Apex Primary School

Child protection and safeguarding policy

Reviewed: August 2026 **Next Review: August 2027**

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1.0 Policy statement and principles

Apex Primary School recognises its responsibilities of Safeguarding children. It is concerned about the welfare and safety of its pupils and works to create a culture of security, enabling pupils to feel valued, heard and to know that their wishes and feelings are respected. The school wants to work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best in life.
This policy is one of a series in the school's integrated safeguarding portfolio.

This policy is available on the school website and is included as part of staff induction.

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance

- safer children make more successful learners
- policies will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.

1.1 Child protection statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, volunteers and trustees and are consistent with those of the local safeguarding partner arrangements.

1.2 Policy principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support as soon as problems occur.

1.3 Policy aims

- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities.
- To ensure consistent good practice.
- To demonstrate the school's commitment regarding child protection to pupils, parents and other partners.
- Prevention through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils/students

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of 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.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

DSL refers to the designated safeguarding lead at the school

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

2.0 Safeguarding legislation and guidance

The following safeguarding legislation and guidance has been considered when drafting this policy:

- Section 157 of the Education Act 2002
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- School Premises (England) Regulations 2012
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Teachers' Standards 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes 2024
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Behaviour in schools 2024
- UK GDPR
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- The Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- Crime and Policing Act 2026
- The Children's Wellbeing and School Act 2026

3.0 Roles and responsibilities

Please see Appendix three for more important contacts.

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Melanie Hodgson	melanie.hodgson@apexprimary.co.uk 0208 554 1208
Deputy DSL	Zainab Goni	contact@apexprimary.co.uk 0208 554 1208
Headteacher	Meherun Hamid	As above
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Helen Curtis	helen.curtis@redbridge.gov.uk 0208 708 5350
Trustee for safeguarding	Imtiaz Ahmed	contact@apexprimary.co.uk 0208 554 1208

4.0 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) takes **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) in the school. The DSL has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post, which include:

- ensuring the child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately by staff, reviewed annually and publically available
- advising and supporting staff on child protection and safeguarding matters
- encouraging a culture of listening to children
- managing safeguarding referrals to children's social care, the police, or other agencies
- taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings
- liaising with the "case manager" and the designated officer(s) at the local authority where allegations are made against staff
- making staff aware of training courses and the latest local safeguarding arrangements available through the local safeguarding partner arrangements

- transferring the child protection file to a child's new school
- undergoing training and receiving regular updates to maintain the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role, including Prevent awareness training.
- responsible for all record keeping and maintenance of relevant files
- Understand the filtering and monitoring processes that the school has in place to support online safety

4.1 The deputy designated safeguarding lead(s):

Is trained to the same level as the DSL and supports the DSL with safeguarding matters as appropriate. In the absence of the DSL, the deputy DSL carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the deputy will assume the functions above.

5.0 Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct

Good practice includes:

- treating all pupils with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving pupils in decisions that affect them
- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils
- being a good listener
- being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding the school's child protection policy, staff behaviour policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse
- referring all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary, directly to police or children's social care.

5.1 Abuse of position of trust

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach.

Staff understand that under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence.

The school's staff code of conduct sets out our expectations of staff and is part of induction.

5.2 Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur. To ensure that our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- living away from home or in temporary accommodation

- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- living transient lifestyles
- affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- do not have English as a first language
- at risk of sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, forced marriage or being drawn into extremism.

This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive. Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats for children with communication needs.

5.3 Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. These children are more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice based bullying) than other children. Children with SEND may have communication barriers and difficulties in managing and reporting these challenges.
Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in this group of children, which can include:

- 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 being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Staff are trained to manage these additional barriers to ensure this group of children are appropriately safeguarded.

5.4 Children missing education

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child who is absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation, child criminal exploitation - county lines, or mental health problems. The school will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future.

This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent 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.

Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risks and to help prevent the risk of them going missing in future.

6.0 Mental health

Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils.

All staff are aware that mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff are also aware that where children have suffered adverse childhood experiences those experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

- ***Prevention****: creating a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school population, and equipping pupils to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This will include teaching pupils about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this teaching through school activities and ethos;*
- ***Identification:*** *recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible;*
- ***Early support:*** *helping pupils to access evidence based early support and interventions;*
- ***Access to specialist support****: working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment*

Where staff are concerned that a child's mental health is also a safeguarding concern, they will discuss it with the DSL, DDSL or Emotional Wellbeing Lead - Ms Meherun Hamid

Staff should be alert to potential warning signs that a child may be struggling with their mental health, including significant changes in behaviour, ongoing difficulty sleeping, withdrawing from social situations, loss of interest in activities they usually enjoy, or physical signs of self-harm or self-neglect. Not every child showing these signs is at risk, but staff should discuss any such concerns with the DSL, DDSL or Emotional Wellbeing Lead.

If staff believe a child is in immediate danger, they must call 999 or arrange for the child to be taken to A&E immediately by a parent/carer or other suitable person. If a child needs urgent help for their mental health but it is not an emergency, staff can contact NHS 111 and select the mental health option.

See Pupil Wellbeing Policy

6.1 Whistleblowing if you have concerns about a colleague

The school's whistleblowing procedures enable staff to raise about poor or unsafe practice in the setting's safeguarding provision concerns or allegations, in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. This must include when and how to report concerns and the process that will be followed after staff report concerns. All staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a pupil 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. We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues pertaining to any areas of safeguarding i.e. child protection, radicalisation & extremism, should be reported to the headteacher. Complaints about

the headteacher should be raised with the Chair of Trustees. Both the Headteacher and the Chair of trustees will pass on any concerns to the Redbridge Designated Officer after initial inquiries.

Staff may also report their concerns directly to children's social care or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action.

All staff are made aware of their duty to raise concerns in induction and Safeguarding training. Pupils are encouraged to raise their concerns to any of the designated members of staff,

7.0 Allegations against staff

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, including supply staff or trainee teachers, or a volunteer, our set procedures must be followed. The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*

Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the school, or historical allegations will be reported to the police.

All school staff/volunteers should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children to be conducted in view of other adults.
All staff should be aware of the school's behaviour policy. This can be found on the Shared drive under the School Policies section.
We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff/volunteer. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Head Teacher or the most senior teacher if the Head Teacher is not present.

The head teacher will only carry out initial enquiries (not an investigation) prior to a discussion with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Head Teacher, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Trustee who will consult the LADO without notifying the Head Teacher first.

The school will follow the Local Authority procedures for managing allegations against staff as outlined in Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. This is to be read in conjunction with chapter 7 of The London Child Protection Procedures.
Suspension of the member of staff against whom an allegation has been made needs careful consideration, and we will consult the Trustees in making this decision. If a member of staff or volunteer is dismissed, removed from their role, or would have been had they not resigned, due to safeguarding concerns, a referral will be made to the DBS. Where the individual is a member of staff, a referral will also be made to the TRA (Teacher Regulation Agency) for consideration of a prohibition order.

The Trustees are committed to creating a positive and safe working environment for all staff in line with its core values. The Trust wants to create and maintain a working environment where individuals are treated with respect and dignity. The Trust is opposed to all forms of unlawful discrimination, bullying or harassment of any kind. The Trust, Head teacher and Senior Managers are firmly committed to the success of this policy and all steps taken towards its achievement.

Everyone has the right to be treated with respect and dignity in the workplace, irrespective of their level, status or position within the organisation.

7.1 Staff training

It is important that all staff receive training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to know what to do if they have a concern.

The Trust ensures that all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety).

New staff and trustees will receive a briefing during their induction, which includes the school's child protection policy and staff behaviour policy, reporting and recording arrangements, and details for the DSL. All staff, including the DSL, headteacher (unless the headteacher is the DSL) and trustees will receive training that is regularly updated. This training will include online safety training, to ensure that all staff understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring systems used within the school.

All staff, including lunchtime supervisors, site and administrative staff, are required to read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 in full as part of their induction, with completion recorded.

All staff will also receive safeguarding and child protection updates via email, e-bulletins, website access and staff meetings throughout the year.

Early Years

All Early Years staff must hold valid Paediatric First Aid (PFA) training. Staff are responsible for recognising potential hazards and identifying any signs of distress or difficulty a child may display. A member of staff with a current PFA certificate must be present in the room at all times while children are eating. Food must always be prepared and presented in a manner that minimises the risk of choking.

Prior to a child starting at the setting, information must be gathered regarding any special dietary requirements, preferences, allergies, intolerances, or health conditions. This information must be shared with all staff involved in the preparation and handling of food. If a child experiences a choking incident that requires intervention, staff must record full details of the incident, including where and how it occurred, and inform the child's parents/carers. These records should be reviewed regularly to identify any recurring patterns or concerns, and appropriate actions must be taken to reduce the likelihood of future incidents.

At every mealtime and snack time, staff must ensure that all food provided aligns with each child's dietary needs. Staff must maintain ongoing communication with parents/carers and, where necessary, relevant health professionals to develop and review allergy action plans for children with known allergies or intolerances. This information must be kept up to date and shared with all staff. All staff must be aware of the symptoms and appropriate treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis, understand the difference between allergies and intolerances, and recognise that children may develop allergies at any time.

7.2 Safer recruitment

The school complies fully with the requirements of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* and local safeguarding partner arrangements. All required pre-employment checks are carried out, including verification of identity, qualifications, and employment history. The school's Staff Recruitment Policy sets out the full recruitment and vetting process and is available on the

shared drive. At least one member of every recruitment panel will have completed accredited safer recruitment training.

References for former employees will be provided promptly upon request. When giving references, the school will confirm whether the referee is satisfied that the applicant is suitable to work with children and will share factual information regarding any substantiated safeguarding concerns or allegations that meet the harm threshold. References will not include information about concerns or allegations that are unsubstantiated, unfounded, false, or malicious.

Students on long-term placements, volunteers aged 17 or over, and apprentices aged 16 or over may be included in staffing ratios at one level below their level of study, provided they are deemed competent and responsible, and hold a valid Paediatric First Aid (PFA) certificate.

All relevant staff working in Early Years and/or before and after school provision for children under eight are informed of the *Disqualification from Childcare* legislation. They are required to disclose relevant information through the application process and via an annual disqualification declaration.

The school obtains written confirmation from any third-party organisation that agency workers or other external individuals who may work in the school have undergone the appropriate safeguarding checks and are suitable to work with children.

As part of safer recruitment due diligence, the school conducts online searches for shortlisted candidates to identify any publicly available information that may indicate potential risks. Further details are outlined in the school's Safer Recruitment Policy.

Trainee teachers will be subject to all required checks, completed either by the school or the training provider. Written confirmation of their suitability to work with children will be obtained from the relevant organisation.

The school maintains a Single Central Record (SCR) of all recruitment and vetting checks.
The school does not use supply teachers from agencies.

7.3 Volunteers

Volunteers, including trustees will undergo checks commensurate with the work they undertake in the school and their contact with pupils. Following the removal of the supervision exemption from the definition of regulated activity, any volunteer who teaches, trains, instructs, cares for or supervises children on more than three days in any 30-day period, or overnight, is in regulated activity regardless of the level of supervision provided, and will undergo an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information before starting that role. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who falls within regulated activity, or who has not been appropriately checked, cannot be left unsupervised with children.

Where a role sits within provision covered by the EYFS framework, a volunteer must not begin working in that setting until their enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information, has been received in full.

7.4 Contractors

The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS with barred list checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised during the school day.

7.5 Low level concerns

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college, including supply staff, trainee teachers and volunteers, may have acted in a way that:

• is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and

• does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

All low-level concerns should be recorded in writing (using the Low-Level Concerns Log) and passed onto the Headteacher. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible.
Records will be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, the school will either carry out disciplinary procedures or where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold, in which case it should be referred to the LADO.

8.0 Site security

Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations. The headteacher will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

8.0a School premises - toilets

The school provides separate toilets for boys and girls aged 8 and over, in line with the School Premises (England) Regulations 2012 and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, except where individual toilets are in a lockable room intended for use by one pupil at a time.

If a gender-questioning child does not wish to use the toilet designated for their biological sex, the school will consider whether an alternative toilet facility (for example, a self-contained individual toilet) can be provided without compromising the provision of single-sex facilities, or the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the child or of other children. A clear record will be kept of any such arrangements, communicated appropriately, and reviewed regularly.

8.0b Children questioning their gender

The school recognises that some pupils may, at times, express feelings about their gender identity. It is not the role of the school to initiate any discussion or action regarding a child's gender identity, or to encourage a change in how a child identifies or presents. Where a child or their parents raise such a matter, the school will respond with sensitivity, care and confidentiality, and will take a cautious, individual, case-by-case approach centred on the best interests and safeguarding of the child.

Given the age and stage of development of our pupils, requests to support a change in how a child presents at school (social transition) are expected to be very rare, and will be treated with particular caution. Any such request will involve the DSL from the outset, and will not be

progressed without the active involvement of the child's parents or carers, except in the rare circumstance where involving parents would itself place the child at risk of harm - in which case advice will be sought from children's social care before any decision is made.

The school will consider the impact of any decision on the wellbeing of the individual child, other pupils, and the school community as a whole, and will keep a written record of any request, the decisions made, and the reasoning behind them.

This approach sits alongside the school's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998, and is consistent with the arrangements set out in Section 8.0a above.

9.0 Extended school and off-site arrangements

All extended and off site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site on behalf of our school, we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work-related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

10.0 Staff/pupil online relationships

The school provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with pupils. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action or child protection investigation. Further ||details can be found on the school E-safety Policy.

11.0 Child protection procedures

11.1 Recognising abuse

To ensure that our pupils are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Abuse, neglect and exploitation are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse, neglect or exploit a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone.

Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2026) refers to four categories of abuse. These are set out at Appendix One along with indicators of abuse.

Staff should recognise that children may experience prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-based prejudice, and other forms of discrimination. Such experiences may affect a child's welfare, wellbeing, mental health, and willingness to seek help.

Staff should recognise that racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other forms of discriminatory behaviour may have a significant impact on a child's welfare, wellbeing and sense of safety, and should be considered within safeguarding practice where appropriate.

11.2 Bullying

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause anxiety and distress. All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through our tackling-bullying procedures which can be accessed on our website Anti-Bullying policy and Behaviour Policy.

11.3 Taking action

Any child, in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here". Key points for staff to remember for acting are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child (including calling 999)
- report your concern as soon as possible to the DSL, definitely by the end of the day
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of concern on Impero (school monitoring system)
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

11.4 Prevention

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with trusted adults helps prevention. The school will therefore seek to:
• Establish and maintain an ethos where pupils/students feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
• Ensure children/pupils know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
• Include in the curriculum/timetable activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip pupils/students with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know who to turn to for help;
• Teach RSE (Sex & Relationship Education) included in Year 6, where prevention will be highlighted in many aspects

12.0 If you are concerned about a pupil's welfare

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical signs may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the pupil the opportunity to talk and ask if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Staff should use Impero to record these early concerns. If the pupil does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff has concerns, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL.

12.1 If a pupil discloses to you

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen

if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will, at the appropriate time, let the pupil know that in order to help them they must pass the information on to the DSL**. The point at which they tell the pupil this is a matter for professional judgement. During their conversations with the pupils, staff will:

- allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and not overreact
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me'
- not be afraid of silences
- reassure them that this will be taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- never give the impression that they are causing a problem by making a report, nor should they be made to feel ashamed
- **under no circumstances** ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings, or what does the pupil's mother think about it
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about this when it started' may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- tell the pupil what will happen next
- report verbally to the DSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves
- complete the **Impero/Activion Log** and speak to the DSL as soon as possible
- seek support if they feel distressed

12.3 Notifying parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively, and the DSL will contact the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil. Therefore, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police before parents are contacted.

13.0 Confidentiality and sharing information

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality. Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL, headteacher or chair of trustees (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

Following several cases where senior leaders in school had failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)* emphasises that **any** member of staff can contact children's social care if they are concerned about a child.
The school will act promptly on relevant information received from other agencies, including notifications from the police, through Operation Encompass (see Section 14.6), where a pupil may have been present during a domestic incident, and from the local housing authority where a pupil is placed in temporary accommodation.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with our Retention and Destruction Policy.

Information sharing will take place in a timely and secure manner and where:

- it is necessary and proportionate to do so; and
- the information to be shared is relevant, adequate and accurate.
- any inappropriate images obtained, the school will not view and will be forwarded directly to the LA.

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share.

Records should include :-

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was follow up and resolved
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome

Impero and other written information will be stored securely and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Child protection information will be stored separately from the pupil's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

The DSL will normally obtain consent from the pupil and/or parents to share sensitive information within the school or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL may share information *without* consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the DSL.

Data protection legislation - including UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 - is never a barrier to sharing information which may help to protect a child. Where there is a safeguarding concern, the safety and welfare of the child takes priority.

The school's Data protection policy is available to parents and pupils on request.

13.1 Referral to children's social care

The DSL will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.
Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect a child.

Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care, including using the online referral system, if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect a child. Redbridge - Professionals working with children and young people

Where a family's needs do not meet the threshold for a referral to children's social care, the school may signpost to Redbridge's Family Help service, which acts as the single front door for all new referrals and requests for support (020 8708 3885).

13.2 Reporting directly to child protection agencies

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated safeguarding lead, their deputy, the headteacher and the chair of trustees are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety
- for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

13.3 Physical intervention

The DFE guidance on positive handling, as outlined by the 'Education and Inspections Act 2006' and 'Use of Reasonable Force' Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies 2013, states that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, e.g. when a child is endangering him/herself or others and that, at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person, reasonable and proportionate. Pupils cannot be locked in rooms for any reason (including pupil or staff safety).
Such events should be recorded using the Restraint (Positive Handling) Log. We understand that physical intervention of a nature that causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under safeguarding children or disciplinary procedures. However it must also be accepted that in using reasonable and proportionate action this may sometimes result in the child or member of staff receiving a mark or injury. The presence of such a mark or injury should not always be taken as evidence of malpractice on behalf of staff.

Parents will be informed of any such incident where a child has misbehaved, however, the school strongly discourages parents to use corporal punishment as a form of punishment.

13.4 Child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence)

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's anti-bullying procedures where necessary. However, all staff recognise that children can abuse other children and should be clear about the school's policy and procedures regarding child on child abuse. All child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously, the school has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse. We as a school, understand that even if there are no reports of child on child abuse in school it may be happening and can occur across any age range. As such all our staff and children are supported to:

- be alert to child on child abuse (including sexual harassment);
- understand how the school views and responds to child on child abuse
- stay safe and be confident that reports of such abuse will be taken seriously.

Child on child abuse can take many forms, including:

- **bullying** (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- **discriminatory behaviour,** including racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other prejudice-based behaviour

- **physical abuse** such as biting, hitting, kicking or hair pulling
- **sexually harmful behaviour/sexual abuse** such as inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault or rape
- **consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)**including pressuring another person to send a sexual imagery or video content
- **teenage relationship abuse** - defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, perpetrated against a current or former partner.
- **upskirting** – taking a picture under a person's clothing without their knowledge for the purposes of sexual gratification or to cause humiliation, distress or alarm
- **initiation/hazing** - used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as sports team or school groups by subjecting them to a series of potentially humiliating, embarrassing or abusing trials which promote a bond between them
- **prejudiced behaviour** - a range of behaviours which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless or excluded and which relates to prejudices around belonging, identity and equality, in particular prejudices linked to disabilities, special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender and sexual identity.
- **abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers**
- 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;
- Use of mobile phones to sexually harass peers

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up." Staff should be aware of the role misogynistic attitudes and behaviour can play in driving harmful sexual behaviour between children, while remaining alert to the fact that any child, regardless of gender, may be a victim or display harmful behaviour. All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously, regardless of the gender of those involved.

At our school, we take the following steps to minimise or prevent the risk of child on child abuse.

- An open and honest environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them.
- Assemblies are used to provide a moral framework outlining acceptable behaviour and stressing the effects of bullying.
- RE and PSHE/SMSC are used to reinforce the message through stories, role play, current affairs and other suitable activities.
- Staff will endeavour always to create surroundings where everyone feels confident and at ease in school.
- We will ensure that the school is well supervised, especially in areas where children might be vulnerable.
- We will adopt the 'whole school approach' to tackling sexism.

All allegations of child on child abuse should be passed to the DSL immediately. They will then be investigated and dealt with as follows.

- **Information gathering** – children, staff and witnesses will be spoken with as soon as possible to gather relevant information quickly to understand the situation and assess whether there was intent to cause harm.
- **Decide on action** – if it is believed that any young person is at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made to children's social care. The DSL will then work with children's social care to decide on next steps, which may include contacting the police.

- **Inform parents** - as with other concerns of abuse, the school will normally seek to discuss concerns about a pupil with parents. Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil and so if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police before parents are contacted.
- Outcomes: DSL to complete/ gather all paperwork and record findings and these to be placed in a secure file

Where allegations of sexual violence or sexual harassment are made, the school will act in accordance with the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. A child under the age of 13 can never legally consent to any sexual activity. Staff should also be aware that most sexual abuse is committed by someone previously known to the victim, rather than a stranger.

13.5 Supporting those involved

Support will be given to victims, perpetrators and any other children affected.
The support required for the pupil who has been harmed will depend on their circumstance and the nature of the abuse. Support could include counselling, mentoring, the support of family and friends and/or support with improving peer relationships or some restorative justice work.

Support may also be required for the pupil who has caused the harm. We will seek to understand why the pupil acted in this way and consider what support may be required to help the pupil and/or change behaviours. Once those needs have been met, the consequences for the harm caused or intended will be addressed.

13.6 Serious violence (including weapons)

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

Staff must report any concerns about a child carrying, using, or threatening with a weapon (or expressing intent to do so) to the DSL or a deputy. The DSL will assess the risk to the individual pupil and to others in the school, considering any wider information or concerns, and take appropriate action. This may include putting in place a safety and support plan and, where relevant, action to de-escalate peer conflict.

See Safety and Support Plan Template - Safety and Support Plan Template.docx

14.0 Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and child sexual exploitation (CSE)

Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. This power imbalance can be due to a range of factors, including age, gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources.

The school includes the risks of criminal exploitation and sexual exploitation in the PSHE and RSE curriculum as appropriate to age. A common feature of such exploitation is that the child often doesn't recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and doesn't see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

14.1 Sexual exploitation of children

Sexual exploitation involves an individual or group of adults taking advantage of the vulnerability of an individual or groups of children or young people, and victims can be boys or girls. Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, gifts, drugs and alcohol, and sometimes accommodation. Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to child trafficking.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation including the indicators set out under CCE below. All concerns are reported immediately to the DSL. **• make reference to multi-agency practice principles in relation to child exploitation.**

14.2 Criminal exploitation of children

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

All staff are made aware of indicators that children are at risk from or experiencing criminal exploitation. The main indicator can include children who:

- appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- misuse drugs or alcohol
- go missing for periods of time or regular return home late
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

14.3 County lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs around the country using dedicated mobile phone lines. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move drugs or money, with offenders often using coercion, intimidation, violence and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

County lines exploitation can occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child. This power imbalance can be due to the same range of factors set out under CCE, above.

Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations, including schools and colleges. Indicators of county lines include those indicators set out under CCE, above, with the main indicator being missing episodes from home and/or school.

14.4 Online safety (including Artificial Intelligence)

As schools increasingly work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate material. The use of technology, including generative artificial intelligence (AI), has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues, such as child

sexual exploitation, radicalisation, sexual predation and the creation of AI-generated or deepfake images.

We have ensured that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place to manage the content pupils can access, who can contact them, and their own conduct online whilst on school devices or the school network. **The school will review the effectiveness of these systems at least once every academic year, led by the senior leader responsible for filtering and monitoring, with support from the DSL and IT support, with a record kept of the review.**

Protecting personal information and maintaining appropriate cyber security systems is treated as part of the school's wider safeguarding responsibilities, not solely an IT matter. We have a Consultant IT manager who ensures that there is an appropriate level of security protection procedures in place in order to safeguard our systems, staff and learners. These are reviewed at least annually to keep pace with evolving cyber-crime technologies.

Staff can access further support via the DfE's "Generative artificial intelligence in education" guidance and related AI safety resources.

See E-safety policy

14.4a Mobile phones

The school operates as a mobile phone-free environment by default. Pupils do not have access to their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime. Any exception to this is by agreement with the headteacher only.

Staff mobile phone use is governed by the school's staff behaviour policy (code of conduct), which sets out expectations around acceptable use of personal devices, including when working with pupils.

14.5 Nude or semi-nude photographs

This is defined as the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams online by young people under the age of 18. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's AirDrop which works offline. Alternative terms used by children and young people may include 'dick pics' or 'pics'.

The motivations for taking and sharing nude and semi-nude images, videos and live streams are not always sexually or criminally motivated.

This advice does not apply to adults making or sharing nudes or semi-nudes of under 18-year olds. This is a form of child sexual abuse and must be referred to the police as a matter of urgency.

The UKCIS advice document uses the term 'making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes.' Some professionals may also refer to this as 'youth produced sexual imagery,' whether consensually or non-consensually.

It is also not acceptable to view and share pornography and other harmful content.

All incidents will be responded to in the same way regardless of whether the images were shared consensually or non-consensually.

Images may also be digitally altered or wholly AI-generated ("deepfakes"), and will be treated with the same seriousness as genuine images.

All incidents involving the making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes will be responded to as follows:

- The incident will be referred to the DSL immediately and the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff. If appropriate, there will be subsequent interviews with the young people involved.
- Parents will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm.
- At any point in the process, if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately in accordance with this policy.

Codes of practice to be followed.

Never view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a child to share or download – this is illegal.

If you have already viewed the imagery by accident (e.g. if a young person has showed it to you before you could ask them not to), report this to the DSL (or equivalent) and seek support.

Do not delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it.

Do not ask the child/children or young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL (or equivalent).

Do not share information about the incident with other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.

Do not say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.

Do explain to them that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the DSL (or equivalent).

In some instances, it may be necessary to refer the matter to the police. Once a report is made to the police, the report must be recorded, and the police will investigate. This may include seizure of devices and interviews with the young people involved.

The school policy does not allow children to bring in any mobile devices into school, however we are aware incidents of sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images between children may occur outside of school.

14.6 Domestic violence and abuse

Domestic violence or abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse, between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. It can include psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects.

Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic violence and exposure to it can have a long lasting negative impact on children.

When police have been called to a domestic violence incident where children are in the household and experienced that incident, the police will inform the DSL. This ensures that the school has up to date safeguarding information about the child.

All staff are aware of the impact domestic violence can have on a child. If any of our staff are concerned that a child has witnessed domestic abuse, they will report their concerns immediately to the DSL.

At Apex Primary School we work in partnership with the Metropolitan Police and Children's Services to identify and support pupils who have experienced domestic abuse in their household, through a scheme called Operation Encompass.

Where the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) notifies the school that a pupil was present during a domestic incident, this is passed to the DSL as early as possible the following morning. The DSL decides on the appropriate support for the child, handled sensitively and discreetly, in line with the child's needs and wishes.

Information shared under Operation Encompass is treated with the same confidentiality as any other child protection information, and stored securely in line with the record-keeping procedures set out in Section 13.0. This does not replace our standard safeguarding procedures - any further concerns identified are referred in the usual way.

The school's Operation Encompass Key Adult is the DSL (Melanie Hodgson), with the DDSL (Zainab Goni) as deputy Key Adult. Both have completed Operation Encompass Key Adult training.

14.7 Honour-based abuse

'Honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of HBV are abuse.

FGM is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is a criminal offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. The practice can cause intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth.

FGM is carried out on girls of any age, from young babies to older teenagers and adult women, so school staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators. Many such procedures are carried out abroad and staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female pupils about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period.

A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse. In England and Wales, the practice is a criminal offence under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

Children may be married at a very young age, and well below the age of consent in England. School staff receive training and should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a pupil about being taken abroad and not be allowed to return to England.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage. In an arranged marriage, which is common in several cultures, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

14.8 Radicalisation and extremism

The government defines extremism as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Some children are at risk of being radicalised: adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous. Islamic extremism is the most widely publicised form and schools should also remain alert to the risk of radicalisation into white supremacy extremism.

School staff receive training to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting fundamental British Values as part of SMCS (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014).

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance

Abuse can also occur from the following:

- Child abduction and community safety incidents
- Children and the court system
- Children with family members in prison
- County lines
- Modern slavery and the national referral mechanism
- Cybercrime
- Homelessness
- Forced marriage
- Channel
- Sexual violence and sexual harrassment between children in schools and colleges

15.0 Private fostering arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16 or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible.

When a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement, they will raise this with the DSL and the school should notify the local authority of the circumstances.

15.1 Related safeguarding portfolio policies

This policy should be read alongside our other safeguarding policies, which are set out in Appendix Two.

1. Looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse, neglect and exploitation. The school ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The DSL has details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority's virtual head for children in care.
As an independent school. We do not foresee any cases of Looked after children attending the setting.

2. Children who have a social worker

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Local authorities will share this information with us, and the DSL will hold and use this information to inform decisions about safeguarding and promoting the child's welfare.

3. Work experience

As a primary school we will not have any pupils on work experience, however, we may offer to host pupils from secondary schools and ensure they are supervised appropriately.

4. Visitor to the school

Visitors to the school site must all sign in at the Reception where they will then be given a Lanyard.

16.0 Appendix One

16.1

Four categories of abuse

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

Emotional abuse

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 a child 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 a 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. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Protecting children from maltreatment, inside or outside the home, including online, is essential, and it is important to recognise that some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone."

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing, causing or inciting a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or penetration with an object) 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 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 care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Abuse can also include a child causing harm to a parent, carer, or other family member — sometimes referred to as child-to-parent or caregiver abuse. Where staff become aware of this, it should be treated as a safeguarding concern in the same way as any other, considering the needs of both the child and the family member affected.

Indicators of abuse

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons, it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead.

It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused, neglected or exploited may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss school, arrive late or leave the school for part of the day
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their school work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends'.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed.

17.0 Appendix Two

17.1 Related safeguarding policies

- Staff behaviour/code of conduct
- Behaviour
- Personal and intimate care
- Concerns and Complaints procedure
- Anti- bullying
- E-safety
- Health and Safety
- SEND
- Lost/Missing children
- Safer Recruitment
- Data Protection

18.0 Appendix Three

18.1 Important contacts

First point of contact with any safeguarding concerns: Child Protection Assessment Team (CPAT) (Duty Social Worker) 255 Lynton Road High Road Ilford Essex IG1 1NN Tel: 020 8708-3781/ 020 8708-3885 Emergency (out of hours) 020 8708-5825 Fax: 020 8708-3886	Redbridge Safeguarding Children Partnership - LB Redbridge Children's Services 'one front door' Ley Street House 497-499 Ley Street Ilford Essex IG2 7QX Tel: 020 8708-5961 020 8708- 5143 Online form - London Borough Redbridge Multi Agency Referral Form – Fill in form
LADO (Redbridge) Helen Curtis Tel: 020 8708 5350 Email: helen.curtis@redbridge.gov.uk Development Manager (Redbridge)Veronica Sma Tel: 020 8708-5226 veronica.small@redbridge.gov.uk	Redbridge **Prevent** Coordinator: Neil Lemon Tel: 020 8708 5971 Email: neil.lemon@redbridge.gov.uk Training: perryn.jasper@redbridge.gov.uk
NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000 NSPCC whistleblowing helpline: 0800 028 0285	Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) PO Box 181 Darlington DL1 9FA 01325 953 795