blame” or “you’re not alone”, “you’re not the only one this sort of thing has happened to”.
- Acknowledge how hard it must have been for the child to tell you what happened.
- Empathise with the child – don’t tell them what they should be feeling.

React

- React to the student only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter, but do not “interrogate” them for full details.
- Do not ask “leading” questions such as “what did he do next?” or “did he touch your private parts?”, such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child’s) in any later prosecution in court. Instead ask a minimum of open questions like “Tell me what has happened”, “Anything else to tell me?”, “Yes”, or “And?”
- Do not criticise the perpetrator, the student may love him/her and reconciliation may not be possible as your criticism.
- Do not ask the student to repeat everything to another member of staff.
- Explain to the child what you have to do next and to whom you have to talk.
- Inform the designated teacher for Child Protection.
- Try to see the matter through and keep in contact with the student.
- Ensure that if a Social Services interview is to follow, the student has a “support person” present if they wish (possibly yourself).

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Record

- Make some very brief notes at the time of the disclosure on any paper which comes to hand and write them up as soon as possible.
- Do not destroy your original notes in case they are requested by a court.
- Record the date, time, place, names of those present, circumstances, any noticeable non-related behaviour and the words used by the child. If the child uses their family's own private sexual words, record the actual words used rather than translating them into "proper" words.
- Be objective in your recording, including statements and observable things rather than your own assumptions or interpretations.

Support

- Make sure that you continue to support the child, providing time and a safe space throughout the process of investigation and afterwards.
- Get some support for yourself, without disclosing confidential information about the child to colleagues.

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Appendix 3 CONCERNED ABOUT A POSSIBLE CASE OF CHILD ABUSE?

SHARE IT IMMEDIATELY WITH THE DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR SAFEGUARDING OR THE HEAD TEACHER

Who will ensure that contact is made with social services without delay

THE DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR SAFEGUARDING IN THIS SCHOOL IS:

Ms Cascarino (Designated Safeguarding Lead)

CHILD PROTECTION – OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

1 Be aware and alert to signs of injury, distress or neglect. Ensure you have read the Child Protection Policy and know the correct procedures. Familiarise yourself with the signs and symptoms of child abuse.

2 Act quickly. Try to reassure and support the child and endeavour to create an atmosphere where the child can talk freely. It is important to find out as much about the circumstances as possible.

3 Discuss urgently with the Designated Teacher for Safeguarding. In this school the Designated Teacher for Child Protection is Ms Cascarino. She is responsible for any contact with the Social Services or parents.

3 Record carefully & without delay the circumstances and the action taken. Ensure that the Designated Teacher for Child Protection has the full details.

ALWAYS SHARE YOUR CONCERN

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Appendix 4 THRESHOLDS, THRESHOLD RESPONSE TABLE

S.47 (Child Protection)

S.17 (Child in Need)

Any allegation of abuse or neglect or any suspicious injury in a pre or non-mobile child.

Allegation of physical assault with no visible or only minor injury (other than to a pre- or non-mobile child)

Allegations or suspicions about a serious injury to a child

An incident /injury triggering concern e.g. a series of apparently accidental injuries or a minor non-accidental incident

Inconsistent or suspicions about a serious injury to a child

Repeated allegations or reasonable suspicions of non-accidental injury

Repeatedly expressed minor concerns from one or more sources

Scale 4 domestic violent risk indicator matrix

Scale 3 domestic violence risk indicator matrix. Supplementary London Child Protection Procedures

Allegations/reasonable suspicions of serious neglect

Allegations of periodic neglect including insufficient supervision: poor hygiene, clothing or nutrition: failure to seek/attend treatment or appointment: age inappropriate domestic chores, poor school attendance

Medical referral of non-organic failure to thrive in under fives

Direct allegation of sexual abuse made by child or abuser's confession to such abuse

Suspicions of sexual abuse e.g. sexualised behaviour, medical concerns or referral by concerned relative, neighbour, carer

Any allegation suggesting connections between sexually abused children in different families or more than one abuser

Individual who poses "A risk to children" moving into a household with under eighteen year olds

Any suspicious injury or allegation involving a child already subject the child protection plan or looked after by a local authority

No available parent/carer and child vulnerable to significant harm e.g. an abandoned baby

No available parent/carer, child in need of accommodation and no specific risk if this need met e.g. unaccompanied asylum seeking child

Suspicion that child has suffered or is at risk of significant harm due to fabricated/induced illness

Children subject of parental delusions which imply risk

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Child at risk of significant harm due to parental substance misuse, mental health or learning difficulty

Child in need of additional services due to parental substance use, mental health or learning difficulty

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Appendix 5 References, Procedures, Protocols and Assessment tools

“Barnardo's Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Risk Identification Matrix”

(LCPP Supplementary procedures)

www.londonscb.gov.uk/files/procedures/dv/dv_risk_assessment_matrix__final.pdf

Children Missing Education – Statutory Guidance for Local authorities 2016.

“Bexley Common Assessment Framework Guidance & Forms”

www.bexley.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4647

“Bexley Inter-Agency Referral Form for Children Social Care”

<http://www.bexley.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4092>

“Child in Need and Integrated Approach”

“Combating Bullying & Discriminatory Behaviour Strategy”

www.bexleyscb.org.uk/bexley_policies_and_procedures.html

“Information Sharing Guidance”

“Integrated Working without Boundaries - Pan London CAF Protocol”

www.younglondonmatters.org/uploads/documents/mobilityandyounglondoncafprotocol.pdf

“Inter-agency Protocol to meet Needs of Children Whose Parents have a Learning Difficulty or Disability”

“Interim Inter-Agency Protocol - Children who go Missing from Home or Care”

www.bexleyscb.org.uk/bexley_policies_and_procedures.html

“London Child Protection Procedures” 2007

<http://www.londoncpc.gov.uk/procedures.htm>

“Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education” 2007

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DfES-0027-2004.pdf>

“What to do if you are worried a Child is being Abused” 2006

www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00182

“When to Suspect Child Maltreatment” (NICE)

www.nice.org/CG89

Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2020)

“Working Together to Safeguard Children” September 2019

http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/AE53C8F9D7AEB1B23E403514A6C1B17D.pdf

“Worried about a Child....?” Bexley Children Social Care Threshold leaflet available from Children & Young People's Services

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Appendix 5 Standard Operating Procedure for Social Services Referrals

Step 1

When a referral is made to social services the referral must be filed and logged on the register within 24 hours.

Step 2

Within 1 working day if there is not any communication from Social Services a phone call will be made which will be followed up with a confirmation email.

Step 3

If communication still does not follow within 1 day, an email will be sent to the social worker and their line managers copied in.

Step 4

The student will be met on a fortnightly basis in CT time by the referrer to offer support and monitor the situation. Details of monitoring meetings will be recorded in the student safeguarding file.

Step 5

When Social Services make the student subject of a protection plan, regular sessions will be implemented with student. The school will send a representative to all child protection conferences, CHIN meetings and play an active role in Core Group meetings to active positive outcomes for the students.

Step 6

When Social services close the case, the confirmation letter will be filed and "resolved" will be logged on the safeguarding register.

This procedure is in line with Bexley's LSCB Problem Solving Protocol.

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Appendix 6 Role of the designated safeguarding lead

(Extracted from Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2019 page 19)

Governing bodies, proprietors and management committees should appoint an appropriate senior member of staff, from the school or college leadership team, to the role of designated safeguarding lead. The designated safeguarding lead should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. This should be explicit in the role-holder's job description. This person should have the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post. They should be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings – and/or to support other staff to do so – and to contribute to the assessment of children.

Deputy designated safeguarding leads

It is a matter for individual schools and colleges as to whether they choose to have one or more deputy designated safeguarding lead(s). Any deputies should be trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead.

Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead; this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

Manage referrals

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as required.
- support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care.
- refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required.
- support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme.
- refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required; and
- refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.

Work with others

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- liaise with the Head Teacher or principal to inform him or her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- as required, liaise with the "case manager" (as per Part four) and the designated Lead(s) at the local authority for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member); and
- liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies. Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff.

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Training

The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be annually.

The designated safeguarding lead or deputy should undertake Prevent awareness training.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments.
- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.
- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers.
- are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

Raise Awareness

The designated safeguarding lead should:

- ensure the school or college's child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately.
- ensure the school or college's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this.
- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this; and
- link with the local LSCB to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.

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Child protection file

Where children leave the school or college ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main student file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. To respond promptly and accurately to requests from destination schools and colleges with regard to any known safeguarding issues.

Availability

During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools and colleges, working with the designated safeguarding lead, to define what “available” means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Skype or other such media is acceptable.

It is a matter for individual schools and colleges and the designated safeguarding lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

87 Section 17(10) Children Act 1989: those unlikely to achieve a reasonable standard of health and development without local authority services, those whose health and development is likely to be significantly impaired without the provision of such services, or disabled children.

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INTERNAL NOTIFICATION OF CONCERN FORM

	Child's name (in CAPITAL letters please):	
	Surname:	First name:
	Date of birth:	

	Home address (including Post Code:)

	Details of Concern

	Please print your name in BLOCK capitals
	<hr/> Date: