

1. Introduction and aim

Bigland Green recognises the important role the school has in the early recognition of the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect, and of protecting the wellbeing and welfare of children/pupils. Teachers and other school staff members are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour and failure to develop because they have daily contact with the children. The purpose of this policy is to:

- inform staff, parents/carers, governors, volunteers and supply staff (including contractors) about the school's responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection, and enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how these responsibilities should be carried out effectively, and;
- ensure all pupils on the school roll are effectively safeguarded including those pupils in Alternative Provision (AP) placements.

The school's procedures for safeguarding children are in line with the [Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership \(THSCP\)](#) and child protection procedures which are based on the London Child Protection Procedures. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the THSCP.

The guidance from the DfE (Sept 2024) defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online;
- preventing the impairment of a child's physical and mental health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and;
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

The school trains staff members so that safeguarding and child protection concerns, referrals and monitoring are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the child's needs. The phrase 'child protection' refers to the processes followed to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm. This policy applies to all pupils, staff, governors, volunteers, parents and visitors (including contractors).

2. Framework

Key documents, which inform this policy, are:

- [Keeping children safe in education](#): Statutory guidance for schools and colleges, DfE, updated 2 September 2024
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#) (HM Government December 2023, Updated 23rd February 2024)
- [London Child Protection Procedures revised 7th Edition](#) (London Safeguarding Children Board, 25th April 2024)
- [Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership Levels of Need Guidance](#) (September 2023)
- [Tower Hamlets SCP Supplementary Guidance for Schools/settings and Education Settings on Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff and Concerns that do not meet the Harm Threshold](#), LBTH September 2024
- [Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership \(THSCP\) Arrangements](#), June 2019 (Updated March 2023)
- [Information Sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services](#) (Department for Education, May 2024)
- [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#) (4th January 2024)
- [Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities](#), DfE, (August 2024)
- [Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales \(2023\)](#) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

3. Three main elements of this policy

Prevention

- Providing an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, feel confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties.
- Raising awareness of all staff, of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt actions.
- Ensuring that all adults within our school who have access to children have been rigorously checked as to their suitability using safe recruitment procedures.

Protection

- Through the establishment of a systematic means of monitoring children, known or thought to be at risk of harm.
- Through the establishment of structured procedures within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- Through the development of effective working relationships with all other agencies, involved in safeguarding children.

Support

- Ensuring that key concepts of child protection are integrated within the school curriculum and pupils are educated about risks associated with internet use and new technology.
- Ensuring that children are listened to and their concerns taken seriously and acted upon.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Bigland Green governing body takes seriously its statutory responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm. It aims to limit children's exposure to online risks from the school's IT system and ensures the school has appropriate online filtering and monitoring systems in place and regularly reviews the effectiveness.

Safeguarding encompasses issues such as pupil health and safety, bullying and a range of other issues, e.g. arrangements to meet the medical needs of children with medical conditions, providing first aid, school security, drugs and substance misuse. Safeguarding vulnerable people/children from radicalisation is no different from safeguarding them from other forms of harm. Appendix 1 details the school's measures to safeguard its pupils from radicalisation and extremism and how to seek the necessary support when required in accordance with the guidance in the Prevent Duty.

Responsibilities of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure that the safeguarding policies and procedures are fully implemented and followed.
- Ensure that resources are allocated to enable the designated safeguarding leads and other staff to attend strategy discussion, inter-agency meetings and contribute to assessments.
- Ensure that appropriate members of staff have received training on the use of the Common Assessment Framework in order to identify children with additional needs to receive appropriate support at an early stage.
- Be responsible for receiving allegations against staff and volunteers. Consult the LADO to ensure that the matter is dealt with in an objective and transparent manner. Investigations will be dealt with in accordance with the 'Safeguarding Children & Safer Recruitment in Education', guidelines.

Responsibilities of the designated safeguarding leads (DSL)

- The designated safeguarding lead will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety/understanding the filtering and monitoring systems).
- Ensure all staff receive basic child protection training at least once every three years.
- Ensuring that all records are kept confidentially and secure.
- Referring a child if there are concerns about a child's welfare, possible abuse or neglect, to the LBTH Multi Agency Support Team (MAST) in Tower Hamlets Children's Social Care.
- Acting as a focal point for staff concerns and liaising with other agencies and professionals.

- Ensure that an appropriately informed member of staff attends case conferences, family support meetings, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings. Contributing to the Framework for Assessments process.
- Ensure that all volunteers and supply teaching staff are made aware of the CP procedures.
- Attend THLSCB training for the role once every two years.
- Providing an annual report for the governing body, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by the DSL, school staff and governors.

Responsibilities of staff in the school (teaching & non-teaching)

- Keep up-to-date of child protection issues and receive training at least once every year.
- Be alert to signs of abuse or neglect and report immediately to the Designated Person. Report cases of FGM to the police.
- Follow school policies and procedures on behaviour management and code of conduct.
- To be aware of the local Early Help process and understand their role in it.
- To be aware of the process of making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 that may follow a referral, along with the role that they might be expected to play in such assessments.

Parental involvement/responsibility

It is important that parents/carers understand the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; share information and cooperate with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare. In general, the staff will seek to discuss any concerns about a child's welfare with the family and, where possible, seek their agreement to making referral to children's social care. However, this should only be done where it will not place a child at increased risk of significant harm.

5. School procedures

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) at Bigland Green is the Inclusion Lead and SENDCo – Elena. The school has two deputy designated safeguarding leads who are the Learning Mentor (Jorina), and the Headteacher (Abdul-Hayee). If a member of staff is concerned about a child, then they must inform the DSL or one of the deputies and report their concern using the 'add incident' function in CPOMS. CPOMS is a Child Protection Online Management System and can be accessed on all internet devices using <https://bigland.cpoms.net>

If CPOMS is unavailable, then staff can report their concern using the form attached in appendix 2. If a member of staff is unsure, whether their concern is a child protection concern then they should discuss their concern first with the DSL or one of the deputies. Staff members should always add the incident to CPOMS if it is an urgent child protection concern. If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. Anybody can make a referral in such situation by dialling 020 7364 3444 and need not go through the DSL.

Any concerns must be recorded by the member of staff on the same day using CPOMS. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observation with the correct date and time. Appendix 3 provides a guide to reporting concerns on CPOMS. Appendix 4 provides a summary of reporting an allegation against a member of staff – please see section 9 for more details.

The DSL will follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board, and may refer the matter to the LBTH Multi Agency Support Team (MAST) in Tower Hamlets Children's Social Care. In some cases, parents may be notified, but staff should not notify parents in advance if there is any risk of:

- (a) further endangering the child or children involved;
- (b) compromising the integrity of any evidence which may later be used in court, or
- (c) causing any alleged perpetrator of child abuse to be protected from investigation.

Only the DSL should make decisions about when to disclose child protection issues to parents and other staff must assume that information about child protection issues is strictly confidential, and act accordingly. If a referral is made to the MAST, the DSL will ensure that a written report of the concerns is sent to the social worker dealing with the case within 48 hours. Particular attention is paid to the

attendance and development of any child who has been identified as 'at risk' or who has been made subject to a Child Protection Plan. If a pupil about whom safeguarding concerns have been raised changes school, the DSL or the Deputy DSL will inform the social worker responsible for the case (if there is one) and transfer the appropriate records to the receiving school. They will also inform the Local Authorities involved.

All staff members are required to provide relevant information about any person who lives or works in the same household as them who may pose a risk to children.

Voice of the child

Staff need to be aware of and promote the systems in place at the school which enable children to share their concerns and report abuse confidently. Children need to be assured that their concerns will be taken seriously by staff and action will be taken to safeguard and protect them. It is also important that staff determine how best to build safe and trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitates communication and the sharing of concerns. The systems in place to facilitate children voicing their concerns and abuse include:

- clear signposting and promotion throughout the school of who you can talk to if you are worried
- a curriculum that supports the voice of the child through 'Big Thinking'

Dealing with a disclosure

If a pupil discloses that they have been abused in some way, the member of staff should:

- Always stop and listen to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse, without displaying shock & disbelief.
- Take the child seriously. Always assume that they are telling the truth.
- Do not promise confidentiality; you have a duty to refer to the DSL to seek help.
- Do reassure and alleviate guilt. For example, you could say; 'you are not to blame.' 'You have done the right thing to tell someone.'
- Do not ask leading questions. For example, 'What did she do next?' (this assumes that she did), or 'did he touch your private part'. The child may well have to tell the story again, and to do so repeatedly will cause undue stress. In cases where criminal proceedings occur, such questioning can cause evidence to become invalid.
- Do try and get as much information as possible. You can ask questions like: What happened? What were you doing? When did it happen? Who was there? Where did it happen?
- Do not ask the child to repeat the incident for another member of staff.
- End by summarising what has been said and what action has been agreed.
- Record carefully what has been said and what actions have been agreed.
- Discuss your concern/disclosure with the DSL only, at the earliest opportunity.

Record keeping

When a pupil has made a disclosure the member of staff should:

- Make brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation (these notes should be made before speaking to the DSL). Do not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court.
- Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child. Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury.
- Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions.
- Add the incident to CPOMS on the same day.

6. School procedures for children missing education

The school will cooperate fully for the effective implementation of the statutory guidance for Local Authorities in regards to children missing education. In particular, the school will do the following:

1. The Local Authority will be notified in writing before a pupil is removed from the school register unless it is at a standard transition point.
2. Before moving a pupil from the school register, the school will make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child has not been attending school regularly.
3. The school will inform the LA of a new admission within five days if the admission is not at a standard transition point in writing and provide the information listed for taking a pupil off roll.

The school will ensure that any absences of more than two consecutive school days are followed up by a telephone call. Parents will be required to provide a written note explaining any absence of more than three consecutive days on the pupils' return to school. If parents inform that they plan to home-educate their child, then this information will be communicated in writing to the LA.

7. Training and support

The Governing body will ensure that:

- There is a designated member of the leadership team who has undertaken Designated Person Child Protection training and is the DSL.
- A member of the governing body is fully trained for safeguarding.
- There are two other members of staff who will act in the absence of the DSL, who also have appropriate training.
- All members of staff will receive appropriate training to develop their:
 - understanding of signs and indicators of abuse, (appendix 5)
 - understanding of how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse
 - understanding of the procedures to be followed in sharing a concern of possible abuse or a disclosure of abuse
 - specific guidance in recognising signs of abuse, FGM, child trafficking and exploitation, child sexual exploitation, children at risk from extremism and radicalisation, domestic violence, E-safety (use of ICT, the Internet and Social Media), forced marriage, violence against women and girls, involvement in gangs, drugs and neglect (appendix 1 and 6).
- New staff, supply staff and volunteers will be advised of the school's safeguarding and child protection arrangements and contact details of the DSL, as part of their induction.

Safer recruitment training

Preventing unsuitable people from working with children and young people is essential to keeping children safe. Rigorous selection and recruitment of staff and volunteers is a key responsibility of the Headteacher and the governing body. The Headteacher and a nominated governor will complete the 'Safer Recruitment' training, either on-line or through the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. Governors may nominate other senior members of staff to undertake the training. A single central record of checks will be maintained and reviewed regularly by the governing body.

Extended school, lettings and the use of the premises by others

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body using the school premises, the governing body will seek written assurance that the body concerned follows safer recruitment procedures and has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children. The safeguarding standards expected of non-regulated external organisations are set out in the Department for Education's Keeping Children Safe during community activities, after school-clubs and tuition: non-statutory guidance for providers running out-of-school activities (April 2022).

Confidentiality

The school recognises that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

- The Designated Person will disclose personal information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being or that of another.
- Always undertake to share the school's intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation.

Supporting staff members

We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered or likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to seek further support. This could be provided for all staff by, for example, the Head teacher, by Occupational Health, and/or a teacher/trade union representative as appropriate.

8. Link with other school policies

This child protection policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies. All these and other school policies are available on the staff shared drive or from the school office.

- Bullying / Cyber bullying - (refer to school's anti-bullying policy document)
- Racist Incidents – (refer to the school single equality policy)
- Pupils with Medical Needs (refer to the school's first aid policy)
- Looked After Children (refer to the policy for looked after children)
- Whistle-blowing (refer to the school's policy)
- Photography, Video, Internet use (refer to the starter pack/prospectus)
- Work Experience (refer to the school's policy on volunteers in school)
- Online Safety
- Staff Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) (refer to school's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policy)

9. Allegations against staff members

All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. All staff are made aware of the school's behaviour/discipline policy and the staff code of conduct, with reference to professional boundaries in the staff handbook.

We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Headteacher.

The Headteacher will assume the role of a case manager and try to establish the practical details about the time, date(s) and location of the abuse and the names of potential witnesses. On no account will they seek to interview the child/ren or the alleged staff. A written record will be kept. All such allegations will be reported to and discussed with the LADO¹(local authority designated officer) in the first instance who will facilitate a referral to the Child Protection Advice Line as necessary. In the event that the LADO is not contactable, the Child Protection Advice Line will be contacted directly.

If an allegation made to a member of staff, concerns the behaviour of the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair² of governors (who is also the safeguarding governor) who will act as the case manager and consult the LADO without notifying the Headteacher. Contact can be made directly with the LADO if the Chair of governors is unavailable or the concern is of a serious nature which requires immediate action.

Further information³ about dealing with an allegation against a staff member can be found on the THSP Supplementary Guidance, a copy of which is kept in the school child protection folder for reference purpose.

10. Monitoring, evaluation and review

This effectiveness of this policy will be monitored on a continuous basis by the headteacher. Any significant factors will be reported to the full governing body. Any urgent issues will be raised with the Chair of governors immediately.

The designated governor will review the effectiveness of this policy at least once a year and report back to the full governing body. The policy will be reviewed annually by the full governing body.

Approved	Signature	Review date
October 2024	B. A. Patilla	September 2025

¹ The LADO at LBTH is Melanie Benzie, Tel. 020 7364 0677; LADO@towerhamlets.gov.uk

² The Chair of governor is Barbara Patilla (contact details in school office); admin@biglandgreen.towerhamlets.sch.uk

³ KCSIE 2024 Part 4 and the THSCP Supplementary Guidance- Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff – September 2024

Appendix 1

Radicalisation and Extremism (Prevent)

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk is part of the school's safeguarding approach. There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home).

For Bigland Green to fulfil its Prevent Duty, it is essential that staff are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation, as mentioned before, is a part of the wider safeguarding duties and no different from protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. We can build pupils' resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views. This should be done as part of Big Thinking, and opportunities created during the course of teaching on an on-going basis. The school has a risk assessment and Prevent Checklists, as part of their Prevent Duty, which is available to all staff in the shared drive.

In accordance with the Prevent Duty the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place when children access the internet via school devices and when using the school network. The school meets the Department for Education's Filtering and Monitoring Standards through

- identifying and assigning roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems;
- reviewing filtering and monitoring provision at least annually;
- blocking harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning, and;
- having effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs.

Reporting

In the first instance, report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead to deal with the concerns about a child being involved in, drawn into, or susceptible to violent extremism, the DSL will follow the referral route set out in 'The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation. In LBTH the Prevent Education Officer is Iona Karrman-Bailey: Iona.Karrman-Bailey@towerhamlets.gov.uk. In LBTH all Prevent referrals related to children should be made through the Multi Agency Support Team.

Early Help

All staff are trained and prepared to identify children who may benefit from Early Help, which is providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. This can be support provided through school's internal pastoral system and resources and/or Local Authority services and other external agencies. The Tower Hamlets Early Help Strategy recognises the important role schools have in identifying children and families who are at risk of poor outcomes without early intervention. All staff need to recognise that all children may benefit from Early Help at any point in their childhood, but some children may benefit from Early Help more than others. These are children with known vulnerabilities, which are:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- has a mental health need;
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care; and
- is at risk of so-called honour based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- is a privately fostered child;
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

The DSL will contact the LBTH MAST for support and advice if required: 020 7364 5006 (Option 3) 020 7364 3444/5601/5606/5358/7796

Appendix 2 – Child Protection Record of Concern

Please use this sheet to report your concerns to the Designated Person for child protection when CPOMs is not available. CPOMs is the preferred way of reporting at Bigland Green.



PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Part 1: to be completed by the person reporting the concern or the allegation

Child's full name:			
Date of birth		Class	
Record the allegation in child's own words or provide details of your concern – please be clear, precise and factual (use additional sheet if required)			
Name of staff		Signature	Date

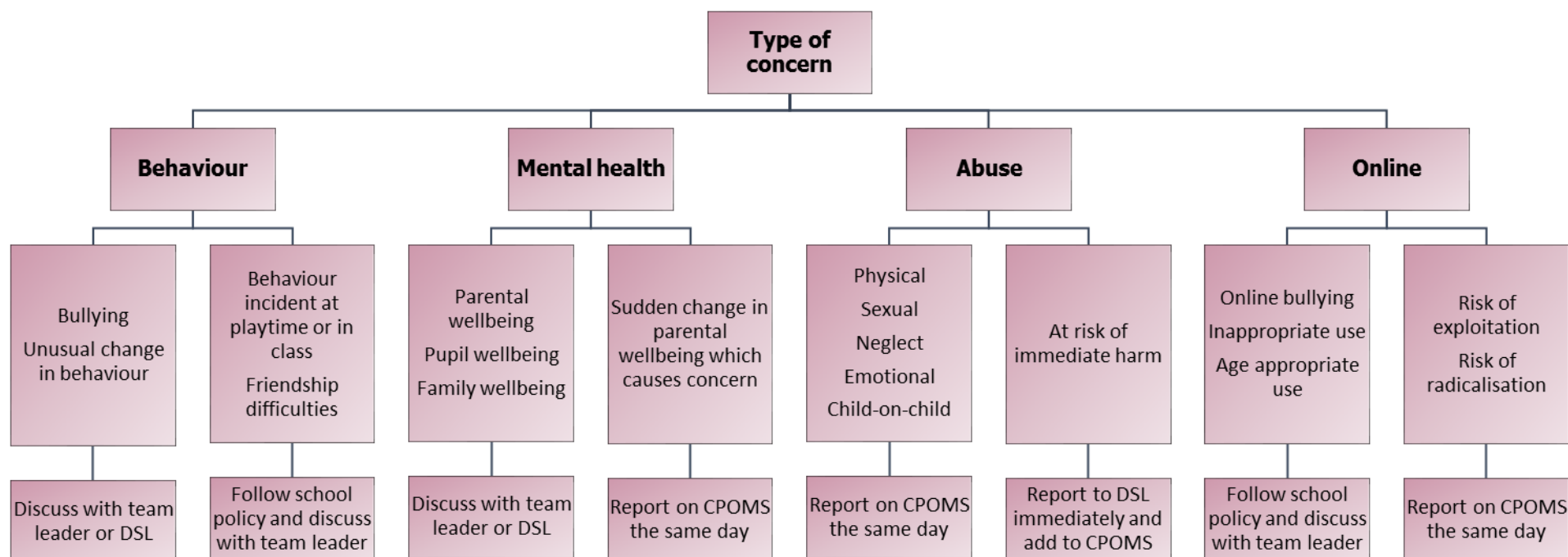
Part B: to be completed by the Designated Person

Actions taken & outcome			
Name of staff		Signature	Date

Appendix 3: Reporting of **allegations against staff members** or governors or outside agency

An allegation against a member of staff (other than the Headteacher)	Report to the Headteacher.
An allegation against the Headteacher	Report to the Safeguarding Governor (who is also the Chair of the governing body) If the Safeguarding Governor is not available then report to the LADO
An allegation against a governor	Report to the Safeguarding Governor (who is also the Chair of the governing body) If the allegation is about the Safeguarding Governor then report to the LADO.
An allegation against an outside agency	Liaise with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome.

Appendix 4: CPOM reporting guide for Bigland Green Primary School



Appendix 5

Types of abuse and their symptoms

Physical Abuse

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

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unexplained injuries – bruises /abrasions /lacerations ▪ The account of the accident may be vague or may vary from one telling to another. ▪ Unexplained burns ▪ Regular occurrence of unexplained injuries <p>Most accidental injuries occur on parts of the body where the skin passes over a bony protrusion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Withdrawn or aggressive behavioural extremes ▪ Uncomfortable with physical contact ▪ Seems afraid to go home ▪ Complains of soreness or moves uncomfortably ▪ Wears clothing inappropriate for the weather, in order to cover body. ▪ The interaction between the child and its carer

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and / or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may involve a parent failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter or protect a child from physical and emotional harm/danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); and access to appropriate medical care or treatment

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

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unattended medical need; Underweight or obesity ▪ Recurrent infection; Unkempt dirty appearance ▪ Smelly, inadequate /unwashed clothes ▪ Consistent lack of supervision; consistent hunger ▪ Inappropriately dressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poor social relationships; indiscriminate friendliness ▪ Poor concentration; low self-esteem ▪ Regularly displays fatigue or lethargic; frequently falls asleep in class ▪ Frequent unexplained absences

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development, and may involve:

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or not valued;
- Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction;
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another; serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children; exploiting and corrupting children.

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poor attachment relationship, unresponsive/ neglectful behaviour towards the child's emotional needs ▪ Persistent negative comments about the child, ▪ Inappropriate or inconsistent expectations, Self-harm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low self-esteem, unhappiness, anxiety, withdrawn, insecure, attention seeking, passive or aggressive behavioural extremes

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. Sexual abuse includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sign of blood / discharge on the child' underclothing ▪ Awkwardness in walking/sitting; pain or itching – genital area; bruising, scratching, bites on the inner thighs/external genitalia. ▪ Self-harm; sudden weight loss or gain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sexually proactive behaviour or knowledge that is incompatible with the child's age & understanding. ▪ Drawings & or written work that is sexually explicit ▪ Self-harm/suicide attempts; running away ▪ Substance abuse; significant devaluing of self

Appendix 6

Specific topics

Schools/settings need to be alert to the possible signs and symptoms of all forms of abuse. In “Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges – 2 September 2024” (DfE, Sept 2024) detailed information is provided by the DfE in Annexe A & B relating to:

- Bullying (Including Cyberbullying)
- Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents
- Child Criminal Exploitation Including County Lines
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Child-On-Child Abuse
- Child-On-Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment
- Children and the Court System
- Children who are absent from education
- Children with Family Members in Prison
- Domestic Abuse
- FGM mandatory reporting for teachers
- Homelessness
- Mental health
- Modern Slavery
- Online Harms
- Private Fostering
- SEND Children
- Serious Youth Violence
- So-Called Honour-Based Abuse
- So-Called Honour-Based Abuse including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Young Carers
- Youth Produced Sexual Imagery

Some of these are given below with brief guidance. For more detailed guidance please see In “Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges – 2 September 2024” (DfE, Sept 2024).

Bullying (Including Cyberbullying)

Bullying is a very serious issue that can cause anxiety and distress. All incidences of bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy/Pupil Behaviour Policy/Child-on-child abuse Policy, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 and Behaviour in Schools. Please refer to the school’s anti-bullying policy document.

Child Criminal Exploitation Including County Lines

Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools (mainstream and special), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children’s homes and care homes. Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

Many of the indicators of children involved in County Lines are as described above under CCE. However, in addition they can include children who:

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

Further information on the signs of a child’s involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office and The Children’s Society County Lines Toolkit for Professionals.

When referring children at risk of Exploitation to MAST, the school will give consideration to completing an Exploitation Screening Tool to support the Local Authority's assessment of risk to the child.

[N.B. Primary schools should be alert to the increase vulnerability of children under 10 years old being exploited because they are under the age of criminal responsibility]

Child Sexual Exploitation

Staff should be vigilant and be aware of the following indicators of CSE, which is by no means an exhaustive list, and report all concerns immediately to the DSL:

- children who are in possession of multiple phones and overly anxious to check their phones
- children who experience sudden changes in behaviour e.g. looking agitated, children who want to leave the school premises at lunchtime
- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.
- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

The school communicates the CSE risks to children through the PSHE and RSE curriculum in a child-friendly and appropriate manner.

For further information staff can read the Home Office Statutory Guidance on Child Sexual Exploitation as well as speaking to the DSL.

Child-on-child abuse

Staff must be aware that children may be harmed by other children. Child-on-child abuse can happen both inside and outside of school including online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse. Staff should treat all reports of child-on-child abuse very seriously and make it clear that all forms are unacceptable. As with all forms of abuse the occurrence of child-on-child abuse is an infringement of a child's human rights. Abuse is abuse and will never be dismissed as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. The school adopts a Zero Tolerance Approach to child-on-child abuse. All staff should recognise that even though there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse among pupils, such abuse may still be taking place and that it is simply not being reported. Staff should recognise that child-on-child abuse can take many forms and may be facilitated by technology, including:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- physical abuse such as biting, hitting, kicking or hair pulling
- sexually harmful behaviour and sexual abuse including inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault or rape
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos
- upskirting – taking a picture under a person's clothing without their knowledge and/or permission with the attention of viewing their buttocks or genitals (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification. It is a criminal offence.
- initiation/hazing - used to introduce newcomers into an organisation or group by subjecting them to a series of trials and challenges, which are potentially humiliating, embarrassing or abusive.
- prejudice and discrimination - behaviours which cause a person to feel powerless, worthless or excluded originating from prejudices around belonging, identity and equality, for example, prejudices linked to disabilities, special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender and sexual identity.

All staff must be aware that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex and it can happen in any environment including schools, the family home as part of intra-familial abuse and via online platforms. It can also occur when a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or a group of children. The abuse may be perpetrated by a younger child towards an older child because of an imbalance of power caused by factors such as height difference or cognitive ability.

We have the following procedures in place to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse:

- Safeguarding training for staff
- We address child-on-child abuse through our curriculum, in line with Relationships Education, Sex and Relationships Education and Health Education guidance

As part of school's wider safeguarding culture, staff should maintain an 'it could happen here' approach in regard to child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment and understand that children in the school and the local community may be experiencing such forms of child-on-child abuse, including that facilitated by technology, regardless of the number of reports the DSL receives.

Allegations of child-on-child abuse will be recorded on CPOMS and investigated by the DSL and if necessary referred to MAST. Victims, perpetrators and other children affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported by the designated safeguarding leads, SENCo, learning mentor and appropriately trained class staff.

Children who are absent from education

The school closely monitors attendance, absence, suspensions, and exclusions. A child absent from education, whether prolonged or on repeat occasions, can be a vital warning sign of a wide range of safeguarding issues and is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including child sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation, and child criminal exploitation (county lines).

In accordance with the DfE's Working together to improve school attendance, the school follows up on absences and addresses persistent absence as part of its safeguarding duty. Such an approach prevents the risk of these children becoming children missing education in the future. Staff address daily absence and persistent absence as soon as these problems emerge as part of school's early help response. Staff should be alert to children already known to be vulnerable especially Children known to a Social Worker and Looked After Children, since absence from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community. Staff must also be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

School staff need to follow the protocol set out in the school's Attendance Policy.

When a pupil does not return to school and the whereabouts of the child and their family are not known, the school will make reasonable enquiries and refer the child to the Attendance & Welfare Advisor to support with those enquiries to ascertain the child's whereabouts, and only after these steps have been taken refer to the Local Authority using a Missing Children referral form.

Contact: LBTH CME Officer, Tower Hamlets Education Safeguarding Service,
Nasihah.Anwer@towerhamlets.gov.uk 020 7364 3426 / 07562 431 817

Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse recognises that domestic abuse may occur in different types of relationships, including ex-partners and family members and is not restricted to the family home. According to the definition the person perpetrating the abuse and the person to whom the abusive behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and be "personally connected". Domestic Abuse may involve a range of abusive behaviours, which may be a single incident or a pattern of abuse, including physical, sexual, emotional and economic abuse, and coercive and controlling behaviour.

Staff should be aware that all children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home because of the abuse. Children can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'.

In response to safeguarding reports received about children involving Domestic Abuse, the school will make contact with Children's Social Care for advice and guidance. Where appropriate school will complete a DASH Risk Assessment with the individual reporting as a victim of Domestic Abuse.

The school has signed up to the Metropolitan Police's Operation Encompass project. Operation Encompass ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, and where there are children in the household, the police will notify the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead before the child arrives at school the following day, so that the school can provide 'silent support' to the child and follow up with Children's Social Care where appropriate.

FGM mandatory reporting for teachers

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, FGM is a criminal offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers, along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils or students. Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. However, teachers should notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead of this action as well as reporting the disclosure of FGM in line with school's safeguarding procedures.

The duty on teachers to report to the police does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures and report concerns to the DSL. If in doubt, staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. School staff can refer to the HM Government Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance on FGM, Updated 30th July 2020.

Mental health

All staff have an important role in supporting the mental well-being of children and to identify behaviour that may suggest a child is experiencing mental health problems. All staff need to recognise that mental health may be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff should be aware of the trauma and mental health impact on a child who has had adverse childhood experiences including abuse, bereavement and separation of parents. Staff should also be aware that the pandemic has had a negative impact on the mental health of many children, some of whom have never previously experienced difficulties with their mental health. However, all staff should be clear that only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health difficulty.

School staff concerned about a child's mental wellbeing should talk to the Inclusion Lead. The Inclusion Lead works with ELSA and THEWS as part of its development of a whole school approach to mental well-being. For further information staff should read relevant government guidance including Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges (2022) and Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (2018).

Modern Slavery

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer to the National Referral Mechanism is available in the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance. The DSL will refer all potential child victims of modern slavery to the Local Authority via MAST.

Online Harms

Children should have the right to explore the digital environment but also the right to be safe when on it. However, technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm, and the use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Examples of which include child sexual exploitation; child criminal exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation/grooming; and forms of child-on-child abuse such as cyberbullying and nudes and semi-nudes.

In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse other children online, which can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content. In accordance with Behaviour in Schools. Advice for headteachers and school staff (September 2022), the school promotes as part of its culture of

excellent standards of behaviour that the same standards of behaviour are expected online as apply offline, and that every pupil should be treated with kindness, respect and dignity.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk that should form the framework for school's approach to Online Safety:

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example, pornography, fake news, racism, prejudice-based content, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism;
- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example, peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults with the intention of grooming or exploiting them for sexual, criminal; financial or other purposes;
- Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual or non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes), and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying.
- Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. When pupils are at risk of phishing, school can reports concerns to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

The school is committed to ensuring that Online Safety is a running and interrelated theme throughout its safeguarding arrangements including policy and procedure, the curriculum, staff training and induction, the role of the DSL, and parental engagement. This includes promoting an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring systems in place when children access the internet via school devices and the school network. As part of a whole school approach the school is committed to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to be empowered and upskilled in keeping children safe online through the sharing of Online Safety information, advice and guidance including the offer of workshops to support parents for example in installing safeguards on to their children's digital devices.

In accordance with Department for Education's guidance, Mobile Phones in Schools (February 2024), the school prohibits the use of mobile/smart phones throughout the school day as set out in the Behaviour Policy.

Staff should report Online Safety concerns about pupils to the DSL as with all other safeguarding concerns. When it comes to the safety and well-being of the child, the response to the risks and harms that children may experience in the online or digital environment should be no different than the offline, face to face world. Staff should be aware that children with known vulnerabilities such as SEND, LAC and PLAC children and Children known to a Social Worker, may be more vulnerable to harm and exploitation in the online and digital environments.

SEND Children

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or physical health issues can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children, which can include:

- professionals and other adults making assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities or certain medical conditions being vulnerable to experiencing peer exclusion and isolation and being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying (including prejudice-based bullying), without outwardly showing any signs;
- children not understanding that what is happening to them is abuse; and
- communication barriers when reporting abuse and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Further information on safeguarding SEND children is available in the non-statutory guidance Safeguarding Disabled Children (2009); NSPCC Safeguarding Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (May 2022), and NSPCC Safeguarding d/Deaf Children and Children who have disabilities at greater risk of abuse (June 2024), but staff should speak with the DSL and SENDCO in the first instance. All staff are regularly trained to understand and be aware of the additional barriers that exist when safeguarding SEND children. All staff need to be aware that SEND children may be more vulnerable when online and using digital platforms, and it is important that Online Safety lessons and related advice are tailored to their individual needs.