



# The Aldgate School

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Last Reviewed	September, 2024	<b>Notes</b> <b>Designated person term time:</b> Alexandra Allan <b>Deputy:</b> Philip Watkins <b>Designated person non-term time:</b> Georgina Poullais, Zahida Hussain <b>Designated governor for Child protection and safeguarding:</b> Jacqueline Greenlees <b>Chair of governors:</b> Beverley Ryan
Review Cycle	Yearly	
Review by	Designated Safeguarding Lead	

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# What's inside this policy?

Part 1: Child Protection and Safeguarding information for staff

Part 2: The management of safeguarding

Part 3: Child Protection Procedures

Part 4: Recruitment, vetting, selection and staff conduct

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## Our School Vision

Our school vision underpins everything that we do and the way we work at The Aldgate School. It is our duty as staff, to ensure that every pupil and member of staff is safe and well cared for.

*Every member of our school community will develop a questioning approach to faith, grounded in the principles of Christian hope, which prompts everyone to seize every opportunity for growth, to look beyond themselves and lovingly serve their community and the wider world.*

At The Aldgate School, we recognise that no single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

This policy has been developed to ensure that all adults at The Aldgate School are working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils. It describes the management systems and arrangements in place to create and maintain a safe learning environment for all pupils and staff. It identifies actions that should be taken to address any concerns about pupil welfare.

The Headteacher or, in their absence, the member of staff deputising for them, has the ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils goes beyond implementing basic child protection procedures. It is an integral part of all the activities and functions of The Aldgate School.

## Part 1: Safeguarding information for staff

This policy aims to provide all members of staff, governors and volunteers, children and young people, and their families with a clear and secure framework for ensuring that all children in the school (including the Children's Centre) are protected from harm, both while at school and when off the school's premises.

School policies to read in conjunction with this policy include:

- Behaviour Including Antibullying
- Whistleblowing
- Low Level Concerns
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Attendance
- Hire and Lease of Premises
- Online Safety
- Safer Recruitment

Practitioners who work with children in this school should read this policy within the framework of:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024)
- Working together to safeguard children 2023 (updated Feb 2024)
- Information Sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services (May 2024)
- London Safeguarding Children Procedures (31<sup>st</sup> March 2023)
- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2024)
- Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (updated 2012)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (2015)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- The Prevent Duty (updated 2021)

The following legislation and government guidance have informed the content of this policy:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

In addition, practitioners and leads keep up-to-date by regularly reviewing updates on the City of London and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Partnership website: <http://www.chscp.org.uk/> and work proactively to follow guidance and procedures including:

- [City of London Thresholds of Need](#)
- Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership [Levels of Need Guidance](#)
- [Private Fostering, CSE and CME- Guidance for City Professionals](#)

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- <https://chscp.org.uk/child-protection-procedures/>
- Tower Hamlets SCP Multi-Agency Escalation and Resolution Policy

The Aldgate School and the Child and Family Centre @ The Aldgate School (CCFC) believe in supporting all aspects of children and young people's development and learning, and keeping children safe. By all children, we mean those in our school community.

We understand that emotional and social aspects of learning create a foundation for all academic learning. If a child has not been supported to understand, express and resolve their feelings, they may not have the ability to share with other children, resolve the small conflicts that arise in day-to-day school and classroom life, or concentrate on learning. Their frustrations may cause a range of antisocial, disruptive, overly compliant or withdrawn behaviours.

At The Aldgate School we have a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and will take action if we suspect that abuse may be taking place as well as if a child makes a disclosure. All staff are expected to uphold this approach in order to ensure that there is a culture of exemplary behaviour and abuse is not normalised in any way.

#### **All staff will ...**

- Protect children from maltreatment; prevent impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- Where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, immediate action must be taken to protect that child. Action should also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or are at immediate risk. **Anyone can make a referral**, and should do so if the safeguarding lead, deputy or a senior member of staff is not available to do so.

#### **All staff will work to ensure that:**

- Children and young people feel listened to, valued, taken seriously and respected.
- Staff are aware of indicators of abuse and neglect, including for specific safeguarding issues and know how to share their concerns appropriately.
- Early Help is made use of to support families and prevent crisis action.
- All paid and volunteer staff are subject to rigorous safer recruitment procedures.
- All paid and volunteer staff are given appropriate support and training.

Staff play a crucial role in helping to identify welfare concerns, and indicators of possible abuse or neglect, at an early stage. Staff must be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being exposed to harmful practices and they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For this reason, it is important that all staff maintain a professional curiosity at all times and liaise directly with the DSL if they have any concerns. The Aldgate School and the CCFC are committed to referring those concerns via the Designated Safeguarding Lead to

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the appropriate organisation, normally local authority children's social care, contributing to the assessment of a child's needs and, where appropriate, to ongoing action to meet those needs.

In order to ensure children are adequately protected, we will ensure that:

- We have a designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputy (DDSL) who attend multi-agency training at least once every two years and updates at least annually.
- All staff are trained in basic Safeguarding and Child Protection awareness every year.
- All staff have read and understand the Safeguarding Policy and are aware of the indicators of child abuse and how to respond to concerns or disclosures of abuse by children.
- All staff have undertaken Prevent training, this is reviewed regularly.
- All staff have undertaken FGM awareness training.
- All children, young people and their families are familiar with the Safeguarding policy by referencing through assemblies, PSHE, circle time, newsletters, social media, workshops etc.
- We inform parents about raising the awareness of child protection on admission to the school. Our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is available on the school's website.
- All Governors will attend appropriate child protection and safeguarding training upon their induction and at regular intervals thereafter.
- The Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is reviewed on an annual basis by the DSL and the board of Governors. Governors also check the Single Central Record on a termly basis.
- A safeguarding update will be published to Governors termly and an annual report on safeguarding is published to Governors each year. Governors will be given time to provide strategic challenge.

### **The Voice of the Child**

All those with a responsibility to safeguard children need to recognise that it takes great courage for a child to share a concern and speak up about any form of abuse especially child sexual abuse.

There are many reasons why children are not able to articulate what they are experiencing. Children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or are currently being threatened by the perpetrator of abuse. Also, children may not feel ready or know how to tell a trusted adult that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected. They may not even realise that their experiences are harmful.

The barriers preventing a child communicating their concerns may be connected to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation, or language. The child's behaviour including misbehaviour may be the first sign that a child has experienced harm. Staff should therefore exhibit professional curiosity and understand that a child may be communicating a concern through their actions and behaviours and take a safeguarding approach when responding to behaviours.

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

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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.

## **Local Authority Arrangements**

Central to effective child protection and safeguarding is effective multi agency working. At The Aldgate School, we seek to work in close partnership with Children's Social Care, the police, health services and other services in and beyond the borough to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. We will allow access from Children's Social Care in this borough, or from a placing Local Authority where appropriate, to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct, a section 17 or section 47 assessment.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 introduced significant changes to the safeguarding landscape in England, including the replacement of Local Safeguarding Children Boards with new local safeguarding partnerships led by three safeguarding partners – the Local Authority, Clinical Commissioning Group and Police.

The development of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP) is led by an executive group consisting of key partners including schools, colleges and the voluntary sector. The vision of the CHSCP is that the statutory partners, wider relevant agencies, community and voluntary sector and residents work together to ensure that everyone does everything they can to ensure that all our children and young people are safe, supported and successful.

## **Early Help**

We work collaboratively with early intervention and help teams in the City of London and other local authorities, to support families where there is a need. We work together and collaborate to identify children with additional needs and provide support as soon as a problem emerges.

We continually review the needs of vulnerable families and children. In addition, we hold a termly forum with our Family Involvement Worker and the City of London Early Help lead to identify families who may be in need of additional support. It is important that staff 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 – including but not limited to:

- Has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded or is accessing alternative provision;
- Has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending;
- Is frequently missing from education, home or care.

## **Recognising Abuse**

In the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, a child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

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Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) 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 impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. This may happen in person or online.

Children may witness abuse or ill treatment of others in the home and in turn suffer from long-term detrimental impact on their wellbeing. This abuse can be physical, financial, sexual, psychological or emotional. Children who **see, hear or experience the effects of abuse on others** are also classed as victims.

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children, and gives local authorities a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

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.

## **Types of abuse, neglect and exploitation**

The following information is drawn from Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024). It is important to recognise that both mental and physical health are taken into account when considering wellbeing and safeguarding. All school staff must be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

### **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 or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

### **Emotional abuse**

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

- It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.
- It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another – for example where there is fighting or violence in the home.
- It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying / via electronic media), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may also occur alone.

For more information, see our Behaviour Including Anti-Bullying Policy

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in or witness sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse can take place online, and in person and can also take place simultaneously between the two.

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### **Neglect**

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

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:



- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
- Irregular attendance in school, not collected at appropriate times, repeated lateness.

### **Specific safeguarding issues**

The [London Child Protection Procedures](#) outlines response to special circumstances in child protection cases, including issues such as:

- Bullying, including cyber bullying and prejudice-based bullying
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Domestic abuse
- Fabricated or induced illness / Perplexing presentations
- Spiritual, Cultural and Religious Beliefs (including extreme views, spirit possession or witchcraft, gender based abuse etc)
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Circumcision
- Forced marriage – this cannot be condoned for religious or cultural reasons
- Children from abroad and Foreign exchange visits
- Gangs and serious youth violence
- Firesetting
- Animal abuse and links to abuse of children and vulnerable adults
- Dangerous dogs (Under 5s)
- Children visiting prisons and psychiatric wards
- 'Honour'-based abuse
- Information and communication technology (ICT) based forms of abuse
- Missing from care, home and education – including not attending school
- Parental / child mental illness
- Parents / children with learning disabilities
- Parents who misuse substances
- Pregnancy
- Living away from home (including private fostering)
- Preventing extremism and radicalisation
- Self-harming and suicidal behaviour
- Sexting (youth produced sexual imagery)
- Sexually active children
- Trafficked and exploited children
- Young carers

### **Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL should be aware of the contact details and referral routes of the Local Housing Authority to enable them to raise concerns.

### **Children absent from or missing education**

All children are entitled to a suitable education. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. We monitor attendance of all pupils regularly and ensure we know where all our children are by:

- Conducting first day absence reports which are signed and checked by the Headteacher.
- Conducting follow up absence investigations, including informing the LA where no contact with carers can be made.
- Holding regular attendance meetings with the LA Welfare officer.
- Holding meeting with parents and families and supporting regularly attendance through our Family Involvement Worker and collaborative work with the local authority welfare officer.

We follow a removal from roll procedure whereby we only remove from the roll when satisfactory checks have been completed by the school to confirm the whereabouts of a child.

We would also make checks on pre-admission list/register in YR who do not arrive on the expected date, pupils not returning after a school holiday or term-time holiday and children below 5 who cease to regularly access children's services in the Child and Family Centre reach area.

These procedures in the LA Children Missing Education Policy do not replace any Safeguarding/Child Protection procedures or guidance but are to be used in conjunction with them; they aim to provide a minimum standard of safety for pupils to check their circumstances and follow them up when they are absent from school. We follow the recommended procedures in the LA children Missing From Education Policy.

Where children move to our school from a previous school, we will make contact with them to request any safeguarding or child protection records that may have been held by that setting.

### **Looked after children and (LAC) and previously looked after children**

Staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously LAC safe. When dealing with LAC and previously LAC, all agencies should work together to take prompt action to safeguard this vulnerable group.

### **The designated teacher**

The role of the designated teacher is to "promote the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales" in addition to LAC. At TAS, the designated teacher for LAC and previously LAC is the Deputy Head.

### **Care leavers**

The Local Authority have an ongoing responsibility to care leavers. This duty includes keeping in touch with them, preparing assessments of their needs and appointing a personal adviser to develop a pathway plan. Schools should have the

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details of their LA personal advisor and liaise with them as necessary. In the CoL this can be found by contacting Adult Social Care.

### **Children and the court system**

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. They may also have parents or family members making child arrangements via the family court – this can be stressful for children

Staff should use the guidance from the DFE to support children through the process.

If you are aware of children being involved in the court system, please make the DSL aware.

### **Children with family members in custody**

Children with family members in custody including in prison are at a risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. Staff should use NICCO <https://www.nicco.org.uk/> to support children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children. If you are aware of any children experiencing a family member in custody, please bring it to the attention of the DSL.

### **Child Criminal Exploitation CCE / Child Sexual Exploitation CSE**

All staff and volunteers should be aware of indicators that children may be involved in or at risk from serious violent crime. These may include:

- Unexplained gifts or new possessions – indicators of involvement with or being approached by gangs
- Increased absence
- Change in friendship groups
- Significant decline in performance
- Signs of self-harm / significant changes in wellbeing
- Signs of assault / unexplained injuries

### **Child criminal exploitation (CCE):**

CCE can include vehicle crime and threatening / committing serious violence. Children who are involved in Criminal exploitation must also be treated as victims themselves. Children being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

### **county lines**

This often refers to drug networks or gangs grooming and exploiting children to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban areas, rural areas and market and seaside towns. The key to identifying potential involvement in county lines is “missing episodes” – where the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs. In such cases, a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered.

### **Child sexual exploitation (CSE):**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse and involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people may receive something as a result of engaging in sexual activities. CSE may involve physical or nonphysical contact and children may not realise they have been exploited. Our staff are trained to recognise the signs of sexual abuse including CSE and understand their duties to raise concerns / report it.

### **Preventing radicalisation / extremism**

If you are concerned that a child, young person and/or their parents may hold extremist views or are at risk of being radicalised you have a duty to ensure that they receive support to protect them from being drawn into terrorism. Staff should report any concerns relating to Prevent to the DSL who will follow safeguarding procedures. Staff receive regular training and guidance into their responsibilities relating to Prevent.

The school and Children's Centre follows the procedures and advice laid out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024).

### **Female genital mutilation (FGM)**

Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia. It is a form of abuse. Teachers and other professionals have a statutory duty to report to the police where they discuss FGM appears to have been carried out or it is at risk of being done so.

### **Child on child abuse**

Child on child abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied or harmed by one or more peers of a similar age. Child on child abuse can relate to various forms of abuse and can be harmful to the perpetrator(s) as well as the victim. Technology is a significant component in child on child abuse and staff must be aware that it can take place outside of school and may not be reported to staff. All allegations and suspicions of peer or peer abuse will be dealt with seriously and not tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up". Child on child abuse will be dealt with in line with the school's Behaviour including Antibullying policy. All staff must be aware of the different gender, racial and SEND issues that can be prevalent when dealing with child on child abuse as well as that individuals with certain protected characteristics according to the equality act are potentially at greater risk of harm. Teachers must ensure that each class has a worry box and that PSHE lessons and circle times are used to minimise the risk of child on child abuse. The leadership team will work to ensure that opportunities are taken within collective worship to minimise the risk of child on child abuse and to maximise children's understanding of the importance of sharing their concerns.

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

- Bullying – including cyberbullying, prejudiced-based bullying and discriminatory bullying.
- Physical abuse – including hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling etc and also including online threats of and encouragements to perpetrate physical abuse.
- Sexual violence - including online threats of and encouragements to perpetrate sexual violence or abuse.

- Sexual harassment – this may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Upskirting – typically involving taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission (can include shorts, cassock etc as well as skirts), with the intention of sexual gratification or causing humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence.
- Pulling down trousers, grabbing bra straps, touching bottoms breasts or genitalia. It is potentially a criminal offence.
- Sexting – also known as youth produced sexual imagery that involves the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images / videos
- Initiation/hazing – rituals both online and offline

### **Private fostering**

Sometimes our children may be provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home.

A child is not privately fostered if the person caring for an accommodating them has done so for less than 28 days and does not intend to do so for longer.

Such arrangements may come to the attention of school staff through the normal course of their interaction, and promotion of learning activities, with children.

We must notify the Local Authority if we suspect that a child is being privately fostered so that they can check the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child. If you suspect a child is being privately fostered, please bring it to the attention of the DSL.

### **Contextual Safeguarding at The Aldgate School including the Child and Family Centre**

In any setting, it is important to maintain an 'it could happen here' attitude for any types of abuse or safeguarding concern, however certain areas of the country, certain demographics and specific situations have shown that there may be a higher prevalence of one type of safeguarding concern.

Our current primary contextual safeguarding need can be classified as:

- Domestic violence and abuse – often due to overcrowding and economic issues.
- Unsupervised and unregulated activity beyond school – including the online community and the risks associated therewith (eg, child on child abuse, CSE, exposure extreme views, exposure to harm)

### **Mental Health support at The Aldgate School including the Child and Family Centre**

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We have a three tiered approach to supporting mental health and wellbeing here at The Aldgate School.

- Tier 1 support is through our curriculum, specifically PSHE lessons, P4C, Circle Time, RE and assemblies
- Tier 2 support is through additional support and interventions such as lego therapy, social stories, nurture groups and other TA led interventions including our ELSA support.
- Tier 3 support is through our school counsellors, educational psychologist, WAMHS practitioner and referrals to external services such as CAMHS.

Children are able to access tier 2 and 3 support when a member of staff, parent or the child themselves has identified the need for support and referred their concern to the DSL or SENDCo.

## **Part 2: The management of safeguarding and child protection**

### **Temporary staff and contractors employed by other bodies**

Temporary and supply staff are given safeguarding information and informed who the duty DSL is. This information outlines their responsibility to report all safeguarding concerns to the DSL.

Information about vulnerable children with medical needs is kept in the school office and supply staff are made aware of any children in their class who have medical needs.

All agencies who work with the school must complete a signed declaration (attached to this policy) and ensure that the relevant checks are carried out. Temporary staff must bring photographic ID to confirm their identity.

### **Volunteering and visitors**

We encourage an active community of volunteers to work collaboratively with the school and Children's Centre.

Visitors to school are always accompanied by a member of school staff and speakers are expected to comply with our visiting speaker's policy.

Volunteers must complete a volunteer application form before they are permitted to volunteer. Application forms are checked by a School Administrator and a risk assessment is performed if appropriate. All forms must be signed off by the Headteacher.

The same procedures apply for work experience volunteers.

Any checks carried out on volunteers will be recorded on the single central record.

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

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All safeguarding policies listed in this policy will apply equally to children in early years settings, so far as they are relevant to that age group. The school will notify Ofsted in the event of an allegation of serious harm or abuse by any person working in the early years setting.

The Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2024) recognises that there are additional barriers in existence when recognising the signs of abuse and neglect in very young children. To support practitioners in the promotion of safeguarding of their young children, supervision is in place on a termly basis.

The **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage** (2023) requires **settings** to have a child protection and safeguarding policy with procedures which include the **use of mobile phones** and **cameras** in the setting to minimise the risk of inappropriate sharing of images.

### **Child Protection and the Use of Mobile Phones.**

The school has the following child protection policies and procedures in relation to the use of mobile phones:

- Staff in the early years must lock their mobile phones away in the lockers provided while they are working and around the children.
- Parents and carers are asked to switch off mobile phones if they are coming into the early years setting and leave the setting if they need to use their mobile.
- Parents are prohibited from taking any photographs of children in the early years setting. The only exception would be in the event of a class assembly or performance.
- Staff must use mobile phones during breaks in the staff room and not whilst children are present, unless in an emergency situation.
- School cameras should be used for all recording/photographing purposes both in and out of school. These images should only be printed out at school and staff should not under any circumstances take photos or images of children home.
- The use of personal mobile phones and camera by staff to take photos of children both in and out of school is not permitted.
- Recording of images is prohibited in the following areas: First Aid room, toilet, changing and private spaces.

### **Online Safety (see also full online safety policy)**

All of our children will use mobile phones, computers and other devices at some time. They are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that some people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations (sexting), webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. It could also involve online practices involving money – such as gambling. The school's e-safety policy explains how we try to keep children safe in school, from child on child and external abuse. Cyber-bullying and sexting by children (child on child), via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures.

School undertakes to ensure that children are protected from harmful online materials. This will be done through the use of filters and monitoring systems that are

regularly checked by the IT company employed by the school. All staff are required to thoroughly check online content prior to delivering lessons.

We follow the DfE online safety Guidance published in June 2019, to ensure all children are educated in the risks of social media and the online world.

It is important that all of our pupils know how to manage any inappropriate or harmful content they may inadvertently come across. Our PSHE and computing curriculum support children with this.

It is important that parents and carers are aware of and engage with online safety practices in order to safeguard their children out of school time. This is promoted through the website, X (Twitter feed), newsletters and workshops as well as through individual meetings where the need arises.

### **The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

The DSL takes the lead responsibility for child protection, including support for other staff and information sharing with other agencies, developing policies and staff training. On our site we have several deputies (DDSL) as we are open for children 48 weeks per year and operate extended day provision.

The DSL is the named person who responds to allegations made against members of staff.

The DSL should be a senior member of staff with the authority and seniority to carry out the functions of the role. At The Aldgate School, the DSL is the Headteacher supported by the Deputy Head.

The **deputy designated lead(s)** is appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated person, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of children. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

There will be a designated member of staff available at all times that the setting is open.

The **governing body** ensures that the school has:

- A DSLs / DDSLs for safeguarding and child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken the approved LSCP training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training
- Child protection policy and procedures that are consistent with LSCP requirements, reviewed annually and made available to parents on request
- Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the Headteacher
- Safer recruitment procedures that include the requirement for appropriate checks in line with national guidance and online searches as part of the shortlisting process.
- A training strategy that ensures all staff, including the Headteacher, receive child protection training, with refresher training at three-yearly

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intervals and annual updates. The DSL and DDSL receive formal refresher training at two-yearly intervals as well as at least annual updates to their knowledge and skills.

- Arrangements to ensure that all temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection.
- The governing body nominates a member (normally the chair) to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the Headteacher. An annual report will be submitted to the local authority about how the governing body's duties have been carried out. Any weaknesses or areas of concern will be rectified without delay.
- Pupils have a chance to express their views about safeguarding and safety in a variety of contexts and that the curriculum empowers children to have an awareness of what to do if they or others may be at risk of harm.

### **The Deputy Head:**

- ensures that the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- allocates sufficient time and resources to enable those with DSL duties to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the school's whistle blowing procedures
- ensures that children's safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum.

### **Duty DSL Responsibilities**

- Refer suspected abuse and neglect to Duty Social Care.
- Enquire into and report allegations made against members of staff to the Local Authority Designated Officer or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).
- Develop and update the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, ensuring that staff and children/families/parents are aware of them.
- Provide support and advice to all members of staff within the setting regarding child protection concerns.
- Ensure all staff provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- Keep the Headteacher informed about any issues that arise.
- Ensure that cover is provided for the role when absent from the setting.
- Ensure that a child's child protection file is sent to the new educational establishment when a child moves educational settings, and that this file is transferred securely and separately from the main pupil file.
- Ensure that, for new starters, contact with a previous school is made to request any existing child protection files are sent over

- Ensure that all staff receive appropriate Safeguarding and Child Protection training and ensure training records are maintained.
- All staff have the responsibility to identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.
- Work in conjunction with support agencies and be proactive in information sharing, joint decision making and keeping up to date records.
- Cooperate with any requests for information from the local authority, such as Child Protection training returns and self-evaluative forms for safeguarding and child protection, in compliance with Section 11, Children Act 2004.

### **Other Staff Responsibilities**

The Staff Code of Conduct also contains the staff behaviour policy, which sets out clearly what is expected of staff in terms of their professional conduct and responsibilities towards pupils and other members of staff.

It is the responsibility of all other members of staff to ensure that all child protection and/or safeguarding concerns, both low-level (any concern that may cause a sense of unease) and serious, are reported to the Headteacher or Deputy Head as soon as reasonably possible.

The DSL may have other information regarding a child, young person or their family of which other staff may not be aware. Low-level concerns may take on greater significance within the wider context of knowledge of a child or family that the DSL may have.

All staff should be aware of the systems in the school and have a responsibility to ensure they can access the relevant reporting systems.

All staff should maintain an 'It could happen here' attitude regarding safeguarding and child protection.

All staff should be aware of the **What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused: Advice for Practitioners** document.

A casual / supply staff child protection, safeguarding and welfare leaflet is kept in the office and all temporary staff must read this carefully before they start working with children at our school and Children's Centre.

## Part 3: Child Protection Procedures

### ALL STAFF

**1. You have a concern about a child / young person's wellbeing, based on:**

- a. Something the child / young person / parent has told you
- b. Something you have noticed about the child's behaviour, health (physical or mental), or appearance
- c. Something another professional said or did

Even if you think your concern is minor, the DSL may have more information that, together with what you know, represents a more serious worry about a child. Multiple safeguarding issues often overlap

Staff, leaders and managers must remember and be aware that additional barriers exist when recognising the signs of abuse and neglect of children and young people with special educational needs and / or disabilities. As such, all staff working on a one to one basis with children who have an EHCP will be offered termly supervision.

**It is never your decision alone how to respond to concerns – always report in the first instance to the DSL, as soon after the event as possible.**

**It is always your responsibility to share concerns, no matter how small.**

**2. Let the child / young person**

If you have heard a disclosure of abuse or you are talking with them about your concerns. Do **not** promise to keep what they tell you secret.

...for example, 'I am worried about your bruise and I need to tell \*\*\*\* so that they can help us think about how to keep you safe'

Reassure the child and ensure that they know they are not creating any problems by telling you.

**3. Decide whether you need to find out more** by asking the child / young person, or their parent to clarify your concerns, being careful to use open questions:

...beginning with words like: 'how', 'why', 'where', 'when', 'who'?

4. **Inform the DSL immediately.** If the DSL is not available, inform their Deputy. If neither are available, speak to another senior member of staff.
5. **Make a written record** as soon as possible after the event using the CPOMS system  
[https://sirjohncass.cpoms.net/auth/identity?origin=https://sirjohncass.cpoms.net/students/30/incidents/130#incident\\_130](https://sirjohncass.cpoms.net/auth/identity?origin=https://sirjohncass.cpoms.net/students/30/incidents/130#incident_130)

Please make sure you complete the forms as accurately as possible including the background information in the first section. These should always be completed as soon as possible but always on the same day as the disclosure or concern is brought to your attention.

## DSL

6. The DSL may take advice from the Duty Social Care Team in the child's relevant local authority.
7. The DSL makes the referral to the Duty Social Care Team.  
The referral will note all previous intervention by the school with the child, any relevant history relating to the child, their siblings or the family.
8. The DSL shares information with other relevant professionals, recording reasons for sharing information and ensuring that they are aware of what action the other professionals will take as a result of information shared.
9. The DSL or other significant member of staff informs the parent that they have made a CP referral, if the parent does not already know, and if there is no reason not to let them know.
  - a. The Duty Social Care Team may suggest to delay informing the parent in cases of suspected sexual abuse, or where informing the parent might put the child at further risk, to prevent the child being harmed or intimidated (and retracting their disclosure)
  - b. In cases of suspected Fabricated or Induced Illness by proxy, the parent is not informed that this is being considered
10. The DSL remains in close communication with other professionals around the child / young person and with the family, in order to share any updates about the child / young person

If a child protection investigation is pursued, the DDSL and other key school staff will:

- Work closely and collaboratively with all professionals involved in the investigation, to keep the child / young person safe
- Attend a child protection conference when invited and provide updated information about the child
- Attend any subsequent child protection review conferences.
- Attend core group meetings and take an active role in the implementation of the protection plan.

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**We use CPOMS to log and child protection or safeguarding concerns. Please use CPOMS as well as informing the DSL verbally about your concerns.**

[https://sirjohncass.cpoms.net/auth/identity?origin=https://sirjohncass.cpoms.net/schools/1/students/192/incidents/820#incident\\_820](https://sirjohncass.cpoms.net/auth/identity?origin=https://sirjohncass.cpoms.net/schools/1/students/192/incidents/820#incident_820)

#### **Part 4: Recruitment, vetting, selection and staff conduct**

We are committed to a culture of safe recruitment and make decisions about the suitability of candidates based on a rigorous process and all the evidence available, this includes carrying out online searches as part of the recruitment shortlisting process. Once staff are employed by the school we expect their conduct to be exemplary and fully comply with our safeguarding procedures.

##### **Safer Recruitment**

We follow national and local guidance and minimum expectations on Safe Recruitment (CHSCP):

At least one member of staff on every recruitment panel has undertaken training in Safer Recruitment.

We aim to:

- Deter potential abusers by setting high standards of practice and recruitment.
- Reject inappropriate candidates at the application and interview stages
- Prevent abuse to children by developing robust policies and agreeing on safe practice

*We follow the minimum local requirements for safer recruitment including:*

- *An enhanced DBS check for all appropriate site users;*
- *Obtaining 2 satisfactory references, one of which from the most recent employer;*
- *Obtaining proof of ID;*
- *Obtaining proof of right to work in the UK and where necessary, further checks for those who have lived or worked outside the UK;*
- *Safeguarding statements in adverts, job descriptions other recruitment documentation;*
- *Obtaining Childcare declaration;*
- *Ensuring managers receive safer recruitment training every two years;*
- *An induction checklist is completed for all new members of staff.*

We also conduct repeat checks on all members of staff, governors and volunteers at least every 3 years and all permanent staff are registered on the DBS update service.

All checks carried out on staff, governors and volunteers are recorded on the single central record. Our school governors have also undergone a section 128 check.

Our recruitment packs state that online checks will be carried out on shortlisted candidates. Candidates being invited to interview will be asked to bring along their

social media handles and be informed that we will also complete a 'top 10' Google search of them.

### **Legal and policy framework**

As an early years provider delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the school aims to meet the specific safeguarding and child protection duties set out in the Childcare Act 2006 and related statutory guidance.

The school will ensure that children taught in the Early Years Foundation Stage are able to learn and develop and are kept safe and healthy so that they are ready for school by providing a safe, secure learning environment that safeguards and promotes their welfare, and takes appropriate action where there are child protection concerns.

### **Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers**

We refer to the City of London Designated Officer guidance on the City of London city and Families website.

Allegations of abuse can be made by children and young people and they can be made by other concerned adults. An allegation may be made about a member of staff's behaviour towards children either in school or out of school (transferrable risk).

All allegations against staff (permanent or supply), visitors or volunteers should be immediately brought to the attention of the Headteacher.

If an allegation is made against the Headteacher, this should be brought to the attention of the Chair of Governors.

In all cases, the DO (Designated officer – formerly known as the Local Authority Designated Officer), who is one of the Child Protection Advisers, should be notified.

The Headteacher should take the following actions:

- Ensure that the child reporting the allegation is safe and away from the member of staff against whom the allegation is made
- Contact the Designated Officer in the City of London immediately following making basic enquiries in line with local procedures
- Make a referral to the Children's Service where the child resides, if appropriate
- Contact the parents/carers of the child, following advice from the Designated Officer
- Suspend the member of staff or review his/her working arrangements, pending the investigation, following advice from the Designated Officer
- Attend strategy meetings convened by the Designated Officer and act upon the decisions made at these meetings

Suspension should be considered when:

- There is a cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm or
- The allegation warrants investigation by the police or

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- The allegation is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal  
(London Child Protection Procedure)

Any disciplinary investigation should be carried out once the child protection investigation has been completed.

For more information, see Chapter 5 of Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007)

The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (pp 57-67)  
[https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/11296/2/Safeguarding\\_Children\\_Guidance.pdf](https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/11296/2/Safeguarding_Children_Guidance.pdf)

### **If you have concerns about a colleague (see also whistleblowing and Low Level concerns Policies)**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague (including trainees and supply staff) towards a child are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school's whistleblowing policy enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. All concerns of poor practice or concerns about a child's welfare brought about by the behaviour of colleagues should be reported to the Headteacher. Complaints about the Headteacher should be reported to the chair of governors.

If you do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally, or you have concerns about the way that a concern is being handled, please note NSPCC's What you can do to report abuse helpline number: **0800 028 0285** It is available from 8:00am until 8:00pm, Monday to Friday and they can also be emailed on: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

The same processes should be followed if you become aware of a behaviour that might not directly involve children but could indicate they may not be suitable to work with children. The reason is because of transferrable risk. Where a member of staff or volunteer is involved in an incident outside of school which did not involve children but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children. For example, a member of staff is involved in domestic violence at home. No children were involved, but school needs to consider what triggered these actions and could a child in the school trigger the same reaction, therefore being put at risk.

### **Visitors**

- No visitors, including tradespeople, should be on site without first signing in at the office and receiving a visitor's badge (purple lanyard).
- Staff should be alert to strangers frequently waiting outside a venue with no apparent purpose.

## **Collection of Children**

- Children should not be collected by people other than their parents unless written or verbal notification has been received in advance. Children must not be collected by any person under the age of 16 years old.
- If children are to go home alone, written permission must be given by the parents and kept in the child's file. Children are not to go home alone before they are in Year 5.
- Children not collected on time; under 5's go to the CCFC and KS1/2 go to the school office. The CCFC will inform the school office of any uncollected children they have.
- If a child is not collected after a session, it is reasonable to wait approximately 15 minutes to half an hour for a parent or carer to arrive. If the parent or carer cannot be contacted, staff should contact the Leadership Team. Lateness must be recorded in the record book stored in the school office. In cases where children are not collected and no contact can be made with any of the emergency contacts, school will contact children's social care or the police.

## **Supporting School Provision**

Many other aspects of school provision support the aims of this policy. Schools play an important role in making children and young people aware both of behaviour towards them that is not acceptable, and of how they can help keep themselves safe.

The framework for personal, social and health education (PSHE) provides opportunities for children and young people to learn about keeping safe. PSHE curriculum materials provide resources that enable schools to tackle issues regarding healthy relationships, including domestic abuse and bullying. Discussions about personal safety and keeping safe can reinforce the message that any kind of violence is unacceptable, let children and young people know that it is acceptable to talk about their own problems, and signpost sources of help. Staff must always bear in mind that some children won't feel ready or able to acknowledge their experiences and for this reason should keep an open and professional curiosity.

## **Use of Force, Restraint and Positive Handling**

The law forbids a teacher or other members of staff from using any degree of physical contact that is deliberately intended to punish a pupil, or that is primarily intended to cause pain or injury or humiliation.

Teachers at a school are allowed to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils under certain circumstances. In some circumstances, authorised members of staff can restrain pupils in order to protect them and others. When considering the use of reasonable force towards children with SEND or medical conditions, the risks should be carefully considered. Individual behaviour plans and other forms of proactive behaviour support can reduce the need for reasonable force.

For more information, see our Restraint and Physical Intervention policy.



Any concerns or allegations that a member of staff may have acted inappropriately should be brought to the Headteacher immediately, in confidence or in their absence the Deputy Head. They, in turn, will contact the Designated Officer (formerly LADO).

### **Staff Conduct**

In order to protect children, young people and members of staff, we encourage staff to follow our professional code of conduct. This covers -

- Appropriate dress
- Being alone with the child / young person
- Physical contact / restraint
- Social contact outside setting / appropriate boundaries
- Gifts & favouritism
- Behaviour management
- Intimate care
- Safe use of technology (Security / Internet / mobile phones / digital images of children, etc)
- Appropriate use of social networking sites

### **Safeguarding Training**

Detailed records of all staff's safeguarding training will be kept and issue reminders when training updates are required. It is good practice to include a safeguarding and child protection agenda item in all staff meetings.

In addition, the designated members of staff will undertake multi-agency training every two years.

### **Implementation, Dissemination & Review Strategies**

This policy is reviewed annually by the DSL and is approved by the board of Governors.

- All members of staff read and agree to the child protection policy before the start of their employment.
- Parents / Carers will read and agree to the policy at the point of admission. In the Children's Centre this will be completed on a home visit.
- It is important for families to be aware of actions staff may take if there are any concerns for a child or a young person's safety, and for them to understand that they might not be consulted before action is taken. Knowing about child protection procedures ahead of time helps parents to engage better in the process, meaning that change is more likely to take place.
- Copies of this policy and supporting materials, such as the London Child Protection Procedures (2017) and Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007) are easily accessible in the following areas on the secure area of the school website.
- An annual safeguarding report is produced for governors.

## Part 5: Appendices

1. Key Contacts in Child Protection
2. Staff acknowledgement example
3. Definitions and signs of symptoms and abuse – taken from London child Protection Procedures (5<sup>th</sup> edition)

### Appendix 1: Key Contacts in Child Protection

#### Designated Safeguarding Leads

- Alex Allan (Lead): 07816 750054
- Philip Watkins (Deputy): 07552654733
- Georgina Poullais / Zahida Hussain (Non term-time leads)

#### City of London Children's Social Care

- Duty Social Care: 0207 332 3621 (out of hours this call will be routed to Hackney Social Care)
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): Laura Demetriades 0207 3321215
- Duty email inbox: [DCCSDutyF&YPT@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:DCCSDutyF&YPT@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

#### City and Hackney Safeguarding and Children's Partnership:

<http://www.chscp.org.uk/>

#### Tower Hamlets Social Care

- Duty Desk: 0207 3645006

#### Police

- Bishopsgate Police Station Tel: 101 (ask for Bishopsgate)
- Emergencies: 999

#### Prevent (Community Safety Teams)

- 0207 332 3549 [prevent@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:prevent@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

The **safeguarding lead governor** is Jacqueline Greenlees

The Chair of **Governors** is **Beverley Ryan**. Beverley can be contacted via [chair@thealdgateschool.org](mailto:chair@thealdgateschool.org)



**The Aldgate School**  
Headteacher: Miss A Allan

## **Safeguarding Declaration**

**Company Name:**

I have read The Aldgate School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and all staff assigned to the school on behalf of the company agree to abide by it. They have been provided with copies of the policy.

In addition, I confirm that the following actions have been undertaken for all staff assigned to the school.

- **That safer recruitment practices, as outlined in part 4 of this policy, have been followed.**
- **An enhanced DBS check every 2 years** *(the Headteacher to be informed of any convictions or cautions revealed);*
- **Issued staff with photo ID to bring to the school;**
- **You comply with data protection law and have satisfactory security measures in place.**

**Name:**

**Signature:**

**Date:**

**Position in the Company:**



**The Aldgate School**  
Headteacher: Miss A Allan

## **Safeguarding Declaration**

### **Company Name:**

I have read The Aldgate School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and all staff assigned to the school on behalf of the company agree to abide by it. They have been provided with copies of the policy.

In addition, I confirm that where appropriate the following actions have been undertaken for all staff assigned to the school.

### **For all staff**

- **That safer recruitment practices, as outlined in part 4 of this policy and the Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance have been followed.**
- **An enhanced DBS check every 2 years** *(the Headteacher to be informed of any convictions or cautions revealed)*;
- **A Barred List check** *(if required)*;
- **Prohibition check** *(for staff with teaching responsibility)*;
- **Issued staff with photo ID to bring to the school;**
- **You comply with data protection law and have satisfactory security measures in place;**

### **For Staff specifically based in a nursery setting also applies:**

- **Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge)(Extended Entitlement)(Amendment) Regulations 2018 declaration;**
- **Early Years staff who completed a level 2 or 3 qualification on or after 30 June 2016 to hold either a full or emergency Paediatric First Aid certificate.**

**Name:**

**Signature:**

**Date:**

**Position in the Company:**

## Appendix 3

### Definitions and signs and symptoms of abuse taken from London Child Protection Procedures, 5th edition

#### 4.1 Concept of significant harm

4.1.1 Some children are in need because they are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children, and gives local authorities a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

4.1.2 There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the degree and the extent of physical harm, the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect, the extent of premeditation, and the presence or degree of threat, coercion, sadism and bizarre or unusual elements.

4.1.3 Each of these elements has been associated with more severe effects on the child, and / or relatively greater difficulty in helping the child overcome the adverse impact of the maltreatment.

4.1.4 Sometimes, a single traumatic event may constitute significant harm (e.g. a violent assault, suffocation or poisoning). More often, significant harm is a compilation of significant events, both acute and longstanding, which interrupt, change or damage the child's physical and psychological development.

4.1.5 Some children live in family and social circumstances where their health and development are neglected. For them, it is the corrosiveness of long-term neglect, emotional, physical or sexual abuse that causes impairment to the extent of constituting significant harm.

#### 4.2 Definitions of child abuse and neglect

##### *Recognising physical abuse*

4.3.6 The following are often regarded as indicators of concern:

- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury;
- Several different explanations provided for an injury;
- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment;
- The parent/s are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury;
- Parents are absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment;

- Repeated presentation of minor injuries (which may represent a 'cry for help' and if ignored could lead to a more serious injury);
- Frequent use of different doctors and accident and emergency departments;
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries.

### **Bruising**

4.3.7 Children can have accidental bruising, but the following must be considered as indicators of harm unless there is evidence or an adequate explanation provided. Only a paediatric view around such explanations will be sufficient to dispel concerns listed below:

- Any bruising to a pre-crawling or pre-walking baby;
- Bruising in or around the mouth, particularly in small babies which may indicate force feeding;
- Two simultaneous bruised eyes, without bruising to the forehead, (rarely accidental, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive);
- Repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally;
- Variation in colour possibly indicating injuries caused at different times;
- The outline of an object used (e.g. belt marks, hand prints or a hair brush);
- Bruising or tears around, or behind, the earlobe/s indicating injury by pulling or twisting;
- Bruising around the face;
- Grasp marks on small children;
- Bruising on the arms, buttocks and thighs may be an indicator of sexual abuse.

### **Bite marks**

4.3.8 Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth. Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped. Those over 3cm in diameter are more likely to have been caused by an adult or older child.

4.3.9 A medical opinion should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite.

### **Burns and scalds**

4.3.10 It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non- accidental burns and scalds, and will always require experienced medical opinion. Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious, e.g.:

- Circular burns from cigarettes (but may be friction burns if along the bony protuberance of the spine);
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements;
- Burns of uniform depth over a large area;
- Scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid (a child getting into hot water of its own accord will struggle to get out and cause splash marks);
- Old scars indicating previous burns / scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation.

4.3.11 Scalds to the buttocks of a small child, particularly in the absence of burns to the feet, are indicative of dipping into a hot liquid or bath.

## **Fractures**

4.3.12 Fractures may cause pain, swelling and discolouration over a bone or joint, and loss of function in the limb or joint.

4.3.13 Non-mobile children rarely sustain fractures.

4.3.14 There are grounds for concern if:

- The history provided is vague, non-existent or inconsistent with the fracture type;
- There are associated old fractures;
- Medical attention is sought after a period of delay when the fracture has caused symptoms such as swelling, pain or loss of movement;
- There is an unexplained fracture in the first year of life.

## **Scars**

4.3.15 A large number of scars or scars of different sizes or ages, or on different parts of the body, may suggest abuse.

## **Recognising emotional abuse**

4.3.16 Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise, as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical.

4.3.17 The indicators of emotional abuse are often also associated with other forms of abuse. Professionals should therefore be aware that emotional abuse might also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse.

4.3.18 The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Developmental delay;
- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent (e.g. anxious, indiscriminate or no attachment);
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach;
- Aggressive behaviour towards others;
- Appeasing behaviour towards others;
- Scapegoated within the family;
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children;
- Low self esteem and lack of confidence;
- Withdrawn or seen as a 'loner' – difficulty relating to others.

## **Recognising sexual abuse**

4.3.19 Sexual abuse can be very difficult to recognise and reporting sexual abuse can be an extremely traumatic experience for a child. Therefore both identification and disclosure rates are deceptively low.

4.3.20 Boys and girls of all ages may be sexually abused and are frequently scared to say anything due to guilt and / or fear. According to a recent study three-quarters (72%) of sexually abused children did not tell anyone about the abuse at the time. Twenty-seven percent of the children told someone later, and around a third (31%) still had not told anyone about their experience/s by early adulthood.

4.3.21 If a child makes an allegation of sexual abuse, it is very important that they are taken seriously. Allegations can often initially be indirect as the child tests the

professional's response. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional / behavioural.

4.3.22 Behavioural indicators which may help professionals identify child sexual abuse include:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct;
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the child's age;
- Contact or non-contact sexually harmful behaviour;
- Continual and inappropriate or excessive masturbation;
- Self-harm (including eating disorder), self-mutilation and suicide attempts;
- Involvement in sexual exploitation or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners;
- An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes for e.g. sports events (but this may be related to cultural norms or physical difficulties).

4.3.23 Physical indicators associated with child sexual abuse include:

- Pain or itching of genital area;
- Blood on underclothes;
- Pregnancy in a child;
- Physical symptoms such as injuries to the genital or anal area, bruising to buttocks, abdomen and thighs, sexually transmitted disease, presence of semen on vagina, anus, external genitalia or clothing.

4.3.24 Sex offenders have no common profile, and it is important for professionals to avoid attaching any significance to stereotypes around their background or behaviour. While media interest often focuses on 'stranger danger', research indicates that as much as 80 per cent of sexual offending occurs in the context of a known relationship, either family, acquaintance or colleague.

### **Recognising neglect**

4.3.25 It is rare that an isolated incident will lead to agencies becoming involved with a neglectful family. Evidence of neglect is built up over a period of time. Professionals should therefore compile a chronology and discuss concerns with any other agencies which may be involved with the family, to establish whether seemingly minor incidents are in fact part of a wider pattern of neglectful parenting.

4.3.26 When working in areas where poverty and deprivation are commonplace professionals may become desensitised to some of the indicators of neglect. These include:

- Failure by parents or carers to meet essential physical needs (e.g. adequate or appropriate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene and medical or dental care);
- Failure by parents or carers to meet essential emotional needs (e.g. to feel loved and valued, to live in a safe, predictable home environment);
- A child seen to be listless, apathetic and unresponsive with no apparent medical cause;
- Failure of child to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss;
- Child thrives away from home environment;
- Child frequently absent from school;
- Child left with inappropriate carers (e.g. too young, complete strangers);

*Faith, hope and love abide, these three: and the greatest of these is love.*



- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent;
- Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods.

4.3.27 Disabled children and young people can be particularly vulnerable to neglect

Further information can be found at: <https://www.londoncp.co.uk/>