



West Lodge School

A co-educational prep school for 3-11 year olds

West Lodge School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Role	<i>Designated Teacher for Child Protection (Ultimate Lead Responsibility)</i>	<i>Deputy Designated Teacher</i>
Name	Mr Robert Francis Head Teacher	Mr Ben Weighill Deputy Head Teacher
Contact via	<i>Head Teacher's office Tel 020 8300 2489</i>	<i>Main school office Tel 020 8300 2489</i>

Governors at West Lodge ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard pupils at the school. All child protection arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Our 'Named Governor' with special responsibility for child protection is Mrs Chris Head-Rapson (contact via Main school office Tel 020 8300 2489)

EYFS Designated Teacher for Child Protection is Mrs Sarah Collins (Assistant Head)

This policy is available to parents on the school website.

MAKING CONTACT WITH OTHER AGENCIES

In the case of concern about a child's safety, wellbeing or abuse of a child

BEXLEY CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

Telephone: 020 8303 7777 (office Hours) 020 3045 5440 MASH team

EMERGENCY DUTY TEAM

Telephone: 020 8303 7171 (out of office hours) childrensocialcare.admin@bexley.gov.uk

DISABLED CHILDREN'S SERVICE

Triage Team Telephone: 020 3045 3600 childrensocialcare.admin@bexley.gcsx.gov.uk

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S SERVICE

Telephone: 020 8303 7777

safeguardingchildren@bexley.gov.uk childrens.triageteam@bexley.cjsm.net

BEXLEY EARLY ASSESSMENT OF NEED (BEAN) ADMINISTRATOR

Telephone: 020 8303 7777

September 2025

LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO)

Sharon Ackbersingh LADO@bexley.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 3045 3436 (LADO team)

020 83045 5645 (Business Support)

BEXLEY SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

www.bexleylscb.org.uk

Partnership Manager

020 3045 4125

THE DfE DEDICATED HELPLINE AND MAILBOX FOR NON EMERGENCY ADVICE ON
EXTREMISM

Tele: 020 7340 7264

Counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

Non-emergency police number 101

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Linked policies include: Health and Safety, Safer Recruitment, Behaviour Policy, Anti-bullying Policy, Anti-Cyber bullying Policy, Bexley Partnership Protocol for Managing allegations against staff, E-Safety, Staff Code of Conduct and Handbook, Social Media Policy and AI Policy

Introduction

This policy also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and before and after school activities.

The purpose of this document is to assist all staff to protect and safeguard children who are at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. All West Lodge staff are trained to promote the child's welfare as set out in KCSIE 2025. The school ensures that "all staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction and that online safety training (which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) is provided as part of annual updates, meeting the requirements of KCSIE 2025. All staff should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment, and allocation of appropriate service provision, whether this is when problems first emerge, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care.

The policy also applies to children in need who may require additional support from one or more agencies. This policy incorporates in Appendix J, our Policy Statement on The Prevent duty for the school to have safeguarding arrangements to promote pupils' welfare and prevent radicalisation and extremism.

Children who have suffered or are likely to suffer significant harm should be reported to Children's Social Care and or the police immediately. Where a child in need is identified, this should lead to inter-agency assessment using local processes including the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and Team around the child (TAC). Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D (Safeguarding Partnership for Children and Young People) is using a multi agency referral form. Information about the three safeguarding partners can be found [here](#).

This policy and procedures should be read in conjunction with the relevant sections of the **Local Safeguarding Children Procedures**. This policy has regard to the requirements of **Working Together to Safeguard Children updated 2024 including information sharing (September 2018)**, **Keeping Children Safe In Education (KCSIE) Sept 2024 incorporating disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (June 2016)** and **What to do if you are worried a child is being abused March 2015** and **Statutory Framework for the Foundation Stage September 2023**. This policy also has regard to **Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (2021) (Prevent)**. Prevent is supplemented by non statutory advice and a briefing note: **the Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and child-minders (June 2015)** and **The use of social media for online radicalisation (July 2015)**. Useful guidance also includes: [NPCC When to call the Police](#). The School has also taken note of non-statutory interim supplements to KSCIE: **Coronavirus (COVID-19); safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers (2020 subject to DfE updates)** and **Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (COVID 19)**.

If staff members have any concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger) they will need to decide what action to take. Where possible, there should be a conversation with the DSL to agree a course of action, which could include pastoral support, although any staff member can make a referral to Children's Social Care. Other options could include referral to specialist services or early help services and should be made in accordance with the referral threshold set by the Safeguarding Partnership.

If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral they should inform the DSL, as soon as possible. The local authority should make a decision within one working day of a referral being made about what course of action they are taking and should let the referrer know the outcome. Staff should follow up on a referral should that information not be forthcoming. See Appendix K.

If after a referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving the DSL (or the person that made the referral) should press for reconsideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

In line with managing internally, the school may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from early help. Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent HSB and may prevent escalation of sexual violence. It is particularly important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) know what the local early help process is and how and where to access support

If early help is appropriate the DSL should support the staff member in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter agency assessment as appropriate. If early help and/or other support is appropriate the case should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to Children's Social Care if the child's situation does not appear to be improving.

The school will contribute to a co-ordinated offer of early help in accordance with WTTSC. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges. Any child may benefit from early help, but all staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education Health and Care Plan);
- Has a mental health need;
- Is a young carer;
- Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;

- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit (The safeguarding of a pupil placed with an alternative provision provider continues to be the responsibility of the school and the school should be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs);
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation;
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- Has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending;
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- Is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- Is a privately fostered child.

The safeguarding of children is everyone's business and schools have a responsibility under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This includes

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

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

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

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

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

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

Policy Statement

In West Lodge School, we are committed to practice, which protects all children from harm including EYFS pupils. Staff and volunteers in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues, which cause children harm. Our approach is child-centred and the best interests of the child will be considered at all times.

:

We will aim to safeguard children by:

1. Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
2. Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents and carers, staff and volunteers.
3. Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.
4. Carefully following the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers.
5. Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through support, supervision and training.
6. We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice at least annually.

We recognise the expertise staff build by undertaking safeguarding training and managing safeguarding concerns on a daily basis. Opportunities are provided for staff to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and child protection policy.

We recognise that because of the day-to-day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

1. Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are confident to talk and are listened to.
2. Ensure children know they can approach adults employed in the school if they are worried.

3. Include opportunities in the PSHEE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise how to stay safe from harm or abuse.
4. Provide early help where required.

PROCEDURES

The school will operate safeguarding procedures in line with with locally agreed multi agency arrangements as set out by London Child Protection Procedures and Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education to:

- 1. Ensure we have a designated Teacher for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place), who has received appropriate inter agency training and support for this role. The Designated Teacher with lead responsibility for Safeguarding in the School, at the time of writing this policy, is Mr Robert Francis (Head Teacher. Mr Ben Weighill (Deputy Head) and Mrs Sarah Collins (Assistant Head) are Deputy Designated Teachers. The Network Manager will have day to day responsibility for online filtering and monitoring with oversight by the DSL and deputy DSLs.**
2. Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection. At the time of writing this policy the nominated safeguarding governor and the Chair of Governors is Mrs Chris Head-Rapson (Role description for safeguarding governor can be found in Appendix H).
3. Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the Designated Teacher responsible for child protection and their role.
4. Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the Designated Teacher responsible for child protection.
5. If a crime has been committed then the matter should be reported to the police.
6. Ensure that parents have an awareness of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
7. Notify Children's Social Care immediately if there is an unexplained absence of a pupil who is subject to a child protection plan.
8. Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.

(if it proves impossible to send a representative a written report should be submitted to the child protection conference chairman)

9. Be part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners to agree the levels for the different types of assessment and services to be commissioned and delivered, as part of the local arrangements. Safeguarding partners should publish a local threshold document which includes the process for the local early help assessment and the type and level of early help services to be provided, and DSLs (and their deputies) need to familiarise themselves with this document.
10. Keep written chronological records of concerns about children, even if it is assessed that a referral is not necessary; and if that is the case, consider whether a common assessment should be undertaken.
11. Ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main pupil file.
12. Follow procedures laid down by the London Borough of Bexley Partnership where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
13. Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.
14. Take a proportionate risk-based approach to the level of information that is provided to temporary staff, volunteers and contractors.
15. Ensure evacuation procedures are always followed. Children take part in Evacuation procedures throughout the year; all school staff/personnel are aware of these procedures.
16. When a child transfers to another school the Designated Teacher will contact the designated member of staff of the receiving school to inform them that there are concerns.
17. Personal mobile phones are not to be used as cameras on the school premises by staff (in accordance with EYFS Statutory Framework 2024 sec 3 point 3.4). Please refer to the Taking, Storing and Using Images Policy.
18. Please refer to the Reasonable Force Guidelines. If physical restraint is used, parents will be informed on the same day.
19. Assurance will be gained that the staff of another organisation e.g. swimming, sports coaches, have been checked for suitability if they supervise the school's pupils on a site other than the school.

20. In an emergency the police will be called.

Governors

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that all governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training (which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training should be regularly updated.

82. Governing bodies and proprietors should be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 21, the Equality Act 2010²², (including the Public Sector Equality Duty²³), and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

Definitions of abuse

These definitions are based on those from *Keeping Children safe In Education Sept 2024*.

All school staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Peer on peer abuse is addressed in the School's Anti-Bullying Policy, however where there is reasonable concern to suspect that where a child is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm, our response will include referral to local safeguarding agencies.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may take many forms e.g. hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or otherwise causing physical

harm to a child. **See Appendix F. From October 2015 it will be mandatory for teachers to report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.**

It may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child. This unusual and potentially dangerous form of abuse is now described as fabricated or induced illness in a child.

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 over protection 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. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of children, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing 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 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. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate off-line abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The School recognises that the sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

Link added to the CSA Centre's Supporting [practice](#) in tackling child sexual abuse.

Neglect

Neglect involves 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 and 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.

Domestic Abuse

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

[Home : Operation Encompass](#) (includes information for schools on the impact of domestic abuse on children)

Mental Health

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

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day to day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. As a school we recognise that where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact their lives. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact upon their mental health, behaviour and education.

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

Useful Guidance: [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#), [Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing](#)

Contextual Safeguarding

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and / or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and / or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the DSL (and deputies), should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal; exploitation and serious youth violence as well child mental health issues because all of these areas of particular vulnerability. Staff know what to do when a child discloses exploitation as well as abuse or neglect. All staff are trained to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept

safe. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school should not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. It is important to explain that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.

Staff are also trained and are fully aware that they have a duty to be proactive in identifying safeguarding concerns amongst all children but particularly those are vulnerable.

All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or are being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

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

Different forms of harm often overlap, and perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as CCE (including county lines) and CSE.

In some cases the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

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

also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources.

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

- Appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions;
- Associate with other children involved in exploitation;
- Suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- Misuse drugs and alcohol;
- Go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- Regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help maintain them in education.

CSE can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:

- Have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- Suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.

Link added to the Preventing Child Sexual [Exploitation](#) | The Children's Society.

Other specific forms of abuse

We recognise that there are some specific forms of abuse and that other experts and professional bodies may provide us with further support and guidance.

Information regarding the definition and signs of further safeguarding issues can be found in Annex B of KCSIE 2025. This also has some direct links to Government websites on the specific forms of abuse including child abduction and community safety incidents, children and the court system, children with family members in prison, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, county lines, modern slavery and the National Referral Mechanism, cybercrime, homelessness, upskirting, domestic violence, FGM, forced marriage, gangs, youth violence and so called honour based violence amongst other forms of specific abuse against children.

Procedures for dealing with abuse by one or more pupils

Children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse) and it can take many forms. It can happen both inside and outside of school and online. Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and recognise that young people can be both victims and perpetrators of abuse. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off

as 'banter' or 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'. Peer on peer (child on child) abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of peer on peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

This can include, but is not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory); abuse within intimate partner relationships; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexual violence; sexual harassment; consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced imagery); 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; upskirting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and or violent behaviour in the school.

The school utilises the detailed advice on consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos in [UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)

The school also utilises the advice [Harmful online challenges and online hoaxes](#) - this includes advice on preparing for any online challenges and hoaxes, sharing information with parents and carers and where to get help and support.

LGFL ['Undressed'](#) provides schools with advice about how to teach young children about being tricked into getting undressed online in a fun way without scaring them or explaining the motives of sex offenders.

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation in collaboration with the Home Office, has developed ['Shore Space'](#), an online resource which works to prevent harmful sexual behaviour. Shore Space offers a confidential chat service supporting young people who are concerned about their own or someone else's sexual thoughts and behaviour.

Details of how allegations will be investigated and dealt with, can be found in the school's anti-bullying and anti-cyberbullying policies. In the event of abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm, then local agencies will be contacted and a referral made. In the event

of a disclosure about a pupil on pupil abuse, all children whether perpetrator or victim will be treated as at risk. The school's anti-bullying procedures outline arrangements for pupil support.

Possible Signs & Symptoms of Abuse

Pupils may exhibit signs which may or may not be indicators that physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse, including neglect and exploitation, has taken place, but the possibility should be considered.

The following are all possible signs/symptoms of abuse and are listed in 'London Child Protection Procedures':

The absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not occurred.

In an abusive relationship the child may:

- Appear frightened of the parent;
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to their age and development.

The parent may:

- Persistently avoid routine child health services and/or treatment when the child is ill;
- Have unrealistic expectations of the child;
- Frequently complain about / to the child and may fail to provide attention or praise (high criticism / low warmth environment);
- Be absent or leave the child with inappropriate carers;
- Have mental health problems which they do not appear to be managing;
- Be misusing substances;
- Persistently refuse to allow access on home visits;
- Persistently avoid contact with services or delay the start or continuation of treatment;
- Be involved in domestic violence;
- Fail to ensure the child receives an appropriate education.

Professionals should be aware of the potential risk of harm to children when individuals (adults or children), previously known or suspected to have abused children, move into the household.

Recognising physical abuse

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

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

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.

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

Burns and scalds

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.

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

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

Non-mobile children rarely sustain fractures.

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

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

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

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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).

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.

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

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.

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

Disabled children and young people can be particularly vulnerable to neglect due to the increased level of care they may require.

Although neglect can be perpetrated consciously as an abusive act by a parent, it is rarely an act of deliberate cruelty. Neglect is usually defined as an omission of care by the child's parent, often due to one or more unmet needs of their own. These could include domestic

violence, mental health issues, learning disabilities, substance misuse, or social isolation / exclusion, this list is not exhaustive.

While offering support and services to these parents, it is crucial that professionals maintain a clear focus on the needs of the child.

Children at risk should be referred to Children's Social Care **immediately**. Children in need should lead to an inter agency assessment.

Serious violence

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs. It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys – both boys and girls who are being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's [Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](#) and its [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines](#) guidance. Also see [County Lines Toolkit For Professionals](#) - The Children's Society in partnership with Victim Support and National Police Chiefs' Council.

Prevent Extremism and radicalisation

Normal referral processes are available when there are concerns about children who may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Please refer to the front page for contact details.

In the case of pupils identified as being at risk of radicalisation West Lodge will consider the level of risk to identify the most appropriate referral, which could include Channel (or Children's Social Care).

Although decisions to seek support for a child in need, or about whom there are concerns relating to radicalisation, would normally be taken in consultation with parents and pupils, their consent is not required for a referral when there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child is at risk of significant harm. Parental consent is not required for referrals to statutory agencies. Prevent requires schools to set out clear protocols for any visiting speakers. Visiting speakers will be assessed for suitability and appropriately supervised. Please see Appendix I Outside Speakers Protocol and Policy.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Children with special educational need (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- Children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying-without outwardly showing any signs; and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- SEN children are particularly vulnerable to peer upon peer abuse, including isolation from other children and assumptions that behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability. If concerns exist staff are expected to investigate fully

Further information can be found in

- [SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years](#), and
- [Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions](#).

And from specialist organisations such as:

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Services (SENDIASS). SENDIASS offer information, advice and support for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. All local authorities have such a service: [Bexley's service](#)

- [Mencap](#) - Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people
- [NSPCC - Safeguarding children with special educational needs and disabilities \(SEND\)](#) and [NSPCC - Safeguarding child protection/deaf and disabled children and young people](#)

Human Rights

The Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to and contains the Articles and protocols of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) (the Convention) that are deemed to apply in the UK. It compels public organisations to respect and protect an individual's human rights when they make individual decisions about them.

Being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of these rights, depending on the nature of the conduct and the circumstances.

Further information (including on absolute and qualified rights) can be found [at Human Rights | Equality and Human Rights Commission \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com).

Equality Act

Schools and colleges have obligations under the Equality Act 2010 (the Equality Act). 87. According to the Equality Act, schools and colleges must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics). 88. Whilst all of the above protections are important in the context of safeguarding, this guidance and the legal duties placed on schools and colleges, in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, governing bodies and proprietors should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils and students with regard to particular protected characteristics - including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race.

Guidance to help schools understand how the Equality Act affects them and how to fulfil their duties under the act can be found at [Equality Act 2010: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schoolsadvice-for-schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schoolsadvice-for-schools), it may also be useful for colleges. For further information [Equality Act guidance | Equality and Human Rights Commission \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/).

Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or gender questioning

N.B. This section remains under review, pending the outcome of the gender questioning children guidance consultation, and final gender questioning guidance documents being published.

A child or young person being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, they can sometimes be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are.

However, the Cass review identified that caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there remain many unknowns about the impact of social transition and children may well have wider vulnerabilities, including having complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases additional diagnoses of autism spectrum disorder and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

It recommended that when families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning children, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. When parents are supporting pre-pubertal children, clinical services should ensure that they can be seen as early as possible by a clinical professional with relevant experience.

As such, when supporting a gender questioning child, schools should take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with the child's parents (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child), including any clinical advice that is available and how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying. Schools should refer to our Guidance

for Schools and Colleges in relation to Gender Questioning Children, when deciding how to proceed.

Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where they can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory [Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum](#) and there is a range of support available to help schools counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

What to do if you suspect that abuse may have occurred

You must report the concerns immediately to the Designated Teacher by completing an 'Internal Notification of Concern' form and handing it directly to him/her, and also explaining your concern. In the absence of the Designated Teacher, speak to the Deputy Designated Teacher. In his/her absence, speak to the most senior member of staff on the premises. Both the Head teacher and the Deputy Head teacher are contactable on their mobile phone when not on the school premises.

- **The Designated Teacher is Mr Robert Francis (Head Teacher) who has been nominated by the governing body of West Lodge School to refer allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities. In the absence of Mr Robert Francis, the matter should be brought to the attention of Mr Ben Weighill (Deputy Head teacher) or in his absence Mrs Sarah Collins (Assistant Head). *In the absence of any of the above speak to the most senior member of staff on the premises. Both the Head Teacher and the Deputy Head Teacher are contactable on their mobile phones when not on the school premises. The role of DSL is included in the people mentioned above job descriptions – this includes being responsible for online safety including understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.***

Suspicions will not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.

It is the right of any individual to make direct referrals to the child protection agencies. If for any reason you believe that the nominated persons have not responded appropriately to your concerns, it is then your responsibility to consider contacting the child protection agencies directly.

The roles and responsibilities of the Designated Teacher:

- Obtain information from staff, volunteers, children or parents and carers who have child protection concerns and to record this information.

- Keep staff aware of Child Protection Procedures.
- Be aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - [PACE Code C 2019](#).
- Be responsible for online safety including understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.
- Assess the information quickly and carefully and ask for further information as appropriate. Consult readily and immediately with the appropriate department of the Local Safeguarding Board either the children's services or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO – see **appendix A**) if a member of staff is involved.
Pupils who need additional support but who are not considered to have suffered or are likely to suffer significant harm, should be assessed through local inter agency processes including the use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and Team around the child (TAC).
- They should also consult with London Borough of Bexley Children's Social Care (includes the Disabled Children Services) or Safeguarding Children Service to clarify any doubts or worries (For contact details, see **appendix B**)
- The Designated Teacher should make a referral to Children's Social Care or the police without delay if it is agreed during the consultation or there is an immediate risk to the child.
- The referral should be made to Children's Social Care in which the child lives, e.g. if a child lives in another borough, the referral needs to be made to the Social Care Department in that borough. In Bexley referrals are made to the Children's Social Care department. If the child is disabled, the referral should be made to the Disabled Children Service.
- A telephone referral should be made and confirmed in writing using an inter-agency referral form (available on the school portal or through the London Borough of Bexley or Partnership websites) within 48 hours.
- When making a referral, the designated teacher should keep a written record of:
 - Discussions with child
 - Discussions with parent/s
 - Discussions with staff
 - Information provided to Social Care
 - Advice given and decisions taken (clear times, dated and signed).
 - The record should note the rationale for the decisions made.

- Children's Social Care should acknowledge the referral within one working day and should be contacted if no acknowledgement has been received within 3 working days.
- Following referral, Children's Social Care should, within one working day, consider the next course of action, record their decision in writing and notify the Designated Teacher.

Responding to a child making an allegation of abuse

- Stay calm, listen carefully to what is being said
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others-do not promise to keep secrets
- Allow the child to continue at his/her own pace
- Ask questions for clarification only and at all times avoid asking leading questions.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared
- Record in writing what was said using the child's own words as soon as possible, note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated
- Pass this information on immediately to your Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher in his/her absence.
- Do not promise confidentiality

After a child has disclosed abuse, the designated teacher should carefully consider whether or not it is safe for a child to return home to a potentially abusive situation. On these rare occasions it may be necessary to take immediate action to contact Children's Social Care to discuss putting safety measures into effect.

The Needs of Children with a Social Worker

Local authorities should share the fact that a child has a social worker and the DSL should use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. West Lodge recognises how important this is to enable us to respond appropriately to unauthorised absence. This will influence the provision of pastoral and / or academic support.

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

The Bexley S.H.E.L.D procedures on allegations against the Head Teacher, school staff, other workers or volunteers will be followed in all such cases. It is available on the Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D website and is available to parents on request.

If there is an allegation against a member of staff or a volunteer including supply staff it should be reported immediately to the Head Teacher. If the Head Teacher is absent it must be

reported immediately to the Chair of Governors. Where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the Head, it should be reported to the LADO direct. If there is an allegation against the Head Teacher or a member of the governing body, it must be reported straight away to the Chair of Governors (who is the nominated Safeguarding governor). As specified in para 3 of p.23 of this policy, if the allegation is against the Head, the Head must not be informed. The nominated governor's role includes liaison with the local authority on issues on child protection or in case of allegations against the Head teacher or a member of the governing body.

Information for Employees and Volunteers regarding the Management of Allegations of Abuse against Adults who work with Children

Becoming the subject of an allegation is inevitably difficult and distressing for everyone involved and is likely to cause a great deal of anxiety and concern. We recognise that the impact on you, your family and the child concerned can be far reaching. We are committed to providing fair treatment and to achieving just outcomes for **all** concerned.

This guide is intended to help you to be as well informed as possible should you be faced with an allegation. It provides an explanation of the process that will be followed and offers information about appropriate support and guidance.

Some of the information contained in this leaflet only applies to employees, not volunteers: where this is the case, this is clearly indicated. Please note that the term 'manager' could apply to your line manager, your Head teacher or another relevant manager within the school or service in which you work/volunteer, and the expressions 'child' and 'children' are used to refer to both children and young people who are 17 and under.

Supply Staff and Peripatetic Teachers

West Lodge School does not use supply teachers from agencies. However, would we do so we will ensure that allegations will be dealt with properly. In no circumstances should the school decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. The school would routinely inform the supply agency of our process for managing allegations.

Peripatetic staff are not employees of the school but are subject to the West Lodge safeguarding checks and safer recruitment procedures. In the event of an allegation this would be investigated in accordance with the school's safeguarding protocols set out in this policy. We also recognise that they may work privately with pupils at the school so advice would be sought from the LADO regarding appropriate action whilst accusations are being investigated and following the outcome of an investigation.

What is an 'allegation'? An 'allegation' refers to any information or concern which suggests an adult who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child: or
- Behaved in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children. **OR** behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children.

An allegation can arise in connection with your work, your own children or other children living outside the family, and can relate to a current or historical concern.

An allegation can be made in a number of ways:

- Directly by the child in person;
- Indirectly, for example by friends of the child;
- Complaint from a parent/carer to a Head Teacher /Manager, Children's Social Care or the Police;
- Report from a colleague or another agency;
- Anonymously.

What happens when an allegation is made?

All allegations are taken seriously and acted upon. The management of allegations sits within an effective cycle of good practice which exists both to protect children and those who work with them. When an allegation is made, a senior manager/ Head teacher/ Chair of Governors will refer to the Local Authority Designated Officer* (LADO), who has overall responsibility for the management of allegations, immediately and within one working day at the latest. Together they will consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree the course of action to be taken.

The school must not investigate the allegation before discussions with the LADO or in the most serious cases the Police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations. Parental consent is not required before reporting allegations to the LADO.

*Local Authorities are required to designate officers to be involved in the management and oversight of individual cases – **this designated officer or team of officers** is known as the 'Local Authority Designated Officer' (LADO). The LADO provides advice and guidance, liaises with the Police, Social Care Teams, regulatory bodies such as Ofsted and other organisations as needed and ensures a consistent, fair and thorough process for both child and adult.

Any allegation that meets the threshold for 'harm' or 'risk of harm' will be reported to police and social care for investigation. Investigations may have three related, but independent, strands:

- Enquiries and assessment by children's social care regarding whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services;
- A police investigation into a possible criminal offence;
- Consideration by the employer of whether disciplinary action is necessary.

These three strands need to be thoroughly assessed and a definite conclusion reached on each of them. To ensure this happens, a 'Strategy Meeting' will take place to plan any enquiries, allocate tasks and set timescales. The meeting's primary focus is on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child, but it's also about ensuring a fair process for you, as the adult. It will consider not only the children directly involved in the allegation but also any other children who could have suffered, or are at risk of suffering, harm. This could include your own children.

These meetings are held under the Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D Procedures: they are not part of any disciplinary procedure. There may be circumstances in which the meeting could take place before you have been made aware of the allegation. Those invited to the Strategy Meeting include representatives from the Police and the relevant Social Care Teams, a named Senior Officer/Manager from your place of work and a Human Resources Advisor. In certain circumstances, representatives from Health and Education professionals involved with the child also are invited.

All relevant information will be shared and decisions made about what actions are to be taken next. For employees, if the initial evaluation establishes that a Police or Social Care investigation is not required, the matter may still need to be dealt with under disciplinary procedures. One reason for this is that the burden of proof in criminal cases is "beyond reasonable doubt" whereas the threshold of "the balance of probabilities" applies to disciplinary proceedings.

Please be assured that any subsequent investigations will be conducted as speedily as possible, but of course this has to be balanced against the need for a thorough and fair process. Your views will be represented and shared through any applicable investigation processes by the Police, Social Care Team and your employer.

Cases subject to Police Investigation: If a criminal investigation is required, the Police will set target dates for reviewing progress and for consulting with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) about whether to proceed with the investigation, charge you with an offence or to close the case. In almost all cases where the Police decide,

- i) not to charge you
- ii) to administer a Caution, or
- iii) if a court acquits you

they will still pass all information that would be relevant to a disciplinary case (such as statements) to either the LADO or your manager. If you are convicted of an offence, the Police will inform your employer straight away.

Disciplinary Investigation: If a Disciplinary Investigation is to take place, the investigation will take place in accordance with your organisation's Disciplinary Procedure (which you will be provided with a copy of). In some cases you will have been told not to attend work whilst the investigation is in progress. This is called 'suspension' from duties. Suspension will not take place without careful thought and consideration being given to other suitable alternatives, such as a transfer of duties or additional supervision. Suspension acts as a protection to both the child/children involved and yourself. It is a 'neutral' act, meaning that its use does not mean you are considered blameworthy of the allegation.

Frequently Asked Questions

Will anybody else be notified? Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while an allegation is being investigated and considered. However, alongside the Police and Social Care, there will be a need for a small number of people to be informed that an allegation has been made and the likely course of action:

- The child/young person concerned, their parents/carers and any party making an allegation;
- You – at the appropriate time;
- Your manager;
- In schools, the Chair of Governors;
- The Local Authority Designated Officer;
- Potentially the relevant regulatory body e.g. Ofsted and/or
- Your professional body e.g. the General Medical Council (GMC)
- From Dec 2012 the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Where there is concern the matter has or may become common knowledge or subject to speculation, it may become necessary to issue a brief statement for parents, children and members of the public.

Where will I get support? : You will be:

- i) advised to contact your Trade Union representative and/or professional association;
- ii) offered the services of a Staff Counselling Service, if available.

Employees and **volunteers** will be kept informed of the progress of the case by their line manager, or suitable person designated by them.

Will I be informed of the outcome of the Strategy Meeting? Depending on the scope and scale of the investigation/s, more than one Strategy Meeting may be needed before an outcome can be arrived at. At the final Strategy Meeting, the outcome of Police and Social Care enquiries will be discussed with your employer and consideration given as to whether you pose a risk to children and your suitability to work with children in your current position.

Recommendations will be made to your employer about the level of risk and/or any training issues that may have been identified. Where an allegation has been made but the threshold for harm is not met, your manager may deal with the issue as an internal matter. Where an allegation has been substantiated this may not always result in dismissal, but additional training and monitoring may be necessary.

In the event that you are dismissed from your post because of a safeguarding concern, your employer has a statutory duty to refer you to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for consideration as to whether barring you from working with children is appropriate.

What if I resign during the disciplinary investigation? It is important that every effort is made to reach and record a conclusion in all cases of allegations bearing on the safety or welfare of children, and so a resignation would not prevent an allegation from being followed up and considered through the LADO process. Any requests for references will be honoured but the employer has a duty to mention the current disciplinary process. In addition, your employer has a statutory duty to refer you to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if he or she considers the outcome of the disciplinary could have been dismissal. The DBS will then do their own investigation as to whether you should be barred from working with children.

What about my return to work? Where it is decided that you can return to work, your employer will consider how best to facilitate this. This may include a phased return.

Will the details of the allegation stay on my personal employment file? Details of allegations that are found to have been malicious or deliberately invented should not be retained on personnel records. A clear and comprehensive summary of all other allegations made, a chronology of events and decisions reached will be kept on file at least until you reach normal retirement age, or for 10 years if that is longer. This applies even if you leave. The purpose of this record is to:

- provide clarification in cases where a future DBS check reveals information from the Police that an allegation was made but did not result in a prosecution or conviction;
- enable an accurate response to be given to any future request for a reference;
- prevent unnecessary re-investigation if allegations resurface after a period of time.

Will the details of an allegation appear on my DBS Disclosure Certificate? Yes if the allegation results in a criminal charge, caution or conviction. However, it is also possible there may be reference to an allegation that did not result in a criminal charge or conviction on a future Enhanced DBS Disclosure Certificate. Such information would be disclosed at the discretion of a senior individual within the Police Force.

False allegations: Allegations deemed to be malicious or deliberately invented should be referred to the LADO, and consideration will be given to a referral to Social Care for assessment. This is to rule out the possibility that the child is being abused elsewhere and displacing blame.

Experience shows that false/malicious allegations are not the norm: there is often misunderstood /misinterpreted behaviour of the adult, or the child is aggrieved in some way at treatment received. In the event that an allegation is shown to have been invented or malicious, the Head teacher/Senior Manager should consider whether disciplinary action against the individual who made it is appropriate. The Police may also be asked to consider further action, taking into account the circumstances.

Where can I get more information?

- Chapter 6/Appendix 5 - Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 updated 2024
<http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/>

- Chapter 7 <http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/procedures/>

- Dealing with allegations against teachers and other staff in schools
<http://www.education.gov.uk/>

- Your Manager/Human Resources Advisor

- The Disclosure and Barring Service
<http://www.dbs.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

Key Legislation

Children Act 1989

Childcare (Disqualification) regulations 2009

Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006(June 2015)

Education Act 2002

Children Act 2004 – Every Child Matters, Change for Children

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

The Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (2021) (Prevent)

The Employment Act 2008

Working Together to Safeguard Children updated 2024

The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

The Sexual Offences Act 2003

KCSIE 2025

RSHE 2019

Concerns relating to a member of the school staff or other person in a position of trust:

- If the suspicions in any way involve a member of staff or other person in a position of trust, the matter needs to be brought to the attention of the Head teacher immediately who will act in accordance with procedures issued to all schools by the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). If the suspicion involves the Head teacher, advice needs to be sought from the LADO and the Chair of the Governing Body is to be informed immediately without informing the Head.

- The Head teacher or designated deputy Head teacher will attend any Position of Trust/Strategy Meetings relating to allegations against staff.
- The Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000 established a criminal offence of the abuse of trust affecting teachers and others who are in a relationship of trust with 16-18 year olds. A relationship of trust is one where a teacher, member of education staff or volunteer is in a position of power or influence over a pupil or student by virtue of the work or nature of the activity being undertaken.
- The legislation is intended to protect young people in education who are over the age of consent but under 18 years of age. 'Grooming' a child or young person under 18 with a view to a future sexual relationship may also be an offence in this context.
- The principle of equality embedded in the legislation applies irrespective of sexual orientation: neither homosexual nor heterosexual relationships are acceptable within a position of trust. Any concern raised by a parent, child or young person will be listened to and taken seriously.

Arrangements for dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff

Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe In Education (KCSIE Sept 2024 copy in Staffroom) replaced *Dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff* and thus provides the most recent guidance on this issue.

If an allegation is made against a teacher the quick resolution of that allegation must be a clear priority to the benefit of all concerned. At any stage of consideration or investigation, all unnecessary delays should be eradicated. The School must not undertake their own investigations of allegations without prior consultation with the local authority designated officer (LADO), or in the most serious cases, the police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations. In borderline cases discussions with the LADO can be held informally and without naming the school or individual.

The procedures make it clear that all allegations are to be reported straight away to the head, in the event of the head being absent the allegation must be reported directly to the Chair of Governors, Mrs Chris Head-Rapson. In cases where the head is the subject of the allegation or concern this must be reported directly to the Chair of Governors, without informing the Head. The contact details for the LADO are on the front of this policy and appendix B. The LADO should be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to an employer's attention or that are made directly to the police.

Immediate contact should be made with the LADO to discuss the allegation, consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action including any involvement of the police. Discussions should be recorded in writing, and communication with both the individual and the parents of the child/children agreed. The School will consider carefully whether the circumstances of the case warrant suspension or whether alternative arrangements should be put in place. The School will give due weight to the views of the LADO and the policy when making a decision about suspension.

From 1st October 2012, there are restrictions on the reporting or publishing of allegations against teachers and so the School will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity. These restrictions apply up to the point where the accused person is charged with an offence, or the DfE/TRA publish information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case.

The School will report to the DBS promptly (within one month), any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used and the DBS referral criteria are met. The DBS address for referrals is PO BOX 181, Darlington, DL1 9FA. Telephone 01325 953795.

Ceasing to use a person's services includes: dismissal; non-renewal of a fixed-term contract; no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency; terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee; no longer using staff employed by contractors; no longer using volunteers; resignation; and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering. The School will ensure that reports include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible. **Failure to make a report constitutes an offence.** 'Compromise agreements' cannot apply in this connection, or where the individual refuses to co-operate with an investigation. Proprietors of independent schools have a legal duty to respond to requests from the DBS for information they hold already, but they do not have to find it from other sources.

West Lodge is under a duty to consider making a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate. The reasons such an order would be considered are: "unacceptable professional conduct", "conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute" or a "conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence". Advice about whether an allegation against a teacher is sufficiently serious to refer to the TRA can be found in Teacher Misconduct: the prohibition of teachers (October 2015). Further guidance is published on the TRA website. Where a referral has been made to the DBS, it is not necessary for a referral also to be made to TRA, as information is shared between the two bodies. Where a dismissal does not reach the threshold for DBS referral, separate consideration must be given to an TRA referral.

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns)

West Lodge School has a culture in which **all** concerns about adults are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately. This enables an open and transparent culture, enables the early identification of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, minimising the risk of abuse, ensuring that adults working in the school are clear about and act within professional boundaries in accordance with the values and ethos of West Lodge, and protecting those working in or on behalf of the school from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

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 may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate contact outside of work, and
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the 'LADO.'

These behaviours can exist on a wide spectrum, from inadvertent to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse. They include, for example:

- Being over friendly with children;
- Having favourites;
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;
- Engaging with children on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door;
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Low-level concerns about a member of staff should be reported to the Headteacher. Staff should feel confident to self-refer. Low-level concerns about someone employed by a supply agency or contractor should be shared with the head, the concern recorded, and their employer notified so that potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Where a third party has raised the concern, the Headteacher should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking;

- Directly to the person who raised the concern (if known);
- To the individual involved and any witnesses.

The Headteacher will record all low-level concerns in writing. This should include:

- Details of the concern;
- The context in which it arose;
- Evidence collected by the DSL where the concern has been raised via a third party;
- The decision categorising the type of behaviour;

- Action taken;
- The rationale for decisions and action taken;
- The name of the individual sharing the concerns (respecting any wish to remain anonymous as far as possible).

The records will be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR. They will be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern is identified, the school will take action through disciplinary procedures, or if it meets the harm threshold, refer to the LADO. Consideration will also be given to whether there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled the behaviour to occur and where appropriate policies will be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again. Information will be retained until the individual leaves employment of the school.

Recruitment and appointment of workers and volunteers

Refer to Safer Recruitment, Selection and Disclosures Policy and Procedure.

In recruiting and appointing workers we, West Lodge School, will be responsible for following Bexley HR Service, Recruitment and selection guide for schools.

A summary of pertinent points follows:

- Identifying the tasks and responsibilities involved and the type of person most suitable for the job.
- Draw up the Selection criteria and put together a list of essential and desirable qualifications, skills and experience.
- All applicants should apply in writing and their application will cover their personal details, previous and current work/volunteering experience.
- We will make sure that we measure the application against the selection criteria
- All applicants need to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they should be considered unsuitable to work with children. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) requires that people applying for positions which give them substantial, unsupervised access on a sustained or regular basis to children under the age of 18 must declare all previous convictions which are then subject to police checks. They can then only be offered a job subject to a successful police DBS check and Prohibition check. This includes potential employees, volunteers and self-employed people such as sports coaches. They are also required to declare any pending case against them. It is important that the applicant in this particular category understands that all information will be dealt with confidentially and will not be used against them unfairly.

- We will ask for photographic evidence to confirm the identity of the applicant e.g. their passport and proof of address.
- We will request to see documentation of any qualifications detailed by the applicant.
- We will always interview our candidates for a job.
- We will request two written references from previous employers. We will ask the referee to also comment on their suitability for working with children. If necessary we will also try and follow up written references with a telephone call.
- The same principles apply to ex-pupils who have been involved with the organisation and have become volunteers.
- We will ensure that we are compliant with all the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service. <https://www.gov.uk/teacher-status-checks-information-for-employers>
- Declarations are required from each member of staff confirming their medical fitness and their suitability to work with children at the school. Applicants will be asked to make a declaration, duly signed, that they know of no reasons, on grounds of mental or physical health, why they should not be able to discharge the responsibilities required by the post in question. They will also be required to sign a Staff suitability check. This check will be updated annually.
- In all but exceptional circumstances the school does not employ a person unless they have a satisfactory DBS certificate. If a staff member's DBS certificate is not received the following checks will be put in place: Identity check, satisfactory barred list check, Prohibition check. Prior to starting employment a risk assessment will be undertaken and the person will be supervised while on the premises until the DBS is seen and is clear.
- An online search will be carried out as part of due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school might want to explore with the applicant at interview. The School will inform shortlisted candidates that online searches may be done as part of due diligence checks.
- When using supply teachers, the school will ensure that the agency has undertaken appropriate checks. The supply teacher will be asked to provide evidence before they start work in the form of two types of identification such as their photographic ID as well as a letter (from the agency).
- Prohibition checks will be carried out on Teachers and Teaching assistants.
- Where the successful candidate has worked or been resident overseas such checks and confirmations as the school may consider appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. This includes checking for information about any teacher sanction or restriction that an EEA professional regulating authority has imposed using the TRA Teachers' Services System.

Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (June 2016)

The school does not knowingly employ people to work in childcare or allow them to be directly concerned in its management, if they are “disqualified”.

Early years childcare means education, care (excepting health care) and any supervised activity for a child from birth until the 1 September following their fifth birthday. It applies to all early years provision during and outside school hours, including in school nursery and reception classes.

Later years childcare means childcare for children under the age of 8. To the extent that this overlaps with those in the early years, that category is dealt with above. For children who are older than “early years” but under the age of 8, the normal school day, after-school co- curricular educational clubs and health care are not within scope of the regulations. For this age group, therefore, only provision which would be considered “childcare” (rather than education) is within the scope of the regulations. This essentially means crèche-like facilities before and after school.

Although the word “employ” is used in the regulations, the guidance does not only apply to employees. Others such as volunteers, supply/agency staff, self-employed people, staff of other organisations contracted to provide childcare, governors who volunteer with the relevant groups or are directly concerned with their day to day management, are also potentially within the scope of the guidance. By contrast, those who are not involved in childcare are not within the remit of these regulations, for example, cleaners and kitchen staff.

- Where people are within the scope of the guidance, the school will check themselves whether they are disqualified from childcare or ensure that others have done so.
- The grounds for disqualification include, in summary:
 - being on the DBS Children’s Barred List;
 - being cautioned for, convicted of or charged with certain violent and sexual criminal offences against children and adults, at home or abroad;
 - being the subject of certain other orders relating to the care of children;
 - refusal or cancellation of registration relating to childcare or children’s homes or being [§]prohibited from private fostering;
- Disqualification occurs as soon as the above criteria are met, for example, as soon as a caution or conviction occurs, even before the person is formally included on the children’s barred list.

- Staff are reminded annually to disclose relevant information.

IMPLEMENTATION

- The school will:
 - inform relevant people of the legislation, including that they may be disqualified by association;
 - take steps to gather sufficient and accurate information about whether any member of staff in a relevant childcare setting is disqualified, including by association;
 - keep records of staff employed to work in or manage relevant childcare and including the date disqualification checks were completed.
- In taking steps to gather information, staff can be expected to disclose all their convictions and cautions including those which are spent.
- By definition, a person who is disqualified cannot lawfully do the work from which they are disqualified. If a person is found to be disqualified, or if there is doubt over that issue, then pending resolution they must be removed from the work from which they are or may be disqualified. There is no requirement automatically to suspend or dismiss all individuals found to be disqualified; there is scope in principle to redeploy them with other age groups or in other work from which they are not disqualified, subject to assessing the risks and taking advice from the LADO when appropriate.
- The school will inform Ofsted where they are satisfied that a person working in a relevant setting falls within one of the disqualification criteria. Staff who are disqualified may apply to Ofsted for a waiver of disqualification, unless they are barred from working with children. ^{L T L}_{SEP SEP}

In recruiting and appointing volunteers we at West Lodge School will be responsible for the following:

- All volunteers will be asked to provide a brief written application confirming their details, experience, etc.
- All volunteers will be interviewed.
- Currently there is discretion in respect of detailing enhanced DBS checks on all volunteers. This decision must be made by the Head teacher and will be based on the duties that the volunteer will be involved in. The school will comply with the new definition of regulated activity, supervised and "unsupervised" as of September 2012.

The school will continue to carry out an enhanced DBS check whenever necessary and possible.

- Whenever possible a volunteer should be asked for references. It is acknowledged that this may not be from an employer but can be a personal reference.
- All volunteers should receive an induction and be given clear written guidance on responsibilities, acceptable behaviour and limits to their role.

Supervisory arrangements for the management of West Lodge School out of school hours' activities.

We will aim to protect children from abuse and our team members from false allegations by adopting the following guidelines in line with the school's Safer Working Practices and Code of Conduct:

- We will keep a register of all children attending our activities.
- We will keep a register of all staff / outside providers (both paid staff members and volunteers).
- Where applicable, all clubs independent of the school must have their own child protection policy & procedure in line with the school's Child Protection Policy.
- The club will keep a register of all children attending the activities and give a copy to the school.
- The club will keep a register of all team members (both paid staff members and volunteers) and ensure they are DBS checked and comply with new regulations as of September 2012.
- Registers will include arrival and departure times.
- Our team members will record any unusual events on the accident/incident form.
- Written consent from a parent or guardian will be obtained for every child attending our activities.
- Where possible staff / outside providers should not be alone with a child, although we recognise that there may be times when this may be necessary or helpful.
- Staff / outside providers should not be alone in a closed room with a child.
- Staff / outside providers may escort children to the toilet but they should not go into the toilets. They are not expected to be involved with toileting, unless the child has a special need that has been brought to our attention by the parent/guardian, and a procedure for this has been agreed.
- Physical contact should be avoided unless required for the child's safety and wellbeing or the safety and wellbeing of others. However our team members will be discouraged from this in circumstances where an adult or child are left alone.
- All team members should treat all children with dignity and respect in attitude, language and actions.

Students who go missing on / off school site:

While students are in school, we have a responsibility for duty of care to the students and act in loco-parentis by taking steps that are reasonable to ensure their safety and well-being. While on school visits, it is good practice for younger students to wear easily identifiable clothing, badges or hats. However, students should not wear any badge identifying them by name. They are expected to know details of their destination and of school contacts and it would be good practice for younger students to carry written details of these. Procedures are in place if a student should go missing in / out of school (see **appendix C**).

Children Missing Education/Children Absent from Education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Children missing education (CME) are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of abuse/radicalisation and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later on in life.

Unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. It is important the school's response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, 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.

West Lodge enters pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school undertakes reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and considers notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity. West Lodge also notifies the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register at a non-standard transition point.

West Lodge School monitors pupils' attendance through the daily register. The school notifies the Local Authority of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly or have missed ten school days or more without permission. The school also notifies the Local Authority if a pupil is to be deleted from the admissions register at non-standard transitions and the school is not satisfied that the pupil will be continuing in fulltime education – e.g. when a pupil has been taken out of school to be home educated, when the family has apparently moved away, when the child has been certified as medically unfit to attend.

West Lodge School takes note of the Department's statutory guidance on school attendance, Working Together To Improve School Attendance, which sets out how schools must work with local authority children's services to ensure effective pupil attendance levels.

Education of students through Personal Social Health & Economic Education (PSHEE) and Assemblies:

Students are encouraged to safeguard themselves by being educated about drugs, alcohol, sex and relationships and fundamental British Values through PSHEE(including Sex and Relationship Education) and Assemblies.

Additional Support Plans (Behaviour support):

This includes strategies that help to prevent safeguarding issues in school such as

- Positive physical intervention when necessary
- Behaviour interventions
- Specific strategies for students who are allocated to a member of staff they can talk to about issues of concern or another professional, preferably a counsellor who they can talk to.
- Learning Mentor who sweeps up behaviour issues
- Students with 1:1 Teaching Assistant support

Management of Children with Child Protection Plan:

- If a child is subject to a Child Protection Conference, the Designated Teacher will attend the conference to share any relevant information.
- If the child has a Child Protection Plan, the Designated Teacher is responsible for ensuring that the school participates appropriately in the Child Protection Plan and attends all Core Group Meetings and Child Protection Conferences.
- Information will be shared with staff on a need to know basis but key personnel working with child should have sufficient information to support them in their work with that child.
- If a child with a Child Protection Plan has an unexplained absence from school for two or more consecutive days, the Designated Teacher will inform the Social Worker.

Exclusions Policy:

Students who physically or sexually harass others may be excluded.

Support and Training of staff and volunteers

We at, West Lodge School are committed to the provision of safeguarding training for all our team members.

In addition to the basic safeguarding training, the Designated Teachers undertake training in inter-agency working that is provided by Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D, and refresher training at 2 yearly intervals to keep their knowledge and skills up to date. This includes training about Child protection, Inter-agency working, Bexley locally agreed procedures, participation in case

conferences, supporting children in need, identifying children at risk of radicalisation, record keeping and promoting a culture of listening to children. Training also includes on-line safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.

All other staff undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, including online safety, which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring. This is kept up to date by refresher training at 3 yearly intervals. This now includes training that gives them knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, to challenge extremist ideas and to know how to refer children and young people for further help. Staff are also taught to be aware that abuse can be peer upon peer. This will be supported every year with training and updates provided by the Designated Teacher through staff meetings and start of year inset. This incorporates guidance in how to complete the Cause For Concern form. In addition, all newly appointed staff, temporary staff and volunteers should receive induction in child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring). Staff will receive training in school from an external agency every 3 years. New staff, temporary staff and volunteers are given training either in the school or externally, when they start. They will be given a copy of this policy, the staff code of conduct/behaviour policy, KCSIE (Sept 2024) Part 1 (together with Annex B to school leaders and those who work directly with children) and details of the designated person and pupil behaviour policy.

The training is in accordance with the local Safeguarding Partnership for Children and Young People (Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D).

Training for Designated Persons

- The designated safeguarding lead and other designated safeguarding leads should receive appropriate training carried out every two years which must include Local inter-agency working protocols and training in the Safeguarding Partnership for Children and Young People's (Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D) approach to Prevent duties in order to:
 - Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments
 - Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
 - Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff. Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, and those with educational needs and young carers.

- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.
- Identifying children at risk of radicalisation.

Record Keeping

- Department of Education guidance says that the Designated Teacher should keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of referrals and concerns. These should be kept separately from academic records, in a confidential file stored in a secure cabinet, accessible only by appropriate senior staff members. They are exempt from records available for examination by parents or children unless subject to a court order.
- Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D promotes the use of a chronological record for concerns (see **appendix D**). A template is available on the school portal.
- The School understands the importance intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents
- If a child transfers to another school or other educational establishment, the Designated Teacher should forward the child protection file to a named person at the receiving school/establishment under separate cover from the academic records. The file should be marked '**confidential, to be opened by addressee only.**'
- The Designated Teacher should retain a copy of the child protection file, which should be stored in a secure cabinet accessible only by appropriate senior staff members. Child Protection records about a pupil who has ceased to become of compulsory school age should be archived and catalogued.
- The referrer should confirm verbal and telephone referrals in writing within 48 hours, using the interagency referral form.

Low Level Concerns

What is a low-level concern?

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. 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 may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work

- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO. Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:
- being over friendly with children
- having favourites • taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or humiliating children.

Sharing Low Level Concerns

Whether all low-level concerns are shared initially with the DSL (or a nominated person (such as a values champion)), or with the headteacher/principal is a matter for the school or college to decide. If the former, then the DSL should inform the headteacher/principal of all the low-level concerns and in a timely fashion according to the nature of each particular low-level concern. The headteacher/principal should be the ultimate decision maker in respect of all low-level concerns, although it is recognised that depending on the nature of some low-level concerns and/or the role of the DSL in some schools/colleges, the headteacher/principal may wish to consult with the DSL and take a more collaborative decision making approach.

Low-level concerns which are shared about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified. If schools and colleges are in any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, they should consult with their LADO.

All low-level concerns should be recorded in writing. 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.

Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

- The Head teacher or Designated Teacher will disclose personal information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- However, all staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being or that of another.

Information Sharing

When considering sharing information the staff will consider the seven golden rules:

1. Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information, it provides the framework. As stated in KCSIE 2025 fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. It is important that governing bodies and proprietors are aware that among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. For further data protection information / information sharing refer to KCSIE 2025.
 2. Be open & honest with the person from the outset about how information may be shared
 3. Seek advice, do not fail to share information because you are unsure what to do
 4. Share with consent where appropriate and respect the wishes of those who refuse consent unless you believe that there is a risk of harm to child if the information is not shared
 5. Consider the safety and well-being of the child and base information sharing decisions on this
 6. Ensure all information shared is Necessary, Proportionate, Relevant, Accurate, Timely & Secure. Ensure any third party or hearsay information is identified and that you have consent to share it
 7. Keep a record of your decision and reasons for it. Record what you have shared, with whom and the purpose.
- We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with Bexley Safeguarding Children Service on this point.
 - When children move school, in addition to handing over any child protection child securely, the DSL will share information proactively with the new school to enable the new school to have support in place when a child arrives and to ensure that key staff, such as the SENCO, are aware of any needs.

Working together with parents / guardians to better safeguard children:

To better safeguard children, parents / carers will be asked to agree to an Information Sharing Protocol so that the school can liaise with other agencies involved. The school will also inform parents /carers (unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm), if their child is referred to another agency.

Safer working practice for staff

To be read in conjunction with the Staff Code of Conduct in the Employee Handbook.

1. Interviewing Pupils

All staff, male or female, should be aware of the potential risks (i.e. false allegations against staff) of interviewing a pupil alone, particularly if the pupil has an experience of sexual/emotional abuse. Interviewing individual pupils is an integral part of our work and therefore staff should exercise their own professional judgement and a degree of caution in these situations. All staff should try to ensure that they are not in a compromising position where allegations can be made against them.

Suggested protective measures to consider:

- Ask another person (teacher or pupil's friend – as appropriate to the content) to sit in on the interview:
- Sit in a room where it is possible to be observed through a window or glass-panelled door:
- Do not close the door of the room, if you are not clearly visible from outside the room.

2. Transporting Pupils

Situations often arise, which require a member of staff to take a pupil home. Staff should be aware of the risks involved in this. When a pupil has to be taken home, the teacher should not normally transport the pupil unless accompanied by another colleague. No staff should be alone with a pupil in this situation.

3. Use of Technology

All staff in our school will use technology to support and promote the learning and welfare of the children. However certain safeguards should be remembered:

- Mobile phones - Staff will NOT give any child their personal mobile phone number and will not contact the child on the child's mobile phone either by voicemail or by texting without the consent of the parent and in line with the school's policy in respect of use of mobiles. Staff should not use a mobile phone in the presence of school pupils and pupil areas of the school site unless it is an emergency. Personal mobile phones can only be used in the staffroom, School Office, in classrooms with no pupils, – other locations with permission of the Head teacher. Staff may not use their own mobile devices in the EYFS classrooms at break and lunchtimes. In relation to photographs, staff **must not** use their personal mobile phone, camera (still or moving images) or other devices to take, edit or store images of children from this school. This policy applies to EYFS and all other areas and year groups in the school including out of hours activities. The restriction placed on the use of mobile phones and cameras has a statutory application to EYFS (EYFS Statutory Framework 2024 Section 3 point 3.4). Staff will have an absolute commitment to seek advice from a senior manager about any situation that may be capable of being understood as inappropriate.
- Staff will ensure Bluetooth is disabled when on school premises on all personal mobiles and laptops.
- Communication by email should only be through the school's email system and personal emails must not be shared with children. Staff should not communicate with pupils through private email accounts, social networking sites, even on educational matters, but must use

official email and networking sites sanctioned by the school. Staff should be extremely careful in their personal use of social networking sites and must not discuss school business or any issues relating to pupils.

- Use of Internet: Staff will NOT access or expose children or young people to unsuitable material on the internet. Staff will ensure that they follow e-safety standards about access to and use of the internet and be mindful of the Teacher Standards. The Head teacher will have the final decision on whether a member of staff has behaved in an inappropriate or unprofessional manner.

Examples of inappropriate conduct might include

- Participating in chat rooms with pupils,
- Use of a social media site such as Facebook or Twitter to communicate with pupils,
- Text-messaging.
- The promotion of non-school activities such as outside clubs and organisations or
- Sending emails that are not directly related to the pupil/teacher relationship and specifically relating to school business.

4. Use of Physical Intervention

- It is important to allow children to do what they can for themselves, but depending on age and circumstances (i.e. changing in EYFS, a child who is hurt, who needs instruction in the use of a particular instrument/piece of equipment, safety issues such as the need to prevent a child hurting themselves, running into the road etc.), it may be necessary for some physical contact to take place.
- Outward displays of affection are only appropriate in the case of comforting a distressed child and should normally occur only when another adult is present.

Music, Sport and Cookery Child Protection

- Ensure that physical contact is appropriate and kept to a minimum.
- Where physical contact is necessary, tell the child what you are going to do before making contact.
- Outward displays of affection are only appropriate in the case of comforting a distressed child and should normally occur only when another adult is present.

One-to-one tuition

- Instrumental tuition sometimes takes place on an individual basis and therefore presents a particular risk. Special care therefore needs to be taken to avoid misunderstanding. The following guidelines should be followed:
- One-to-one lessons should usually take place in a room with a window to the corridor or in the door. The window must not be covered.
- One-to-one meetings should take place wherever possible in public or semi-public areas. If

in doubt, leave the door open. If a meeting requires confidentiality, it should take place within the School in an office or classroom and another member of staff should be informed in advance.

- Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables school staff to use 'reasonable force' to prevent a pupil from:
 - a. committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil) ;
 - b. causing personal injury to , or damage to the property of, any person (Including the pupil himself); or
 - c. prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during the teaching session or otherwise.

The school will make use of the powers to search pupils for items that the school deems as banned, inappropriate, a safeguarding risk or prevent the maintenance of good order and discipline, e.g. mobile phones.

E-Safety in *West Lodge School*

Most young people experience the internet and mobile phones as a positive, productive and creative part of their activities and development of their identities. However, issues of E-Safety do arise as some students use the technologies negatively.

- In West Lodge School, we have a major responsibility to educate our pupils; teaching them the appropriate behaviours and critical thinking skills to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the internet and related technologies, particularly social networking sites. This is undertaken through presentations and Computing lessons. It is also important to include parents as much as possible in this process given that children often have access to computers at home. Children should understand the risks posed by adults or young people who use the internet and social media to bully, groom, abuse or radicalise other people, especially children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving, but can be categorised into four areas of risk: content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism,

misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.

- It is appropriate to take photographs of children to capture a curriculum activity or a celebration of school life using school equipment providing we have permission to do so from the parents. Staff **must not** use their personal mobile phone, camera (still or moving images) or other devices to take, edit or store images of children from this school. The restriction placed on the use of mobile phones and cameras has a statutory application to EYFS (EYFS Statutory Framework 2025).
- Staff should not communicate with pupils through private email accounts, social networking sites, even on educational matters, but must use official email and networking sites sanctioned by the school. Staff should be extremely careful in their personal use of social networking sites and must not discuss school business or any issues relating to pupils.
- In West Lodge School, we have a robust filter for the internet and a system for monitoring computer usage, which takes screen shots if any word from our 'trigger' list is typed. If a student is caught viewing inappropriate material on a computer via the School system during School hours, they will receive a serious sanction. However, out of School and particularly on mobile phones connected to the mobile networks, there is often no supervision, monitoring or filtering. However, West Lodge School recognizes and implements the government guidance where children are being asked to work online at home. Guidance is available: [Safeguarding in schools colleges and other providers](#) and [Safeguarding and remote education](#). See **appendix E** for guidelines to support parents / guardians.
- Schools and colleges are likely to be in regular contact with parents and carers. Those communications should be used to reinforce the importance of children being safe online and parents and carers are likely to find it helpful to understand what systems schools and colleges use to filter and monitor online use. It will be especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from the school or college (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.
- Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure online safety is a running and interrelated theme whilst devising and implementing their whole school or college approach to safeguarding and related policies and procedures. This will include considering how online safety is reflected as required in all relevant policies and considering online safety whilst planning the curriculum, any teacher training, the role and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) and any parental engagement.

- Cyber-bullying is unfortunately another area which is growing rapidly. It is different from more traditional forms of bullying. Some students have 24 hour access to the internet or a mobile phone and so it can be hard to escape. The audience for the bullying can be potentially huge and comments and pictures are likely to stay online forever.
- The school is committed to working within the Bexley Safeguarding Partnership for Children and Young People Combating Bullying Strategy.
- As with all forms of bullying, the School will deal with this in accordance with the Behaviour Policies (particularly the Anti-bullying and Cyberbullying policies), even if the cyber-bullying is happening outside School hours. A referral to the Anti-bullying Project will be made as appropriate.

If parents / guardians have any concerns that their child is being cyber-bullied, they should please print off any available evidence and report it to the School as soon as possible.

Supporting the Pupil:

- The school will support pupils in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan as required
- The school will notify any concerns about a child who has a child protection plan or is known to have an allocated social worker to the child's social worker or in her/his absence the manager or a duty officer in the team
- We recognise that children who are abused or who witness violence may experience difficulties which impact on their sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through the content of the curriculum and the school ethos of valuing the pupil.

The curriculum:

Through the curriculum and particularly in PSHEE / RSE , staff will raise pupils' awareness and build their confidence and resilience so that they have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and that of others, recognising that pupils need opportunities to develop the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and radicalisation.

Whistle blowing

Staff should be aware that children may feel unable to express concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should therefore feel free to raise concerns about the attitude and actions of their colleagues in accordance with the school's Whistle Blowing Policy and Procedures found in the Employee Handbook (Code of Conduct).

It is important to create an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role. Any member of staff may make a referral to external agencies.

[The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](#) is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Equality Statement

West Lodge School is committed to promoting equality and preventing discrimination on the grounds of disability, ethnicity, gender, age, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Commitment of the Governing body of West Lodge School

The governors of West Lodge School are committed to safeguarding practices, which protect children from harm. This commitment is shared by the staff and volunteers of West Lodge School. We accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues, which cause children harm. We ensure there are appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare. We are supported by the London Borough of Bexley in all child protection matters. The Governors will support the school in its inter agency work and training.

We have accepted this policy and will implement it. As part of our commitment, we, the entire governing body of West Lodge School will ensure that this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures and the effectiveness with which the related duties have been discharged, are fully discussed and reviewed at least on an annual basis. Any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements will be remedied without delay. We will also make child protection a standing agenda at all of our meetings and monitor this Policy by replying to reports, from the Head Teacher and staff, tabled at Full Governing Body meetings.

This policy is available on the school website; it will be given to all new employees and made freely available to all staff, parents and carers.

This policy is reviewed at least annually, and updated with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve, including lessons learnt.

Confirmation of policy

School: West Lodge School

Date of review: September 2024

Date policy ratified by Governing Body: 14th November 2024

Date to be reviewed: September 2025

Head teacher (name): Robert Francis

Head teacher (signature) R Francis

Chair of Governors (name): CHRIS HEAD-RAPSON...

Chair of Governors (signature): C. Head-Rapson

The original policy, signed off by the Chair of Governors, is held in the school.

APPENDIX A

THE ROLE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO)

The role of the LADO is set out in the HM Government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018 updated 2024). Chapter 2 (under Organisational responsibilities) paragraph 4 outlines the procedures for managing allegations against people who work with children.

The LADO works within Children's Services and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

The LADO role applies to paid, unpaid, volunteer, casual, agency and self-employed workers. They capture concerns, allegations or offences emanating from outside of work. The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case.

They will provide advice, guidance and help to determine whether the allegation sits within the scope of the procedures.

The LADO helps co-ordinate information-sharing with the right people and will also monitor and track any investigation, with the aim to resolve it as quickly as possible.

In Bexley, the LADO heads the Safeguarding Children Service which offers members of the public and other professionals specialist advice, support and guidance about:

- Child protection (safeguarding) advice
- Issues regarding children looked after by the Council
- Concerns regarding the behaviour of professionals or volunteers who work with children

The Safeguarding Children Service has responsibility for convening and chairing Initial and Review Child Protection Conferences.

The service maintains a list of children subject to a child protection plan: thought to be at risk of significant harm in the borough, and works to ensure that child protection plans are made and implemented on their behalf.

In addition to chairing child protection conferences, the Safeguarding Children Officers chair complex strategy meetings such as

- Where an allegation has been made against a professional or volunteer who works with children

- Children at risk of sexual exploitation
- Looked after children who abscond from their placement

(culled

from

http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/cpsu/helpandadvice/organisations/lscbs/lado_wda68916.html and <http://www.bexley.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4686>)

APPENDIX B
MAKING CONTACT WITH OTHER AGENCIES

In the case of concern about a child's safety, wellbeing or abuse of a child

BEXLEY CHILDREN'S SOCIALCARE

Telephone: 020 8303 7777 (Office hours) 020 3045 5440 MASH team

EMERGENCY DUTY TEAM

020 8303 7171 Out of Office hours)

childrensocialcare.admin@bexley.gov.uk

DISABLED CHILDREN'S SERVICE

Triage Team Telephone: 020 3045 3600

childrensocialcare.admin@bexley.gcsx.gov.uk

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S SERVICE

Telephone: 020 8303 7777

safeguardingchildren@bexley.gov.uk

childrens.triageteam@bexley.cism.net

BEXLEY EARLY ASSESSMENT OF NEED (BEAN) ADMINISTRATOR

Telephone: 020 8303 7777

LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO)

Sharon Ackbersingh

LADO@bexley.gov.uk

Tel: 020 3045 3436 (LADO team) 02083045 5645 (Business support)

BEXLEY LOCAL SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP

www.bexleylscb.org.uk

Partnership Manager 020 3045 4125

Partnership Business manager 020 3045 4320

THE DfE DEDICATED HELPLINE AND MAILBOX FOR NON EMERGENCY ADVICE ON
EXTREMISM

Tele: 020 7340 7264

Counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

Non-emergency police number 101

APPENDIX C

GUIDELINES IF A STUDENT GOES MISSING

While students are in school, we have a responsibility for duty of care to the students and act in loco-parentis by taking steps that are reasonable to ensure safety and well-being.

- **If a student goes missing out of school, the following steps should be taken:**
 - Gather other students together
 - Allocate staff to search immediate area and alert local security.
If a student is missing for more than 20 minutes,
 - Contact school to say which measures have been taken
 - Ensure that there is good two way communication established with a range of phone lines
 - Notify the police / security.
If a student continues to go missing,
 - Send other students accompanied by staff back to school (if possible), by bus, cabs, trains and ask the school to send transport and additional staff to help search.
 - School alert parents after 30-45 minutes and keep them posted
 - School alert London Borough of Bexley Deputy Director for Schools and Educational Improvement (Moyra Pickering)
 - Set up link headquarters at school (i.e. Identify roles, rota for manning phones, making tea etc. preparing posters and alert transport police (bus and trains), taxi firms, local police, other police.
 - Try to secure radio and TV help.

Ensure all staff are aware of these procedures.

On outings, always take a mobile phone leaving the number of the phone you have taken with the school office.

Ensure that the school has the numbers of any other phones you have on the trip and make sure these are **ON**.

Do not hesitate to alert school when there is a problem.

- **If a student goes missing in school, the following steps should be taken:**
 - Let the main office / Head Teacher know immediately.
 - One member of staff must go to the roadside to search
 - One member of staff must circumnavigate the grounds
 - One member of staff must search all rooms inside
 - Let all these people know when the student has been found
 - If the student remains missing, school should alert parents after 30 – 45 minutes and keep them posted

Avoid any blame culture, celebrate the success of the mission when the student is found and learn from the investigation. Head Teacher evaluates what happened afterwards in order to learn from the situation and to satisfy ourselves that the best possible was done.

APPENDIX D

Chronological Record of Concerns in Relation a Child's Well-being or Safeguarding Issues

Date	Reported By	Concern or Issue	Is the concern considered to be safeguarding?	Discussed with Parent Yes/No Outcome	Action (see attached prompt list)

Issues to be considered when planning action:

- Does the concern suggest harm or likelihood of harm? **Seek Consultation or make referral to Children Social Care**
- Is the child already known to Children Social care or another agency? Should this concern be shared with that agency?

- Is this a one/off incident or is there a history or pattern to the concerns?
- Does the child have additional or related needs - does this increase vulnerability?
- Should the issue be addressed directly with the child?
- Is additional support or monitoring by the school indicated?
- Should a CAF be convened?

APPENDIX E

E-SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS / GUARDIANS

Consider some of the points below to ensure that your child is using the fantastic new technologies available to them as safely as possible.

1. Please consider employing the strict "safe search" setting on Google. For more information on this and further guides you could look at www.candp-s.com/familysafety - a website full of useful material and advice on Online Safety.
2. Look into setting Parental Controls on a Windows Vista, Windows 7 or Mac computer to restrict specific web sites and also the time when the computer can be used.
3. Mobile phones offer children an amazing amount of opportunity in what they look at and what they can text, including picture messaging. If your child has a smart phone, then please consider setting safe searches on Google and YouTube on these as well.
4. Please take time to talk to your child about their use of the internet. It will be impossible and perhaps not even desirable to ban everything; indeed they are often much more able than us at using the computer! Education and dialogue are the only realistic ways to protect young people.
5. Please encourage a balanced use of the computer and mobile phones- for example, setting expectations that computers are off at 10pm and phones aren't used at mealtimes or ½ hour before bedtime (and not once in bed!).

***How a parent/carer can ensure that their child's online experience is safe.**

1. **Learn** - Find out more about online threats
2. **Talk** - Discuss what your child should, and should not, do online and print off a copy of the Safe Internet Use Agreement - sign it and put it on the wall.
3. **Have fun** - Enjoy some of the recommended sites by going online together (let your child show you how).
4. **Take action** - Make searching on the internet safer by blocking pornography on Google and YouTube and get a healthy balance by setting time restrictions on your child's computer.
5. **Care** - Make each child's computer use more comfortable – avoid posture problems by getting a laptop riser and separate keyboard and mouse and finally – encourage each child to learn to type.

(Culled from www.candp-s.com/familysafety)

The UK Safer Internet Centre (www.saferinternet.org.uk)

CEOP Education <https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk>

West Lodge School Ltd

Educational Trust

Mr R Francis - Head Teacher

Phone 020 8300 2489
Fax 020 8308 1905
E-mail info@westlodge.org.uk



36 Station Road
Sidcup
Kent
DA15 7DU

17th April 2020

Dear Parents

I hope that you enjoyed the lovely weather over Easter and that you and your families are all well.

As stated in previous emails, lessons will resume on the 20th April with an assembly to start the 'new term' at gam so I hope as many children as possible will be online for this. The lesson format will largely be the same as during the final week of term with teachers uploading the work, instructions and videos to the Chamilo platform. Mrs Braggins will be sending suggested activities to Nursery parents but you will also have access to the Reception videos and resources as well. There will be a daily story at 4pm for Nursery – Year 2 children read by different staff each day.

We were most impressed with the children's response to learning remotely and I am sure they will rise to the challenge again. Staff will aim to make the lessons as engaging as possible but inevitably there will be greater emphasis upon independent study, which is obviously a key skill for the children to develop.

In addition to the uploaded lessons some staff are going to trial live video conferencing lessons, which many of you will have been using for work. Not all lessons are suited to this type of delivery, but teachers will advise which lessons will be delivered this way and our aim is to establish set times so that the children will know when to log on and participate. Please note that this will initially be on a trial basis and is new to us as well. Whilst we will do our best, some staff are inevitably more confident and competent in using ICT than others. A further challenge is that a number of teachers are looking after their own young children, which makes delivering live lessons extremely difficult so these staff will make videos in advance and upload to Chamilo.

Zoom has been a particularly popular option but you may also be aware that there have been some well documented concerns regarding security and safeguarding. For this reason schools in Singapore have banned the use of Zoom in schools and at least one of our staff has experienced a session being hacked. Safeguarding the children from inappropriate content has to be a key priority so we have made the decision not to use Zoom. Mr Peebles has been researching other options and has recommended WebEx which, we believe, is far more secure. Some staff, such as Miss Parsad, may continue to use Zoom but this is a decision between parents and these teachers. I do not wish to over-emphasise the risk but West Lodge prides itself upon our culture of safeguarding and have, for this reason, chosen to use the paid version of WebEx which will mean lessons will also be available in class folders for the children to access.

Please see below guidelines for video conferencing lessons

- West Lodge teachers will only conduct group 'lessons'. At this stage no 1:1 conferencing should be conducted with the exception of pre-arranged Learning Support sessions with Mrs Masters
- All video conferencing sessions will be held at the agreed, pre-publicised time
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, and ideally not in bedrooms; where possible this should be against a neutral background
- Whilst we recognise this may not always be possible, an adult should ideally be present in the background when video conferencing lessons are taking place
- The live class will be recorded and backed up, so that if any issues are to arise, the video can be reviewed
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, maximum 40 minutes
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background
- We want the children to participate actively but they should be reminded that any comments are recorded online and shared with the group
- West Lodge has made every effort to reassure ourselves that any teaching/learning software and/or platforms are suitable and raise no privacy issues

Most importantly, please talk to your children about these points and other safeguarding concerns related to online learning. Mr Peebles spends a significant amount of time teaching the children about online protocol and safety, so we are confident that the children are well informed, but please reiterate to the children that if they experience or see anything that is unusual, inappropriate or disturbing this must be reported to an adult as a matter of priority. As Designated Safeguarding lead for West Lodge School, I ask that this is then brought to my attention so that appropriate action can be taken.

Given the lockdown there are some benefits to streamed lessons for the older children but, having spent a considerable amount of time discussing the options over the Easter break, we do feel that the safest and, in many cases, most effective way of working is using the pre-recorded videos and material uploaded to Chamilo. This is particularly the case for the younger children where video conferencing has been shown to be difficult to manage.

Once teachers have identified lessons which will be delivered live, you will sent details of times and instructions for logging in.

Once again, thank you for your support at this challenging time for us all and should you have any questions please contact Mr Peebles and I. The emails are:

itco@westlodge.org.uk Mr Peebles

headteacher@westlodge.org.uk Telephone 07793251616

With best wishes

Robert Francis



APPENDIX F

Female Genital Mutilation

It is likely that there are women and girls living in the borough who have undergone Female Genital Mutilation, and therefore there are young girls who are at risk of having this done to them.

It is important to raise awareness at this time of year because research has indicated that the risk of girls undergoing FGM increases during the school holidays. It is understood that girls most commonly undergo this procedure whilst of primary school age; however it can happen at any time from shortly after birth up to the age of 14 years.

What is Female genital Mutilation?

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), sometimes mistakenly referred to as Female Circumcision, is defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as the range of procedures which involve "the partial or complete removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or any other non-therapeutic reason".

There are severe consequences, both psychological and emotional and the medical consequences could include extreme pain, shock, infection, haemorrhage, infertility, incontinence, HIV and even death.

FGM is not an act of hate. It is carried out because their parents believe it is in the best interest of their daughters. In certain patriarchal communities where FGM takes place, marriage, is seen as necessary for a woman's honour and a woman who has not undergone FGM may not be accepted by her community. The practice is often carried out in the belief that it is a means of purification and ensuring a woman is clean.

FGM is illegal in England and Wales under the Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003). It is an offence whether committed in or outside the United Kingdom, and persons carrying out the procedure or assisting or arranging are committing an offence.

What are our responsibilities?

FGM is usually practised in the country of origin. Suspicions may arise in a number of ways that a child is being prepared for FGM to take place abroad. These include knowing that the family belongs to a community in which FGM is practised and are making preparations for the child to

take a holiday, arranging vaccinations or planning absence from school, and the child may talk about a "special procedure" taking place.

Indicators that FGM may have already occurred include:

Prolonged absence from school/nursery with noticeable behaviour change on return or long periods away from classes or other normal activities, difficulty in sitting, possibly with bladder or menstrual problems. ***If you suspect that any girl is at risk of being subjected to any form of FGM, take action to report it immediately. Time counts so please act as soon as you suspect that a girl may be at risk of FGM.***

To protect a girl from FGM take the following actions

- Inform your Designated Child Protection Advisor
- If the case is non-urgent please make a referral to Children's Social Care 0203 045 5440 or 020 8303 7777 (please see your organisation's procedures)
- In urgent cases contact local Police directly on 999

If it comes to your attention or you suspect that a girl has already undergone FGM, please consider:

- Her need for specialist care and support
- Potential risk to sisters
- Since 31.10.2015 it is mandatory for teachers to report FGM to the police if they received information in the course of their profession directly from the girl or from direct observation of signs.

Training

There are a number of places where staff can access information about Female Genital Mutilation:

- <http://www.afruca.org>
- <http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/fgm/>
- <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/when-things-go-wrong/fgm/>
- <http://www.forwarduk.org.uk/>

The Female Genital Mutilation Helpline is a UK-wide service that operates 24/7. It is staffed by specially child protection trained helpline counsellors who can offer advice, information, and assistance to members of the public and to professionals. Counsellors will also be able to make referrals, as appropriate, to statutory and other services.

The helpline can be contacted on:

0800 028 3550 and emails sent to fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

Appendix G



Information for agencies and organisations regarding the Management of Allegations of Abuse against Adults who work with Children

Dealing with allegations against a member of staff within your organisation is inevitably difficult and distressing for everyone involved and is likely to cause a great deal of anxiety and concern.

This guide provides an explanation of the process that should be followed and where to go for advice if you have an issue or an allegation made against one of your employees.

This information is a general guide to employers and for ease of reference the term 'employee' includes volunteers, casual and temporary staff or anybody that holds a position of trust with children or young people.

What is an 'allegation'?

An 'allegation' refers to any information or concern which suggests an adult who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child; or
- Behaved in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

An allegation can arise in connection with an employee's work with children, their own children or other children living outside the family. The concern or allegation could relate to a current or historical concern.

An allegation can be made in a number of ways:

- Directly by the child;
- Indirectly, for example by friends of the child;
- Complaint from a parent/carer to a Head teacher/Manager, Children's Social Care or the Police;
- Report from a colleague or another agency;
- Anonymously.

What happens when an allegation is made?

All allegations are taken seriously and acted upon. The management of allegations sits within an effective cycle of good practice which exists both to protect children and those who work with them.

Agencies are required by the Safeguarding Partnership for Children and Young People to appoint a Designated Senior Manager whose job it is to ensure that there are robust systems in

place to deal with allegations and oversee that all allegations are investigated properly. In schools this is usually the same person who acts as the Designated Person for Child Protection.

When an allegation is made or a concern is raised, a senior manager/Head teacher should refer to the Local Authority Designated Officer*(LADO), who has overall responsibility for the management of allegations. Together they will consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree the course of action to be taken. The referral should be made within one working day.

*Local Authorities are required to designate officers to be involved in the management and oversight of individual cases – this person is known as the 'Local Authority Designated Officer' (LADO). The LADO provides advice and guidance, liaises with the Police, Social Care Teams, regulatory bodies such as Ofsted and other organisations as needed and ensures a consistent, fair and thorough process for both child and adult.

Dealing with direct allegations

If a child makes a direct allegation this should be recorded as soon as possible after the disclosure has been made using the child's own words wherever possible. Children should be allowed to recount their story without interruption and told what will happen next. Staff or volunteers should be clear with children that they will need to share the information with other people. The Designated Senior Person should then refer the matter to the LADO

Dealing with other types of allegations.

These should be recorded noting the source of the information in as much detail as possible, reported straight away to the named senior person and a discussion had about the way forward before referring to the LADO.

Any allegation that meets the threshold for 'significant harm' or 'risk of significant harm' will be reported to police and social care for investigation. Investigations may have three related, but independent, strands:

- Enquiries and assessment by Children's Social Care (CSC) regarding whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services;
- A police investigation into a possible criminal offence;
- Consideration by the employer of whether disciplinary action is necessary.

Strategy Meetings

These three strands need to be thoroughly assessed and a definite conclusion reached on each of them. To ensure this happens, a 'Strategy Meeting' should take place to plan any enquiries, allocate tasks and set timescales. The meeting should consider not only the children directly involved in the allegation or concern but also any other children who could have suffered, or are at risk of suffering, harm. This could include an employee's own children. There may be times when the concerns raised do not directly involve any children but there is a concern about how an individual has conducted themselves. An example of this could be an individual who has been arrested or convicted of a violent offence against another adult or accessed pornographic material whilst at work.

These meetings are held under the Safeguarding Partnership for Children and Young People(Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D) Procedures: they are not part of any disciplinary procedure. There may be circumstances in which the meeting could take place before an employee has been made aware of the allegation. The Strategy Meeting should include representatives from the Police and the relevant Social Care teams, a manager from the relevant place of work and a Human Resources advisor. In certain circumstances, representatives from health and education professionals involved with the child also are invited.

All relevant information will be shared and decisions made about what actions are to be taken next. For employees, if the initial evaluation establishes that a Police or Social Care investigation is not required, the matter may still need to be dealt with under disciplinary procedures. One reason for this is that the burden of proof in criminal cases is "beyond reasonable doubt" whereas the threshold of "the balance of probabilities" applies to disciplinary proceedings.

Concluding the investigation

Investigations whatever their nature should be concluded as quickly as possible and should be concluded within one month of the allegation becoming known. However this is not always possible particularly where there is a complex police investigation but employees should be kept up to date with what stage the investigation is at.

Depending on the scope and scale of the investigation/s, more than one Strategy Meeting may be needed before an outcome can be arrived at. At the final Strategy Meeting, the outcome of Police and Social Care enquiries will be discussed with the employer and consideration given as to whether the employee poses a risk to children and their suitability to work with children in their current position. The final strategy meeting should contain a summary of the allegations made and the conclusions of any investigations for future reference.

Recommendations should be made to the employer about the level of risk and/or any training issues that may have been identified. Where an allegation has been made but the threshold for

harm is not met, the manager (in agreement with their HR department) may deal with the issue as an internal matter.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

In the event that an employee is dismissed from their post because of a safeguarding concern, the employer has a statutory duty to refer the employee to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for consideration as to whether barring the employee from working with children is appropriate.

Cases subject to Police Investigation:

If a criminal investigation is required, the Police will set target dates for reviewing progress and for consulting with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) about whether to proceed with the investigation. Decisions will then be made to charge the employee with an offence, caution the employee or decide no further action (NFA) is needed. In almost all cases where the Police decide either,

- i not to charge
- ii) or to administer a Caution, or
- iii) If a court acquits the employee

they (the police) will under normal circumstances still pass all information that would be relevant to a disciplinary case (such as a summary of the investigation) to either the LADO or the relevant manager to assist the disciplinary investigation. If an employee is convicted of an offence, the Police should inform the employer straight away.

Disciplinary Investigation:

If a Disciplinary Investigation is to take place, the investigation should take place in accordance with the organisation's Disciplinary Procedure.

Suspension: Suspension should not take place without careful thought and consideration being given to other suitable alternatives, such as a transfer of duties or additional supervision. Suspension is a 'neutral' act that does not imply innocence or guilt and is designed to give the employee the right to representation and protects both parties (adult and child) until the matter is resolved. The decision to suspend remains solely with the employer but they should consult the LADO and other senior managers in making their decision.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who else should be notified about an allegation?

Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity whilst an allegation is being investigated and considered. However, alongside the Police and Social Care, there will be a need for a small number of people to be informed that an allegation has been made and the likely course of action. These are:

- The child/young person concerned, their parents/carers and any party making an allegation;
- The employee – at the appropriate time;
- The employee's manager;
- The Chair of Governors (if a school);
- The relevant regulatory body e.g. Ofsted and/or
- The relevant professional body e.g. the General Medical Council (GMC), Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)
- The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

When should there be a media strategy?

Where there is concern the matter has or may become high profile by becoming common knowledge or subject to speculation, it may become necessary to issue a brief statement to the press. Any media statements should be agreed by the most senior members of the organisation (DCS or equivalent) and where possible should be joint statements between the organisations involved (i.e. police and CSC). Identifying information should not be given unless or until a person is charged.

NB Any information issued to the public or any section of the public should comply with Section 13 of the Education Act 2011 and in some instances the publication of information about allegations is an offence.

What if an employee resigns during a disciplinary investigation?

It is important that every effort is made to reach and record a conclusion in all cases of allegations bearing on the safety or welfare of children, and so a resignation would not prevent an allegation from being followed up and considered through the LADO process. The employer should continue and bring to conclusion any disciplinary process that has started when an employee resigns. Any requests for references should be honoured but the employer has a duty to refer to the current disciplinary process in the reference. In addition, an employer has a statutory duty to refer an employee to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if he or she considers the outcome of the disciplinary process could have been dismissal. The DBS will then do their own investigation as to whether the employee should be barred from working with children.

If it is considered safe for the individual to return to work this should be negotiated with the employee and could include a phased return or could include a prerequisite that the employee completes some specific training as a condition of their return.

Compromise agreements, where an employee agrees to leave with an agreed reference and/or some financial recompense, should not be used in any circumstances where there are safeguarding concerns about the employee.

What details should be maintained on a personnel employment file?

Details of allegations that are found to have been malicious or deliberately invented should not be retained on personnel records. A clear and comprehensive summary of all other allegations made, a chronology of events and decisions reached will be kept on file at least until normal retirement age, or for 10 years if that is longer. This applies even if the person leaves. The purpose of this record is to:

- provide clarification in cases where a future DBS check reveals information from the Police that an allegation was made but did not result in a prosecution or conviction;
- enable an accurate response to be given to any future request for a reference;
- prevent unnecessary re-investigation if allegations resurface after a period of time.

False allegations: Allegations deemed to be malicious or deliberately invented should be referred to the LADO, and consideration should be given to a referral to Social Care for assessment. This is to rule out the possibility that the child is being abused elsewhere and displacing blame. Experience shows that false/malicious allegations are not the norm: there are however times when a child may have misunderstood or misinterpreted the behaviour of the adult, or the child is aggrieved in some way at treatment received. In the event that an allegation is shown to have been invented or malicious, the Head teacher/Senior Manager should consider whether disciplinary action against the individual who made it is appropriate. The Police may also be asked to consider further action, taking into account the circumstances.

Further information

- Chapter 2 - Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 updated 2024
 - <http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/>
- London Child Protection Procedures Version 5 Chapter 7
 - <http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/procedures/>
- Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people
- Dealing with allegations against teachers and other staff in schools
 - <http://www.education.gov.uk/>
- The Disclosure and Barring Service
 - <http://www.dbs.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

Key Members of staff

Sharon Ackbersingh
LADO,
London Borough Bexley
Lado@bexley.gov.uk
(0203 045 3436)

Lucie Heyes,
Head of Quality Assurance and Professional Standards,
London Borough Bexley
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Simon Deakin
Partnership Business Manager
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Key Legislation

Children Act 1989
Childcare (Disqualification) regulations 2009
Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006(June 2016)
Education Act 2002
Children Act 2004 – Every Child Matters, Change for Children
Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
The Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (2021) (Prevent)
The Employment Act 2008
Working Together to Safeguard Children . updated 2024
The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
The Sexual Offences Act 2003
KCSIE Sept 2025
RSHE 2019

Appendix H

Role Description for the Safeguarding Governor

The governor responsible for safeguarding children plays an essential role in ensuring children in this school are kept safe from harm. The safeguarding governor plays an important role in ensuring oversight and scrutiny of safeguarding policy, procedure and practice on behalf of the full governing body. It is recognised that Governors are volunteers and generously give of their time, interest and expertise to the ultimate benefit of children in our school but it should not be underestimated that the role is that of a 'senior manager' of a school with accountability befitting such a significant responsibility.

The role as Nominated Governor for Safeguarding is to:

Act as a 'critical friend' to the school, in order to ensure that the appropriate systems and procedures are in place to cover all aspects of the safeguarding agenda and all statutory governing body responsibilities are met. Monitor appropriate policies, including the safeguarding and whistle blowing policies. Ensure there is a suitably qualified, trained and supported Designated Teacher who has responsibility for responding to and overseeing safeguarding issues.

Ensure there are suitably qualified, trained and supported Deputy Designated Teachers who have responsibility for responding to and overseeing safeguarding issues as agreed reasonable to be delegated by the Designated teacher. Ensure that the Designated teacher adequately supervises and supports the work, development and wellbeing of the Deputy Designated Teachers and any other individual to whom they may delegate additional safeguarding responsibilities in order that there exist clear lines of accountability.

Ensure there is a robust system for recording, storing and reviewing child welfare concerns. Liaise with the head about general child protection and broader safeguarding issues within the school and as such be able to provide reports to the governing body in respect of themes and issues within the school/locality to enable adequate oversight, understanding and development of solutions.

Ensure that school staff training is up to date. They attend Basic Awareness Safeguarding training every 3 years and other training as appropriate to the role and relevant to issues within the school/locality. Ensure other governors attend appropriate safeguarding training. Ensure at least one member on the recruitment and selection panel for staff has successfully completed accredited Safer Recruitment training. Ensure interview panels are convened appropriately and safer recruitment practices are followed. Have oversight of the single central record and ensure it is up to date and maintained in line with guidance. Take account of how safe pupils feel when in school. Ensure the voice of pupils is truly heard and appropriately acknowledged. Ensure the school constantly review and consider their curriculum in order that

key safeguarding 'messages and lessons' run throughout. Ensure the school does not operate in isolation and have an awareness of agencies available to support children and families. Ensure the safeguarding agenda is embedded in the ethos of the school. Provide an annual report to the full governing body to include, amongst other relevant items, detail pertaining to training, themes, issues, contribution to multi-agency meetings and good practice.

If there is an allegation against a member of staff or a volunteer it should be reported immediately to the Head Teacher. If the Head Teacher is absent it must be reported immediately to the Chair of Governors. If there is an allegation against the Head Teacher or a member of the governing body, it must be reported straight away to the Chair of Governors (who is the nominated Safeguarding governor). The nominated governor's role includes liaison with the local authority on issues on child protection or in case of allegations against the Head teacher or a member of the governing body.

To ensure the school is carrying out its full responsibilities under the Prevent duty which is to protect children from the risk of radicalisation.

Appendix I

Outside Speakers Protocol and Policy

This policy applies to all sections of the school including EYFS and before and after school clubs.

The “*Prevent*” statutory guidance requires schools to have clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers who might fall within the scope of the Prevent duty, whether invited by staff or pupils, are suitable and appropriately supervised. This means that even in cases where specific vetting checks are not prescribed by KCSIE Sept 2024, Part 4, for example, if speakers will not be left alone with pupils, schools must take action to ensure that they are suitable. *(The precise action is not prescribed although an internet search, for example, may sometimes be more instructive than formal vetting checks).*

West Lodge School is part of a wider community. Occasionally, we have speakers from our wider community who enrich the children's experience of school, providing information that helps them make decisions at different phases of their education, widening their understanding of world and global issues and providing motivational inspiration through the sharing of a speaker's experience.

Our responsibility to our pupils is to ensure that the information they receive is aligned to the ethos and values of the school and British values.

The following protocols apply:

All requests for outside speakers must be discussed with the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will request:

1. A biography of the speaker must be provided with the purpose clearly defined as to the information the speaker/visitor wishes to communicate. The information must align to the core values and ethos of the school and to British and Universal Values. This must be discussed with the organiser prior to the request being made to the Head Teacher.
2. Prior to any visiting speaker communicating with the children the organiser of the proposed visit is required to complete the school's Visiting Speaker Risk Assessment Form which has to be submitted to the Head Teacher for approval.
3. Whenever possible a notice period of no less than one month be made prior to the speaker/visitor's proposed date at school.
3. An organiser for the visitor/speaker is provided who will be the liaison with school.
4. The member of staff organising the event must ascertain that all information communicated by the visitor/speaker must be lawful.

When sufficient information has been collated the Head Teacher will be able to make a decision giving permission for the visitor/ speaker to come to West Lodge School.

Further guidelines

School safeguarding procedures apply and visiting speakers should normally have photograph identity from their institution. They will be issued with a visitors' badge which they must wear at all times.

Visitors will be accompanied in the buildings at all times.

During the speech monitoring

Staff will be present during the visit to monitor that the speech aligns with the values and ethos of the school and British values. In the unlikely event that the speech does not meet this requirement, immediate action will be taken by the member of staff to balance the information given.

The speech/visit is evaluated by the organiser as to whether it met the needs of our pupils. Should the visit/speaker not meet the needs of our pupils then this will be clearly communicated to the visiting speaker/ institution by the Head Teacher.

Thank you letters are sent by the organiser following the event.

Robert Francis

Head Teacher September 2025

Review September 2026

	children's author, Other.....			
A2.2	Are you satisfied, through either personal recommendation or carrying out a web search that the content of the speaker's presentation will be appropriate for the age of the children and does not promote radicalisation in accordance with PREVENT guidance?	YES	NO	If NO they are not suitable - see Section B
A3.1	Have you discussed this with the DSL and is he content that this speaker is 'low risk' in respect of PREVENT?	YES	NO	If YES to go to Section C If NO they are not suitable - see section B

SECTION B: UNSUITABLE SPEAKERS

B. If you have been directed to section B of this form then the proposed speaker is not suitable to speak to children at West Lodge School. The proposed booking/appearance should not be confirmed.

SECTION C: HEAD'S REVIEW & APPROVAL

C1	I have reviewed this Risk Assessment and authorise the booking for this speaker to be confirmed.	
	Head'sDate:.....
	signature:	

Notes:

A provisional booking may be made for a speaker to attend the school prior to the Risk Assessment being completed but must not be confirmed before the Head has signed section D.

For further information about PREVENT please speak to the DSL who has received appropriate training. The school's Safeguarding Policy also includes a section regarding Preventing Radicalisation.

A copy of the DfE advice document The Prevent Duty can be downloaded at:
http://www.gav.uk/goernment/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/pr-event-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf

Appendix J

Policy Statement

The Prevent Duty

Introduction

We as a school have a responsibility to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation, and what to do to support them.

Risk Assessment

Staff will be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Children at risk may display different signs or seek to hide their views. Staff will use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately.

Even very young children may be vulnerable to radicalisation by others, whether in the family or outside, and display concerning behaviour. Staff will take action if they observe behaviour of concern.

If there is a concern about a particular pupil, staff will follow the school's normal safeguarding procedures, including discussing with the school's designated safeguarding lead, and where deemed necessary, with children's social care.

If a child is identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, a decision will be made regarding whether it is appropriate to refer them to the Channel programme, which focuses on support individuals seen as at risk of being drawn into terrorism and is an entirely voluntary programme.

Working in Partnership

The school is committed to working in partnership with Local Safeguarding Partnership for Children and Young People with regard to our Prevent duty and as part of our wider Safeguarding duties.

IT Policy

The school will assist in equipping children to stay safe online as part of the ICT curriculum. Filters are also in place to prevent access to inappropriate material.

Staff Training

Staff will receive the relevant awareness training to fulfil their duty under the Prevent guidelines, training will be appropriate to their role within the school.

Building children's resilience to radicalisation through the Curriculum

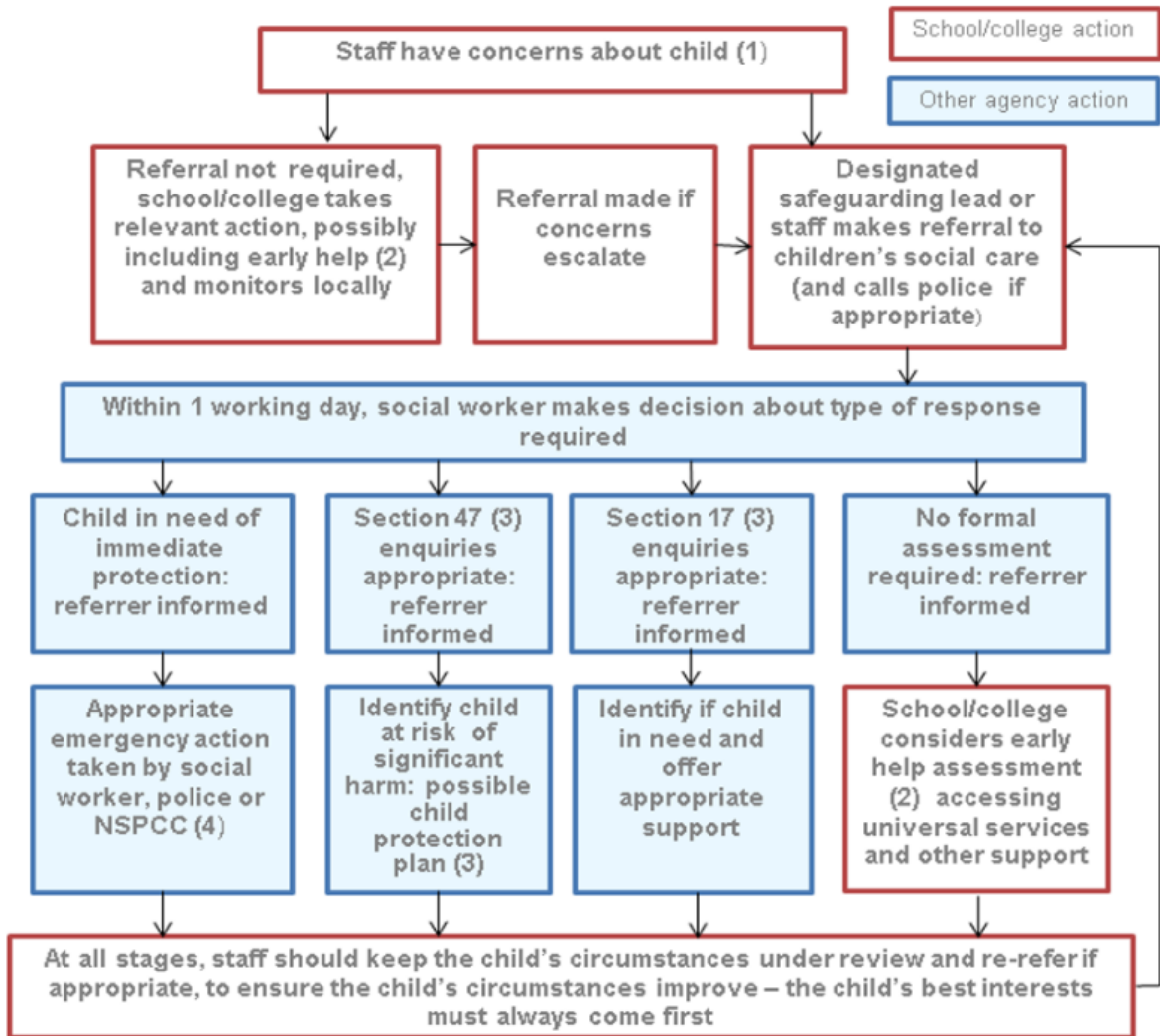
We will build pupils' resilience to radicalisation by providing a safe environment for debating controversial issues and helping them to understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making. The curriculum currently includes promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and, within this, fundamental British values.

In the curriculum Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) will be used to enable pupils to explore sensitive or controversial issues, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to understand and manage difficult situations. The subject can be used to teach pupils to recognise and manage risk, make safer choices, and recognise when pressure from others threatens their personal safety and wellbeing. They can also develop effective ways of resisting pressures, including knowing when, where and how to get help. We will encourage pupils to develop positive character traits through PSHE, such as resilience, determination, self-esteem, and confidence.

This lessons will provide pupils with the knowledge, skills and understanding to prepare them to play a full and active part in society. It will give pupils the opportunity to explore political and social issues critically, to weigh evidence, to debate, and to make reasoned arguments.

Pupils learn about democracy, government and how laws are made and upheld. Pupils are also taught about the diverse national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding.

Actions where there are concerns about a child



Introduction

This leaflet is about managing allegations of abuse made against individuals who work with children and young people in any setting. It is important that all allegations of abuse of children and young people are treated seriously and in line with Bexley Child Protection Procedures.

The statutory duty to effectively manage allegations is covered by Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 and is further highlighted in the Working Together guidance, the London Child Protection Procedures and the Department of Education guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Referral

The LADO process is concerned with managing allegations or concerns about the neglect, sexual, physical or emotional abuse of children. It can also be used to manage wider concerns about grooming or other less obvious possibly harmful behaviour.

A referral to the LADO should be made in all cases where it is believed that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

OUTCOMES

There are six possible outcomes to the LADO process:

1. *Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation*
2. *Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive*
3. *False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation*
4. *Unsubstantiated: this is not the same as a false allegation. It means that there is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation; the term therefore does not imply*

Process

Step One

If you become aware of an allegation or have other safeguarding concerns about someone who works with children, you should immediately notify your line manager or designated manager for safeguarding children in your organisation. If they are the alleged perpetrator, then their line manager should be notified instead. The designated person should then notify the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) as soon as possible but within one day.

If it is an extremely serious allegation (i.e. it is evident the child has suffered significant harm or is likely to suffer significant harm) and/or there is current injury, (e.g. cut, bruise, scratch, graze, broken bone etc.), risk of losing forensic evidence, danger to child/public/staff or crime ongoing, immediately contact the Police (see contact details overleaf) and Bexley Children's Social Care (see contact details overleaf), then contact the LADO (within one working day).

Step Two

In all but the most serious cases (see above) the LADO and senior officer/designated manager for safeguarding children will initially consider:

- Whether or not it needs referring to the Police or Children's Social Care.
- Whether a LADO safeguarding meeting needs to be held to discuss the issues more fully.
- Whether any immediate action needs taking to make a child or other children safe. This can include giving consideration as to whether it is necessary to suspend a worker; a decision that would be taken by the employer in conjunction with their Human Resources.

CONTACTS

If you have a concern about a child, please tell somebody who can help:

Bexley Children's Social Care
020 3045 5440 (Office hours)
Out of office hours (Emergency Duty Team)
020 8303 7777

Metropolitan Police
Emergency 999
Non-Emergency 101

What can you expect

Step Three

The LADO will consult with the Police (and Children's Social Care if it is an open case) and the employer or line manager of the accused person if that person is different from the person who referred the allegation.

Step Four

The LADO will then arrange a LADO safeguarding meeting within five working days (whenever possible). The LADO will also record the decisions and actions agreed with the line manager if the allegation does not meet the criteria for a referral to the LADO and further action.

Step Five

The LADO safeguarding meeting will bring together information and evidence in a multi-agency setting and plan any necessary investigation. There are three possible strands in considering an allegation:

- Enquiries and assessment by Children's Social Care about whether a child is in need of protection (Section 47 of Children Act 1989) or in need of services (Section 17 of Children Act 1989)
- Police investigation of a possible criminal offence.
- Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

Step Six

The LADO will continue to co-ordinate and review further action as necessary. They will record information and outcomes to the process and will support employers, where necessary, in referring individuals to the Disclosure and Barring Service or other regulatory bodies.



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**Child
protection**

