



# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Old Palace Primary School

# Child Protection Policy

## Introduction

**Safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding and should consider at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.**

The Governing Body of Old Palace Primary School recognizes and is committed to its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare and wellbeing of children within the legal framework of the Children Acts 1989 and 2004. For the purpose of this policy, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

We are aware that many children and young people are the victims of different kinds of abuse and that they can be subjected to social factors that have an adverse impact upon their lives. We adopt an attitude of it could happen here and therefore staff are required to remain vigilant at all times.

Furthermore, we recognize that no single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, **everyone** who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. The school is therefore committed to multi-agency working.

## **Aims**

This policy is for the use of all staff, governors, volunteers and visitors and is also available to parents on the school website. Through it we will endeavour to ensure that:

- Children and young people are listened to, valued and respected and pupils are provided with a safe, stable environment in which they can learn
- Staff are aware of the need to be alert to the signs of abuse and know what to do with their concerns
- All staff are given appropriate support and regular training (including induction for all new members of staff and volunteers)
- Staff are able to carry out their roles and responsibilities in the context of safe working practices

## **Responsibilities**

To fulfil its safeguarding responsibilities, the school takes account of DfE guidance, THSCP arrangements and the procedures set out by our Safeguarding Partners (local authority, chief officers of police, and clinical commissioning groups) to:

- Ensure we have a named Designated Safeguarding Lead responsible for safeguarding and child protection, and also a deputy designated safeguarding lead, both of whom receive appropriate training every 2 years, as well as regular updates.
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for safeguarding
- Ensure that the relevant DBS checks are completed for all members of staff, governors and volunteers and that visitors to the school are appropriately supervised following completion of a risk assessment.
- Ensure that safer recruitment practices are followed, including pre and post-employment checks and the use of the Teacher Services' system to check for prohibition orders.
- Ensure all staff, volunteers and Governors know the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their role, as well as their personal responsibilities regarding being alert to the signs of abuse and referring any concerns
- Ensure all staff receive safeguarding and child protection training during their induction and continue to receive regular updates, including an annual refresher.
- Ensure that the school contributes to multi-agency working, including providing a co-ordinated offer of early help, when required, and contributing to multi-agency plans to support children subject to child protection plans
- Ensure that any pupil currently the subject of a Child Protection Plan who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to Social Services
- Keep appropriate written records of any concerns that have been raised, the discussions regarding them, the decisions made and the reasons for these.
- Ensure all records are kept securely and that their storage and transfer complies with GDPR regulations
- Ensure children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material through the use of appropriate filters, monitoring systems and the teaching of online safety
- Ensure that the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which teaches the children about safeguarding, for example through PSHE lessons and focus weeks.

In addition to this policy, all members of staff are required to read the DfE guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019) Part 1, including Annex A, which can be found in Appendix 1 and complete Educare training at the beginning of each academic year (or during induction should they join the school later in the year).

### **The Designated Safeguarding Lead**

The Designated Safeguarding Leads are **Alison Millward & Debbie Kurup** They are responsible for making referrals to the duty officer when there have been concerns raised by any member of staff. The Designated Link Governor for safeguarding is **David Jones**.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will liaise closely with children's social care and other agencies in line with the practices set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and 'THSCP Arrangements'. They will be given the time, funding, training and support to provide advice and guidance to other staff on child welfare and protection matters, to take part in multi-agency meetings (or to support other staff to do so) and to contribute to the assessment of children.

## **Types of Abuse**

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. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

There are four main types of child abuse, although in most cases multiple issues will overlap.

### **Physical**

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

### **Emotional**

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

### **Neglect**

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

### **Sexual**

This involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration or non-penetrative acts such as 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 offline abuse.

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

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are

persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point. Potential indicators of sexual exploitation include: children gaining unexplained gifts or new possessions; having older boyfriends or girlfriends; going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late, regularly missing school, drug and alcohol misuse and suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant.

In addition, members of some communities hold beliefs that may be common within particular cultures but which are against the law in England. So called 'honour based' violence are all forms of abuse and should be handles as such, regardless of the family's motivation. If staff have any doubts, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Examples of particular practices include:

### **Forced Marriages**

A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). This should not be confused with arranged marriages between consenting adults.

### **Under-age Marriages**

In England, a young person cannot legally marry nor have a sexual relationship until they are 16 years old •

### **Female Genital Mutilation**

This comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of abuse with long lasting harmful consequences. Staff need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM or already having suffered FGM, ensuring that any concerns are referred to the Designated Person for Child protection. Where a teacher discovers an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, they have a legal duty to personally report this to the police and to discuss the case with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. **Breast Ironing**

This is a traditional practice in the West African republic of Cameroon by which girls as young as 10 have their chests pounded with hot objects to disguise the onset of puberty. **Ritualistic Abuse**

Some faiths believe that spirits and demons can possess people (including children). What should never be condoned is the use of any physical violence to get rid of the possessing spirit. This is physical abuse and people can be prosecuted even if it was their intention to help the child.

### **Contextual Safeguarding**

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the family. All staff should take into account the wider environmental factors present in a child's life which may pose a threat to their safety and/or welfare. These threats can take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple threats, including: exploitation by criminal gangs; trafficking, drug & alcohol abuse, exposure to domestic abuse and sexual exploitation.

### **Serious Violence**

The Serious Violence Strategy identifies offences such as homicides, knife and gun crimes. The impact of serious violent crime on individuals and the community is significant. Early intervention is essential to help reduce the risk factors. 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 the following:

- Absence from school.
- Change in friendships/relationships with older individuals or groups.
- Significant decline in academic achievement.
- Signs of self-harm or significant change in well-being.
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions.
- Signs of assault or unexplained injuries.

If practitioners have concerns that a child may be a potential victim of modern slavery or human trafficking then a referral should be made to the National Referral Mechanism<sup>12</sup>, as soon as possible.

In addition, in a similar way to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse, schools also have a responsibility to protect children from the **risk of radicalisation**. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

The Prevent Duty has four general themes:

1. Schools are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. The school will demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them.
2. The Prevent duty builds on existing local partnership arrangements. Safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Effective engagement with parents is essential, as they are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation, and assistance will be provided to support families who raise concerns.
3. Schools must ensure that Prevent awareness training is provided so that staff are equipped to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. The Designated Safeguarding Lead has undertaken Prevent awareness training and is able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.
4. Schools must also ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school. The school's internet provider, LGfL provides a filtering system.

The school will discuss any concerns in relation to possible radicalisation with a child's parents in line with our safeguarding policies and procedures, unless there are specific reasons to believe that doing so will put the child at risk. Staff will remain alert to signs which may indicate radicalisation, such as changes in a child's behaviour, expression of radical views or attempts to seek to hide their views. Any concerns will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding leader, in the same way as for other forms of abuse. Where appropriate a referral may then be made to the Channel programme.

Across the curriculum the school will equip children with the skills needed to stay safe online and will promote fundamental British values to allow children to build their resilience to radicalisation, by teaching them to explore issues critically, to weigh up evidence, to debate and to make reasoned arguments.

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

The school recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse is abuse. It will not be tolerated or should not be dismissed as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. All staff have a role in challenging inappropriate views and behaviours, as dismissing or tolerating them risks normalizing such behaviours. Cases of peer on peer abuse must therefore be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the usual way. This can include (but is not limited to):

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse (hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm) □ initiating/hazing type violence and rituals
- sexting
- sexual harassment
- sexual violence
- Upskirting

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of **any** age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. It is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Some examples include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names; • sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment (non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos; sexualised online bullying; unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and • sexual exploitation; coercion and threats

It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. 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.

Depending on the type of abuse, additional guidance may also be found in the school's policies on behaviour, anti-bullying and online safety. All incidents of bullying, including cyber bullying, are logged and monitored to ensure that the victim and perpetrator receives the appropriate support.

Parents are regularly advised that children under the age of 12 are not permitted to have social media accounts. Should it be found that a child has an account, their parents will be informed and the school will monitor the account to ensure that it is closed. The school holds annual workshops as part of safer internet week to remind parents and pupils of the risks posed by social media and to promote strategies to help children to stay safe online. Children are not permitted to use mobile phones on the school premises. Any mobile phones brought into school must be handed into the school office immediately and then collected at the end of the school day.

## **Recognising signs of abuse**

It can often be difficult to recognize abuse. The signs listed in this document are only indicators and many can have reasonable explanations. Children may behave strangely or seem unhappy for a variety of reasons as they move through the stages of childhood or their families experience changes. It is nevertheless important to know what **could** indicate that abuse is taking place and to be alert to the need to consult further.

- Someone can abuse a child by actively inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm
- Abuse can take place within a family, in an institutional or community setting, by telephone, other electronic device or on the Internet
- Abuse can be carried out by someone known to a child or by a complete stranger

In general staff employed within Old Palace Primary School will not have the expertise to diagnose child abuse, but do have a responsibility to be alert and aware of the signs. The presence of one or more signs, or their repeated presence, might raise concerns and should be used as a prompt for discussion with the designated safeguarding lead. Similarly, if staff are unsure they should always speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for further guidance.

### **Possible Indicators and Signs of Abuse**

<b>Neglect</b>	<b>Physical Abuse</b>	<b>Sexual Abuse</b>	<b>Emotional Abuse</b>
Hygiene	Bruising or other significant signs on the body	Showing an awareness of sexual behaviour that is not attributable to their age	Erratic, sometimes violent, behaviour
Inappropriate clothing	New injuries frequent and recurring	Abnormal behaviour: tearful, withdrawn, flinches when touched	Overly physical or affectionate
Lack of Social Skills	Giving inconsistent or false excuses for injury	Aggressiveness	Reliance on adult contact
Underweight	Refusal to change for PE	Physical evidence ie. bruising	Short concentration span
Under stimulated	Excessively nervous behaviour, such as rocking, hair twisting	Medical evidence ie. Toilet problems transmitted disease, itching or discharge	Unusual emphasis on a normal family life
Inadequate medical provision	Withdrawal and backing away from adults	Play representations and drawings with disturbing features	Regularly tearful
Reluctant to go home	Fear of medical help	Written evidence in writing	Isolation or attention seeking

Low self esteem	Aggressive behaviour	Complaints for other children	Overeating/loss of appetite
Delayed social development – poor language & speech	Unable to play, no sense of joy	Child complaining of soreness, discomfort or recurring abdominal pain	Self-inflicting injury

Further information on the signs and symptoms of abuse can be found at:

Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership Website: <http://www.childrenandfamiliestrust.co.uk/the-lsrb/>

London Children Protection Committee Website: <http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/procedures/>

## **Procedure for reporting concerns**

### **Listening to the Child**

Regardless of how knowledge of abuse arises, the first steps when talking to a child are critical. Often a child will be frightened, confused and feeling vulnerable.

The child should be reassured in a calm manner that he/she is safe and has done the right thing by telling someone. Listen carefully to the child without leading their conversation or showing any kind of shock reaction.

A child often assumes an irrational guilt complex, feeling that the abuse is somehow his/her fault. Again reassurance that he/she is not to blame should be given. Emphasise that the claims are taken seriously and that it will be necessary to involve someone else to ensure that the abuse stops.

### **Disclosure**

In the event that a child makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse against an adult, another child or a member of staff, it is important that you:

- Listen to them and/or closely observe their presentation and behaviour
- Let them know that you take what they are saying seriously
- Do **not** attempt to question or interview them yourself
- Let them know that you will need to tell someone else in order to help them
- **Do not promise to keep what they tell you a secret**
- Sign into the CPOM system and create a record of the incident. This will automatically be sent to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- If for any reason you are unable to access CPOM, complete a paper **Record of Concern** form, available in the staffroom and hand this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible. If they are not available speak to another member of the senior leadership team
- In the event of an allegation being made against the Designated Safeguarding Lead, this should be reported to the Headteacher. If the allegation is against the Headteacher this should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will then liaise with the chair of the Governing Body.

It is essential that a written record is kept of any concerns raised and the discussions regarding them. The decisions made and the reasons for these must also be recorded in writing. When completing a written report as much detail as possible should be provided, including:

- The nature of the allegation.
- Details of any bruising or other injury.
- Times, dates and any other relevant information.
- Dates, times and names of those adults involved in the conversation with the child.
- Initials should be used when using staff and children's names.

A copy of any other relevant information (e.g. a picture or a piece of writing) can be uploaded and attached. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will call the Social Services duty officer on the Child Protection Advice Line, in order to pass on the information. They will request information including: the date of birth, home address, parent's names, names of siblings and the name of the GP.

The school will then wait to receive advice from the duty officer. Once this is received, the school will act upon this, contacting parents if advised to do so. If parents are advised to carry out further discussions with the allocated social worker, the school will arrange any joint planning meetings as necessary. The Headteacher will be kept informed of the referral and any subsequent action.

In the case of an allegation against a member of staff the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will also be informed and the school will await their advice on how to proceed.

Respect for the child's privacy is paramount and the staff involved must not discuss details of the disclosure with anyone other than those necessary to carry out the procedures outlined above. The wishes of the child will be taken into consideration when determining what action to take, but ultimately any action taken will be based on their best interests. Details of the child's views and feedback will be recorded within the written record of the referral.

The school recognises that a disclosure can be distressing for a member of staff to deal with. Should this be the case, the member of staff should discuss this with the Headteacher so support can be arranged.

If after a referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will press for reconsideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves. If appropriate action does not appear to have been taken the school will challenge the agencies responsible in writing.

**Where a child is at risk of immediate danger or harm** a Multi-Agency referral form must be made straight away to the Child Protection Advice Line (0207 364 3444) or the police. Anyone can make a referral, so action must not be delayed if the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy cannot be found, such as out of normal working hours. Where referrals are not made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, they should be informed of the referral as soon as possible.

### **Additional Guidelines for Dealing with a Disclosure**

#### **Do's**

- Be accessible/receptive
- Take it seriously (there is a reason for the child imparting such information to you.)
- Reassure the child they are right to tell
- Negotiate getting help (i.e. the Headteacher)
- Find help quickly

- Make careful records of what was said (include date and time records made)

### **Don't**

- Jump to conclusions
- Try to get the child to disclose
- Speculate or accuse anyone
- Investigate any incident, only check the facts

### **Early Help**

All staff need to be aware of the Tower Hamlet's early help process and understand their role in it. From time to time concerns may come to light, which despite not reaching the threshold for intervention, help to build up a picture of a child at risk of possible harm. It is important that such concerns are identified early, so help can be provided before they escalate. Staff should log any 'Cause for Concerns' on CPOM. This will be reviewed weekly by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the school's Attendance and Welfare Adviser. In addition, the identification of vulnerable pupils is a standing item on the agenda of fortnightly progress meetings.

Where concerns are identified, support may be provided by the Parent Support Workers, the school social worker or the designated safeguarding lead. Effective early help relies upon local organisations and agencies working together, this may include signposting families to other agencies or supporting other agencies in completing a multi-agency assessment. If early help is required, the case will be kept under constant review and a referral to children's social care will be considered if the child's situation does not appear to be improving.

Staff should, in particular, be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
  - is a young carer
- has returned home to their family from care
- is a privately fostered child
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- 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

### **Children Missing From Education**

Children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse, neglect, exploitation, mental health problems, risk of substance abuse or risk of FGM or forced marriage. The school has the following procedures in place to help prevent the risks of children going missing:

**First day calling** – the school will attempt to contact parents by telephone on the first day of absence **Home Visits** – if the school has been unsuccessful in contacting the parents by telephone, a visit to the child’s home will be carried out on the second day of absence

**Notifying the Local Authority** – should a child be absent without the school’s permission for a continuous period of 10 school days, the school’s Attendance Welfare Adviser (AWA) will be notified. It is their responsibility to pass this information on to the local authority

**Taking pupils off role** – At the point a child becomes eligible to be taken off the school admissions and attendance register, a notification form will be completed and emailed to the local authority’s Pupils Admissions Team

**Requesting Records** – The AWA will be notified when, following a request, the records of a child transferring to the school have not been received. Likewise the AWA will be notified if the school a child has transferred to does not issue a request for their records to be sent.

**Record Keeping** – Full records will be kept where pupils change school, so that these can be referred to should any issues subsequently arise.

## **Vulnerable Pupils**

### **SEND**

The school recognizes that pupils with SEND may face additional safeguarding challenges and is aware that their behaviour, mood and injury may relate to possible abuse and not just to their SEN need or disability. It may be the case that these children have communication barriers, are disproportionately impacted by bullying or have possible indicators of abuse (such as behaviour and mood) attributed to their condition. Staff therefore need to be extra vigilant with SEND pupils and ensure that any concerns are investigated fully.

### **Children and the Court System**

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. In such cases, guidance of each step of the process will be provided by a familiar adult and additional support and special measures will be offered.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. The school can provide additional support for the child’s wellbeing, should they want it.

### **Family Members in Prison**

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children. The school can also offer additional support for the child’s wellbeing throughout this time, should they want it.

### **Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child’s welfare. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. As part of the schools Early Help offer, referrals can be made to the Local Housing Authority, via the School Social Worker. A referral directly to children’s social care may also be necessary where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

## **Raising further concerns**

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding procedures. These should initially be discussed with the Headteacher, unless there is reason not to do so, and will be taken seriously. Alternatively, the staff member could follow the school's Whistle Blowing procedures, a copy of which is displayed in the staffroom. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue using either of these avenues, they could contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline on 0800 028 0285 – which is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday. Where a member of staff feels that the actions taken following a referral have not improved the child's situation, they should bring this to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Should they continue to be unhappy with the situation they should contact the Child Protection Advice Line (0207 364 3444) directly to alert them to their concerns. The school recognises the expertise staff build up by undertaking safeguarding training and by managing concerns on a daily basis. Staff are therefore encouraged to contribute to and shape the safeguarding arrangements put into place by the school.

## **Information Sharing**

Early information sharing between staff, organisations and agencies is essential is vital for effective identification and to ensure that an individual receives the right services at the right time. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse or neglect. Every practitioner must take responsibility for sharing the information they hold, and cannot assume that someone else will pass on information, which may be critical to keeping a child safe.

The GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children and young people safe.

## **Additional Sources of Support**

### **Useful Numbers**

LBTH Child Protection Advice Line/MASH 0207 364 3444/5601/5606 Early Help  
Hub 020 7364 5006

Police Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT) 0208 217 6484

Children's Social Care Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team (5:00pm onwards) 020 7364 5006- option 3 DfE

Extremism Line: 020 7340 7264

NSPCC 0208 983 3555

Childline England 0207 239 1000

### **Related Policies & Document**

Staff Handbook & Code of Conduct

Supply Teacher Class Packs

Induction Policy

Volunteer Policy

Safer Recruitment Policy

Managing Allegations Against Members of Staff

Behaviour & Anti bullying (including physical restraint)

Attendance Policy

Confidentiality Policy  
DfE: Keeping Children Safe in Education  
DfE: The Prevent Duty  
DfE: Working Together to Safeguard Children  
DfE: Children Missing in Education  
HM Government: What to do if you're worried a child is being abused  
THSCP arrangements 2019  
Safeguarding Disabled Children Practice Guidance, July 2009

**Last Review:** September 2019

## **Appendix 1- Safeguarding during COVID-19**

### **Context**

From the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020, schools have been asked to reopen to Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, as well as continuing to provide provision for key worker and vulnerable children, during COVID-19.

### **Vulnerable Children**

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will continue to engage with social workers, providing update reports and attending all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will notify their Social Worker and they will continue to inform the social worker of any updates.

Regular contact will be made with those children considered vulnerable, who do not have an allocated Social Worker, either by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy DSL, AWA or School Social Worker. Details of the contact made will be recorded on CPOMS.

### **Reporting a Concern**

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the normal procedure outlined in the Child Protection Policy, reporting via CPOMS to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Lead. This will ensure that the concern is received.

Where staff have concerns about an adult working with children they should follow the procedures set out in the Child Protection Policy to report the incident to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### **Children and online safety away from school.**

All pupils who are not attending school, receive at least one online Zoom session per week. As well as supporting learning, these sessions also allow us to monitor the children's wellbeing. Attendance at the sessions is monitored. Should a child miss one session, a reminder text is sent, if two consecutive sessions are missed attempts are made to contact the family to find out the reason for this and to offer support. If sessions continue to be missed the family will be referred to the AWA.

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Child Protection Policy.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the Code of Conduct policy.

Old Palace will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with current privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual interaction via Zoom, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s, groups only
- The video mode must be on for the staff and children.
- The username/screen name must be the child's first name.
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred.
- A minimum of two members of staff should attend each online meeting.
- There must be a familiar adult in the room with the child.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use the platform that has been given- Zoom.
- All meetings must require an ID code and password to enter.
- All meetings must have the 'waiting room' enabled.
- All meetings will not begin until the host has arrived.

Guidance has been provided on the Old Palace school website. <https://oldpalaceprimary.co.uk/our-learning/learning-from-home/>

In regards to parent concerns with their child using a certain site/app online, this should be raised with the administrator of that site/app. The following websites offer guidance and advice for Online Safety and there is also LGFL guidance, which can be found on the school website.

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>- Online Safety Education Programme.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/>- Information to keep children safe Online.

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers/parental-controls-offered-your-home-internet-provider> Setting Parental Controls.

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>- CEOP Child Exploitation and Online Protection.

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

Old Palace recognises extra care should be taken where different groups and new routines have been put in place. Where a school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within the Child Protection Policy.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on CPOMS and appropriate referrals made.