

# GREENWICH ENGINEERING AND MEDICAL SCHOOL

31 Thomas Street, Woolwich, London SE18 6HU

## Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Young Adults Policy including Child Protection and Safer Recruitment

*This Policy MUST be read in conjunction with the GEMS e-safety/acceptable use/ICT Policies*

Leadership Group Responsibility:	Head Teacher
Type of Policy:	Statutory
Review Period:	Every year
Reviewed:	September 2021
Next Review:	September 2022

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## Part One Safeguarding

### Guidance for Reader

#### Policy Review

This policy is reviewed on a yearly basis by the Senior Management Team and is signed off accordingly by the School Proprietor (recorded and indicated as per the back page of this policy)

#### Policy Conjunction

It is important to note that this 'Safeguarding Children & Young Adults' policy embodies the philosophy and ethos of the Greenwich Engineering and Medical School and the principles of 'Every Child Matters' DfES (2003). This policy is written in conjunction with the GEMS e-safety/acceptable use/ICT policy and that the safety and protection of children and young people educated and cared for by GEMS are at all time of paramount importance.

#### Policy Legislation

The policy is based on the DfE statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018).

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- [Part 3 of the schedule to the Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#)
- [The Children Act 1989 \(and 2004 amendment\)](#), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- ['Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation - procedural information', Home Office \(October 2015\)](#)
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#)
- [Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)
- [The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers', DfE \(2015\)](#)
- [The Childcare \(Disqualification\) Regulations 2009 and Childcare Act 2006](#)
- [The Childcare \(Disqualification\) and Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) \(Extended Entitlement\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018](#)
- [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges \(Dec 2017\)](#)
- [Children Missing Education 2018](#)
- [Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2017](#)
- [Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings' \(October 2015\)](#)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused', DfE \(March 2015\)](#)
- [Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services \(July 2018\)](#)
- The London Child Protection Procedures (as signed up to by Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESCP)).

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## Policy Availability

The Safeguarding Policy is available in hard copy on request and will become available online once the website is for the school is set up.

## Definitions

"Children" includes everyone under the age of 18.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

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. Abuse is often categorised in to 3 types of harm; physical, sexual or emotional. Further definitions can be found within [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#).

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of material 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)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

## The Policy

It is the policy of Greenwich Engineering and Medical School to create and maintain a culture of vigilance in safeguarding children and young people and an active commitment to the promotion of their general wellbeing. This is promoted through the maintenance of robust and rigorous recruitment and working practices, education and learning modules, child protection systems and multi-agency working.

It is therefore the responsibility of all staff to play an active role in safeguarding children and promoting their wellbeing and to promote the same in others. All staff must actively work to ensure children are

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protected from possible harm. They must provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that helps to promote young people's social, physical, emotional and moral development as an integral part of their educational progress.

## The aims of this safeguarding policy are:

- To support children's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence;
- To raise staff awareness of all their own personal and professional responsibilities in safeguarding children and in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse;
- To contribute to a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm and to develop and implement a structured procedure which will be followed in all cases of suspected abuse;
- To promote good levels of communication between all members of staff;
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with others, especially parents/carers, the referring authority, the Police, Children's Social Services and other partnership agencies;
- To ensure that all adults who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability and to maintain effective supervision where it is required;
- To uphold the ethos of safeguarding children and promoting their wellbeing and to work within the framework of the overall company policy.

## Procedures

Our procedures for safeguarding children are in line with current DfE statutory guidance, the London Child Protection Procedures and Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership local safeguarding arrangements. We will ensure that:

- We have designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) and their deputies available to staff, pupils and external agencies available who undertake regular training in child protection; this training takes place more regularly than the recommended two years.
- All staff including DSL's will be updated annually on any additional guidance issued on safeguarding to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- All members of staff will be appropriately briefed, trained and supported in implementing this safeguarding policy as well as the requirements of the London Child Protection Procedures.
- All members of staff are supported to develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse;
- All members of staff know how to respond to a child who discloses abuse;
- All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures;
- Our procedures will be regularly reviewed and updated;
- All staff are fully vetted according to our safer recruitment procedures before commencing work with children
- All new members of staff will be given a copy of this Safeguarding policy and procedures as well as Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2021 as part of their induction. They will all be required to read and sign to confirm they understand these documents and their responsibilities contained therein.

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## Supporting Children

- We recognise that a child who is abused or witness's violence may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.
- We recognise that a child in these circumstances may feel helpless and humiliated and may feel self-blame.
- We recognise that our education environment may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.
- We will support all children by:
- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness whilst not condoning aggression or bullying of any nature
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children. Notifying Children's Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern.
- Providing continuing support to a child about whom there have been concerns and who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to their new school or other education setting.

**NOTE: see list of associated policies and procedures**

## Supporting Staff

- GEMS recognise that staff who become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to seek further support where needed, in consultation with Human Resources (HR).

## Prevention of harm

- We recognise that we can play a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children and young people by providing them with good lines of communication with trusted adults and an ethos of safeguarding and protection as outlined in the Munro review, 2011.
- We will therefore:
  - Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to;
  - Ensure that all children know there are adults whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;

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- Include curriculum opportunities in PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help should they feel at risk/threatened or under unwelcome pressure.

**NOTE: see associated policies and guidance including 'Listening to Children'.**

## Confidentiality

- GEMS recognises that all matters relating to Child Protection are confidential.
- The DSL or the deputy will only disclose information about a child to other members of staff on a 'need to know' basis.
- We have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- We cannot and must not promise a child to keep secrets.

**NOTE: for further detail see GEMS Group e-Safety/Acceptable Use/ICT & General Data Protection Regulation Policies**

## Health and Safety

- The health, safety and welfare of children are central to all educational provision and include action taken to promote good attendance, to manage behaviour and tackle bullying including prejudice based bullying ie, racism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of harassment, and to provide effective personal, social, cultural and health education (PSCHE), linked closely to the principles of 'Every Child Matters' and the 'Healthy Schools' initiative.
- Our Health & Safety policy, set out separately, reflects the consideration we give to the safeguarding of our children both within the education setting and outside, to include 1 to 1 working, work experience placements and educational visits.
- Risk Assessments including any risks specific to individual children are completed and in place prior to any off site activities or programs and run in conjunction with our Off-Site Visit Policy.
- GEMS has a clear administration of medication policy and procedure which should be read, understood and adhered to. Any staff member administering medication must be suitably competent to do so.

**NOTE: for detail, please refer to list of associated policies**

## Anti-Bullying

- Our policy on anti-bullying is set out separately and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying including, prejudice-based bullying and homophobic or transphobic bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

**NOTE: for further detail, please refer to the GEMS policy on 'Anti-Bullying'.**

**GEMS also fully adheres to the strategies and guidelines set out by the DfE :**

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## *The Use and Effectiveness of Anti-Bullying Strategies in Schools*

### Racist Incidents

- Our policy on racist incidents is set out separately and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

**NOTE: for further detail, please refer to the GEMS policy on 'Diversity and Equal Opportunities'.**

### Physical Intervention

- Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in our Behaviour Management policy. It acknowledges that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person. Any physical intervention which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

**NOTE: for further detail, please refer to the GEMS policy on 'Behaviour Management'.**

### Roles and Responsibilities

At GEMS we are committed to safeguarding children and young people and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment.

Adults in our school take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them.

Staff at GEMS are 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.

School staff are not expected or trained to diagnose mental health conditions or issues but may notice behaviours that may be of concern.

Where staff have a mental health concern about a child that may also be a safeguarding concern, they should raise the issue by informing the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy in the usual way.

Staff recognise that when a child has a social worker, it is an indicator that the child may be more at risk than most pupils. For example, this may mean that they are more vulnerable to further harm, as well as facing educational barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and poor mental health.

We take these needs into account when making plans to support pupils who have a social worker.

We will always act in the best interest of the child.

### **The Head of Safeguarding will ensure that:**

- The safeguarding policy is in place and is reviewed annually, is available publicly via our website and has been written in line with Local Authority guidance and the requirements of Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership policies and procedures
- GEMS contributes to inter-agency working in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#)

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- A senior member of staff from GEMS leadership team is designated to take the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection
- All staff receive a safeguarding induction and are provided with a copy of this policy and the staff code of conduct
- All staff undertake appropriate child protection training that is updated annually
- Procedures are in place for dealing with allegations against members of staff and volunteers in line with statutory guidance
- Safer recruitment practices are followed in line with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021) and the London Child Protection Procedures.
- They remedy, without delay, any weakness with regards to our safeguarding arrangements that are brought to their attention

At each termly meeting the Head of Safeguarding will receive a safeguarding report that will record the training that has taken place, the number of staff attending and any outstanding training requirements for the school. It will also record all safeguarding activity that has taken place, for example, meetings attended, reports written, training or induction given. It will not identify individual pupils.

## The Head Teacher will ensure that:

- the policies and procedures adopted by GEMS Head of Safeguarding are fully implemented and followed by all staff
- sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance of strategy discussions and other necessary meetings, e.g. child protection conferences and core group meetings
- all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice with regards to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with our Whistleblowing Policy
- all pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online
- relevant staff have completed Safer Recruitment training
- the procedure for managing allegations against staff is known to staff and displayed in staff rooms
- operate the procedure for managing allegations effectively and refer relevant concerns to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- a member of the senior leadership team is appointed to deal with allegations against staff in the absence of the head teacher.
- ensuring the provision of a “an orderly, warm, supportive and above all safe environment” for children to engage constructively with the learning process;
  - ensuring that parents/carers are aware that the full texts of the child protection and associated policies are available on request. The safeguarding policy is available on the school website;
  - acting as Designated Safeguarding Lead (where required) in relation to child protection with a senior, named colleague as deputy, and ensuring that appropriate action is

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taken on concerns or allegations of abuse or suspicion of harm, including the support needed for both children and staff;

- overseeing the encouragement and support of children in contributing to the development of good safeguarding structures, including diversity and equal opportunities, behaviour policy and behaviour management procedures, anti-bullying and diversity and equal opportunities policies and feedback and complaints mechanisms;
- overseeing the development of whole group processes such as class meetings and school councils within group education settings to promote active joint participation in addressing group issues and contribution to school planning and development;
- the development and maintenance of good liaison, home/school contact and support for inter-agency working;
- ensuring that high professional standards are maintained in all essential and required record keeping, reporting and information sharing;
- providing termly reports to the Proprietor that covers the integrated schools services and reports on the following; whole school/project matters, staff training and development (CPD), curriculum matters, child protection issues and all other issues or developments in relation to all aspects of safeguarding and wellbeing;
- liaising with the Proprietor regarding the annual review of all policies and procedures relating to school/project provision and the information to be given to the LA/MASH on how the company's safeguarding duties have been fulfilled;

## The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is a senior member of staff, from the leadership team who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection in our school. The DSL will carry out their role in accordance with the responsibilities outlined in Annex B of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018](#).

The DSL will provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters. Any concern for a child's safety or welfare will be recorded in writing and given to the DSL.

During term time the DSL and/or a deputy will always be available for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, a DSL is not available on the school site in person, we will ensure that they are available via telephone and any other relevant media.

The DSL will be aware of pupils who have a social worker and help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues with teachers and school and college leadership staff.

The DSL at GEMS will represent our school at child protection conferences and core group meetings. Through appropriate training, knowledge and experience our DSL will liaise with Children's Services and other agencies where necessary, and make referrals of suspected abuse to Children's Services, take part in strategy discussions and other interagency meetings and contribute to the assessment of children.

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The DSL will maintain written records and child protection files ensuring that they are kept confidential and stored securely.

The DSL is responsible for ensuring that all staff members and volunteers are aware of our policy and the procedure they need to follow. They will ensure that all staff, volunteers and regular visitors have received appropriate child protection information during induction and that appropriate training needs are identified.

The DSL will also be the lead for 'Early Help' support being managed by the school.

## Administration and Policy - the Proprietor must ensure that:

- there are school policies in place that prioritise the safeguarding of children and promote their wellbeing and involve children and others in their development;
- staff files are kept at Central Services in accordance with the recruitment, vetting and HR/Employment policies and a single central record is kept of all staff appointments, including agency supply workers, that provides secure evidence that their identity, qualifications and criminal records, eligibility to work with children and young people and eligibility to work in the UK and references (two references, one from the last employer), for teaching staff that they have not been prohibited from teaching, overseas checks for those staff who have worked outside the UK and EEC and a check for medical fitness have all been checked and their employment history has been verified (full CV with tight chronology);
- any gaps must be investigated during the interview process and responses kept on file); this record to be held available always for inspection by audit or HMI/OFSTED/ Local Authority and is available within 1 hour for inspections;
- clear policies are in place and are consistently adhered to regarding internet and ICT use (including copyright laws), the use of photographs of children, one to one working situations, visitors to the project, school trips, transporting children and work experience placements;
- staff driving license and insurance details are verified beforehand, with copies held on file, where they may have responsibility for transporting children in private or company vehicles; details to be copied to HR at Central Services;
- contact details of parents/carers are kept up to date and protocols established for when contact must be made or is recommended as good practice, as part of a written policy on 'Information for Children and Parents/Carers';
- clear information is given to children and parents/carers on the education provision, including timetabling, procedures, contact details, requirements for information sharing, complaints and feedback mechanisms and the school's expectations of children and parents/carers and what they may expect in return;
- children have clear access to and understand their right to use a formal complaint system and to be supported in making any complaint;

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- parents/carers are given copies of the complaints leaflet and understand their right and the children' right to use a formal complaint system and to be supported in making any complaint.
- There is a clear policy on curriculum planning and curriculum development that promotes good learning skills and all-round development and encourages active child involvement in decision-making processes;
- the service is monitored to ensure that no child is discriminated against due to age, gender, race, culture, religion, language, disability or sexual orientation;
- there are clear procedures for unauthorised absences and/or absconding from the education setting, or where a child goes missing from the care of a member of staff;
- all exclusions take place in line with the school's exclusion policy and the terms of the contract with the LA;
- contact details of parents/carers are kept up to date and protocols established for when contact must be made or is recommended as good practice
- written parental consent is obtained for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises;
- written records are kept of any injury or illness that occurs, with details of any treatment given. All treatment must comply with the GEMS policy on First Aid;
- written parental consent is obtained for all educational visits, with emergency contact details and essential health information to be carried by staff supervising the visits;
- accurate, detailed records are maintained of all 'critical incidents', including actions taken, and copied on the same working day to Central Services; any follow-up action or consequences must be similarly recorded and copied to Central Services.
- all staff members have an up-to-date copy of the staff handbook that sets out clearly the expectations the company has of them in regard to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare, as well as other matters relating to their GEMS employment.

## **Staff responsibilities and requirements – as supported by the Head Teacher and DSL (where relevant):**

- all staff members are familiar with the company's policies and procedures and are fully committed to the principles and good practice guidelines, as defined in the 'Safeguarding Children' policy objectives
  - there is a firm commitment within the school to promote equalities issues and to ensure that no child is discriminated against due to age, gender, race, culture, religion, language, disability or sexual orientation;
  - there is a programme of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in place for all staff to include the formal processes of Child Protection training and professional supervision and appraisal;
  - child protection responsibilities are clear to all staff members within the school and they know whom to go to with any concerns, including any issues around colleagues' behaviour or practice;
- See Part Two: Child Protection***
- all staff are made aware that inappropriate behaviour towards children is unacceptable. This includes:
    - any form of sexual conduct, including sexually suggestive comments;
    - engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games;
    - giving children inappropriate drugs or other inappropriate substances;
    - lending or borrowing of money or property;

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- giving or receiving gifts;
- exclusive or secretive relationships;
- giving of home /personal mobile numbers or home address details to children.
- taking children to a staff member's home
- 'Friending' or 'following' a child on any form of social media
- it is an offence for a person over 18 (eg teacher/TA) to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of the child, even if the relationship is consensual and even if they do not work directly with them [*Sexual Offences Act 2003*];
- if they are found to have acted inappropriately towards a child, they may be referred to the DBS.
- staff understand their responsibility in checking the identity of new and temporary staff and remaining vigilant to the requirements of safe practice, including the need to supervise visitors when they have access to children and formal checks have not been undertaken;
- there is a commitment to support the needs of 'looked after' children in attending care reviews and personal education plans where requested and will liaise with the virtual Headteacher where relevant to support outcomes.
- there is an understanding and commitment to good multi-agency working and information sharing, including the need for open debate and challenge;
- staff understand and are committed to the company model of behaviour management and receive training in ways of managing difficult behaviour;
- staff understand and comply with the company's policy on physical intervention and restraint; **(see GEMS policy on 'Behaviour Management')**
- staff have a clear understanding of what constitutes safe practice and feel supported both in raising concerns about poor or unsafe practice and in having their own practice challenged by others;
- concerns about poor or unsafe practice are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner and in accordance with the company's whistleblowing policy and commitment to openness of practice;
- staff are prepared in advance for children to bring up personal problems within the classroom or wider school setting. Issues such as domestic violence and abuse can be difficult to broach directly, however discussions about personal safety and keeping safe can reinforce the message that any kind of violence is unacceptable. Raising these issues may lead children to bring up problems and concerns of their own. This is an opportunity to acknowledge that it is okay for young people to talk about their own problems and to signpost sources of help;
  - staff are trained to recognise and understand the boundaries and limitations of confidentiality in the context of their own safety and of child protection;
- staff understand their responsibilities when taking children 'off site' or on education visits, including the need to have with them emergency contact details, a fully charged company mobile phone, first aid provisions and essential health information on each child in their care;
- staff are supported effectively and protected from danger and/or the risk of violence.

*Links to more information about PSCHE, classroom resources and sources of support, are available at: [www.teachernet.gov.uk/childprotection/guidance.htm.](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/childprotection/guidance.htm.)*

*NOTE: for more detailed information in any of the above areas, please refer to the list of associated policies*

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## Academic and pastoral – the Head Teacher must ensure:

- pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online, through various teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum;
- pupils are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.
- pupils are informed, with the support of the curriculum and good role-modelling from staff, about diversity issues and discrimination;
- there is a culture that helps to promote good attendance, to manage behaviour positively and tackle bullying and other forms of harassment;
- attention is paid to the behaviour and anti-bullying policies and procedures, risk assessment and risk management, feedback and complaints mechanisms and child protection and whistleblowing policies and procedures;
- pupils are helped to understand what acceptable behaviour towards them is and how they can stay safe from harm or ask for help if they feel their safety is threatened;
- education plans, behaviour/education contracts, curriculum topics and lesson plans are used wherever appropriate to support and reinforce the principles of personal safety, responsibility and welfare;
- there is a commitment to the Healthy Schools initiative that “provides children/young people with the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes to make informed decisions about their lives”; [*see ‘Healthy Schools Standards and Guidance’ 1999*]
- pupils are encouraged and supported in contributing to the development of good safeguarding structures, including the behaviour policy and behaviour management procedures, equal opportunities, anti-bullying and anti-racism policies and feedback and complaints mechanisms;
- group processes such as class meetings and school councils are developed and facilitated to promote active joint child and staff participation in addressing whole group issues and contributing to school planning and development.

## The Human Resources department is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all agency workers have had all appropriate checks carried out on them by their agency prior to commencing a placement with the school and that written confirmation of these checks have been received by the HR department from the agency prior to arriving at the school.

Ensuring that the school has confirmed the identity of the agency worker upon arrival at the school by viewing and keeping on file original photographic ID such as a passport

- That all permanent employees have had all appropriate pre-employment checks carried out prior to commencing work with the school as outlined in the School Staffing Regulations (2009) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) These include but are not limited to;
- A minimum of two satisfactory written references
- A satisfactory DBS check and a check of the DBS Barred Children List
- If appropriate, Police checks from any country where a candidate has lived overseas
- Qualifications, specifically those relating to Qualified Teachers and Social Workers.

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- Identity checks – proof of Identity, proof of Date of Birth, Proof of current address, proof of eligibility to work in the UK

## Meeting the Safeguarding Objectives

Meeting the objectives of safeguarding children requires personal commitment and the support of systems designed to:

- prevent unsuitable people from working with children and young people;
- promote safe working practice and challenge poor or unsafe practice;
- identify instances where there are grounds for concern about a child or young person's welfare and initiate or take appropriate action to keep them safe;
- create a culture of openness, tolerance and respect for self and others;
- promote personal growth and active learning, with staff and child ownership of the process, through their direct involvement in and contribution to curriculum matters and school development, including related policies and procedures and the school development plan;
- contribute to safe and effective partnership working between all those involved with providing services for children and young people.

Children and young people within GEMS are actively encouraged and helped to understand what acceptable behaviour is, to show mutual respect for self and others, learn how to stay safe from harm and to speak out if they have any worries or concerns. They are also given encouragement and reassurance that any concerns they have will be listened to and taken seriously.

Creating a safe and enabling environment requires openness of practice, a culture of vigilance and a clear focus on the culture and shared responsibility and commitment to wellbeing by the following:

- Safe working practice and recruitment, vetting and Baring Service Checks, Single Central Record and employment procedures;
- Health and Safety, Risk Assessment and Risk Management;
- Behaviour policy and Guidelines to Managing Challenging Behaviour;
- Anti-bullying and Diversity and Equal Opportunities policies and ethos;
- Complaints and feedback mechanisms and procedures;
- Child Welfare/Child Protection Policies and Procedures;
- Philosophy and ethos;
- Behaviour Policy/Code of conduct/education;
- Whistleblowing, Anti-bullying and Diversity and Equal Opportunities policies and ethos;
- Feedback mechanisms and Complaints Procedure;
- Curriculum planning and curriculum development;
- Work experience, education visits and extra-curricular planning;
- Commitment to the principles of the 'Every Child Matters' agenda; and 'Healthy Schools' agenda.
- Taking all reasonable measures to ensure that risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised; and
- Taking all appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of a child, or children, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies.

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## Standards

“Respect has to be given in order to be received. Parents and carers, children and teachers all need to operate in a culture of mutual regard”. *‘Learning Behaviour - The Report of the Practitioners’ Group on School Behaviour and Discipline’ October 2005 (The Steer Report)*.

GEMS recognises the unique status of children and young people and seeks to ensure that they are treated respectfully as individuals. Relationships between staff also need to be based on mutual respect and dignity, with a focus on active support, openness of practice, good teamwork, the sharing of practical skills and knowledge and good role-modelling for children and each other.

- It is important that we maintain vigilance in safeguarding children and a focus on the strategies and good practice requirements for ensuring the promotion of their wellbeing.
- We need therefore to ensure that all our recruitment, management and working practices are in line with safeguarding principles and good practice, that all staff are familiar with the policies and procedures and that they receive the necessary guidance, supervision and training to enable them to contribute creatively and effectively to the provision of a safe and enabling, high quality education experience for every child.
- We need to develop those aspects of the curriculum that support healthy growth and development in emotional and social as well as educational skills and that encourage children to ‘speak out’ if they have issues that are troubling them.
- We need also to ensure that we react promptly, fairly and effectively in any instance of concern regarding safeguarding or child protection, recognising that staff and children alike may find the process anxiety-provoking or threatening and are likely to need support.
- Clear information must also be given to children, parents/carers and partner organisations on our complaints procedures and our publication scheme and information sharing responsibilities and obligations.

There are designated staff with specific responsibility for child protection. Nevertheless, everyone working within GEMS is expected to fulfil the wider requirements for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. All members of staff must accept that in all instances the welfare of the child is paramount.

## Areas of Safeguarding Focus / Safeguarding Themes

### Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

We recognise that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges and these are discussed in staff training. These additional barriers 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 SEND can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying- without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

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Safeguards for disabled children are essentially the same as for non-disabled children and should include ensuring and enabling them to:

- Make their wishes and feelings known;
- Receive appropriate personal, health and social education, including sex education;
- Raise concerns;
- Have a means of communication and a range of adults with whom they can communicate.
- Disabled children must receive the same level of protection from harm as other children and the same procedures be followed.

## Migrant children and those seeking asylum in the UK

The number of migrant children in the UK has increased in recent years. Some move here with family/relatives or other adults and some arrive unaccompanied.

- These children may be vulnerable for a variety of reasons, which may include:
- Insecurity about their legal status, place of residence and carers;
- Separation from significant family members, sometimes against their will;
- Cultural and language difficulties;
- Trauma connected with previous experiences in countries of origin and the circumstances of their departure, including child abuse, being forced to become child soldiers or subjected to female genital mutilation;
- The child may have been moved illegally and be under severe pressure to give a false account of themselves, or to keep secrets;
- Evidence shows that unaccompanied children or those accompanied by someone who is not their parent are particularly vulnerable.
- The possibility that some of these children may be privately fostered should also be borne in mind and if suspected referred to the MASH.
- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of these children must always remain paramount.

## Contextual Safeguarding

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Contextual Safeguarding therefore, expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse in a range of social contexts.

Parents/Carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent child relationships.

*For further advice see Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges December 2017*

## Peer on Peer Abuse

Peer on Peer Abuse is when children abuse other children. This can include but is not limited to bullying (including cyber bullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking,

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shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm. Sexting and initiating hazing type violence and rituals.

As a school, we operate a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, and it should never be passed off, for example, as “banter”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

As a school, we provide accessible means for students to report abuse both directly to staff and confidentially and will treat all reports seriously. Allegations of peer-on-peer abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with robustly. We are committed to support victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by peer-on-peer abuse.

Even where there are no reported cases of peer-on-peer abuse, we acknowledge that such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported.

Whilst it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys’ perpetrators, but that all peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

A safeguarding issue may be considered if the allegation:

- Is being made against an older pupil and refers to their behaviour towards a younger or more vulnerable pupil
- Is of a possible criminal nature
- Puts other pupils in the school at risk, or raises the risk factor for others
- Indicates that other pupils may have been harmed or be at risk or harm
- Includes bullying (under the definition of emotional abuse) or intimidation

Specific safeguarding issues against another student may include:

- Physical abuse:
  - Pre-planned violence
  - Physical altercations
  - Forcing other to carry out violence
  - Forcing others to use drugs, alcohol or other substances
- Emotional abuse:
  - Bullying
  - Threats and Intimidation
  - Blackmail/extortion
- Sexual abuse:
  - Sexual assault
  - Indecent exposure
  - Indecent touching
  - Showing pornography to others
  - Forcing others to create/share/download indecent images
  - Sexting

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- Sexual exploitation
  - Encouraging/enticing other pupils to engage in inappropriate sexual behaviour
  - Photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts
  - Sharing images through social media
  -

All allegations made by a pupil against another student, which is of a safeguarding nature it should be reported to the DSL immediately. immediately who will consider the need for escalation to statutory agencies. Where neither the police or social care thresholds are met, the DSL will record the allegation and undertake a thorough investigation following GEMS Group policies and procedures.

In cases where nudes or semi-nudes have been shared, we follow guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): Sharing nudes and semi-nudes (December 2020)

For more information in this area, staff, pupils and parents can refer to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) Part 5 and the separate guidance 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges' which sets out how we respond to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment.

## E-Safety

Online safety is paramount in our GEMS School and robust systems are in place to ensure appropriate filters and monitoring systems (unless there is a specific approved educational purpose); are in place to identify children accessing or trying to access harmful and inappropriate content online and all staff are aware safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse.

The main areas of risk for our GEMS community can be summarised as follows:

### Content

- exposure to inappropriate content, including online pornography, ignoring age ratings in games (exposure to violence associated with often racist language), substance abuse
- lifestyle websites, for example pro-anorexia/self-harm/suicide sites
- hate sites
- content validation: how to check authenticity and accuracy of online content

### Contact

- grooming
- cyber-bullying in all forms
- identity theft (including 'frape' (hacking Facebook profiles) and sharing passwords)

### Conduct

- privacy issues, including disclosure of personal information
- digital footprint and online reputation
- health and well-being (amount of time spent online (internet or gaming))
- sexting (sending and receiving of personally intimate images) also referred to as SGII (self generated indecent images)
- copyright (little care or consideration for intellectual property and ownership – such as music and film) (Ref Ofsted 2013)

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Commerce

- online gambling,
- inappropriate advertising,
- phishing
- financial scams.

*For full information – see GEMS e-Safety/Acceptable Use/ICT Policy*

## Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK.

FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old; however, it is believed that the majority of cases happen between the ages of 5 and 8.

Risk factors for FGM include:

- low level of integration into UK society
- mother or a sister who has undergone FGM
- girls who are withdrawn from PSHE
- visiting female elder from the country of origin
- being taken on a long holiday to the country of origin
- talk about a 'special' procedure to become a woman

Symptoms of FGM

FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out-of-school to visit an 'at-risk' country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM. Staff should not assume that FGM only happens outside the UK.

Indications that FGM may have already taken place may include:

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable.
- spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- spending long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
- frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
- prolonged or repeated absences from school or college, especially with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return
- reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations.
- confiding in a professional without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.
- talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

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GEMS aims to create an 'open environment' where children feel comfortable and safe to discuss the problems they are facing – an environment where FGM can be discussed openly, and support and counselling are provided routinely. Children need to know that they will be listened to and their concerns taken seriously.

## We create an 'open' and supportive environment by:

- circulating and displaying materials about FGM
- displaying relevant information, e.g. details of the NSPCC's Helpline and Child Line services, Careline, National Domestic Violence Helpline and appropriate black and minority ethnic women's groups
- ensuring that a private telephone is made available should children need to seek advice from the above organisations or other relevant groups discreetly;
- informing/raising awareness about issues around FGM with colleagues – as well as including appropriate training in continuing professional development;
- ensuring that the designated member of staff with responsibility for safeguarding children is well versed in the issues around FGM; referring Children to an education welfare officer, a child protection lead, pastoral tutor, learning mentor or school counsellor as appropriate;
- encouraging young people to access appropriate advice, information and support
- making materials such as books and DVDs available
- introducing FGM into the school curriculum within relevant classes, such as: Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) in England, – particularly in 'Sex and the Law' for Key Stages 4 and 5s and rights Citizenship, Religious Knowledge, Drama, History, Sociology.

## Staff should:

- talk about FGM in a professional and sensitive manner;
- explain that FGM is illegal in the UK and that they will be protected by the law;
- recognise and respect their wishes where possible, but child welfare must be paramount. FGM is child abuse and against the law. If a member of staff believes that the girl is at risk of FGM, or has already undergone FGM, the police and social services must be informed even if this is against the girl's wishes. If you do take action against the Child's wishes, you must inform them of the reasons why;
- activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with the police and children's or adults' social care;
- ensure that the girl is informed of the long-term health consequences of FGM to encourage her to seek and accept medical assistance;
- liaise with the designated teacher with responsibility for safeguarding children;
- refer the child, with their consent, to appropriate medical help, counselling and local and national support groups
- ensure that safeguarding and protection is considered for any female family members.

## Staff should not:

- treat such allegations merely as a domestic issue;
- ignore what the child has told them or dismiss out of hand the need for immediate protection;

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- decide that it is not their responsibility to follow up the allegation;
- approach the Child's family or those with influence within the community, in advance of any enquiries by the police, adult or children's social care, either by telephone or letter.

Remember:

- The child may not wish to be referred to a social worker, police officer or a guidance/pastoral/head teacher from her own community.
- Consult other professionals, particularly an experienced manager/colleague, the local police child protection or domestic violence unit.
- Speaking to the Child's parents about the action you are taking may place the Child at risk of emotional and/or physical harm. Therefore, do not approach the family as they may deny the allegations, expedite any travel arrangements and hasten their plans to carry out the procedure.

## FGM Mandatory Reporting Duty

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon **teachers** along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.

Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining children, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at - *Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information*

Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also still consider and discuss any such case with the school or college's designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures.

## What to do when a Child stops attending school

If a teacher or other member of staff suspects that a Child has been removed from, or prevented from, attending education **as a result of FGM**, a referral should be made to the local authority adult or children's social care and the police. - Staff may consider speaking to the Child's friends to gather information – although they should not make clear that FGM is suspected as this may get back to the family who may hasten any plans to perform the procedure.

All Staff should be aware:

That there may be occasions when a teacher visits the family to find out why the Child is not attending school. The family may tell the teacher that the Child is being educated overseas. Sometimes, the family may suggest that the teacher speaks to the Child on the telephone. If this occurs, the teacher should

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refuse to speak on the telephone and (if the Pupil is a British national) insist that the Pupil is presented at the nearest British Embassy or High Commission.

Staff should not:

- remove the Pupil from the school register without first making enquiries and/or referring the case to the police and local authority adult or children's social care;
- dismiss the Child as taking unauthorised absence

GEMS ensure all staff are trained and understand that it is mandatory to report all instances of the practice in girls below the age of 18

*For full information please read in conjunction with HM Government: multi-agency practice Guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation.*

## Child Sexual Abuse (CSA)

It should be noted that there are no typical families where sexual abuse occurs but there are some factors that occur in such families more frequently. These are:

- Poor or confused parent/child relationships (especially with mothers);
  - Parents unavailable (especially mothers) through absence, illness or \*depression;
  - Families with a step father or \*where the mother has a succession of male partners;
  - Violence between the adults, \*especially of a male partner towards the mother
- \*These are also known key factors in situations of abuse between siblings, or by a child or young person towards another child or children.***
- Children under 16 years of age cannot provide lawful consent to any sexual activity, though in practice many are involved in sexual contact to which, as individuals, they may have agreed.

## Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

GEMS understand that Children or young people at risk of CSE don't always display any signs of CSE and staff are trained to be extra vigilant and to report all cause for concerns which are logged and checked regularly (both in school and in central services) so that common displays or patterns of behaviour can be easily identified.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of CSE

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation;

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- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks;
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work;
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late;
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls;
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol;
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections;
- Evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault;
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups;
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers);
- Frequenting areas known for sex work;
- Concerning use of internet or other social media;
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

Potential vulnerabilities include:

Although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited. Child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these issues.

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse;
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic abuse or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example);
- Recent bereavement or loss;
- Social isolation or social difficulties;
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality;
- Economic vulnerability;
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status;
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited;
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work;
- Having a physical or learning disability;
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories); and
- Sexual identity.

(for further information see 'Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation February 2017)

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## Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) including County Lines

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence.

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

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

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

(Further information on the signs of a child’s involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>

## Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children

The initial response to a disclosure is important and should be reported directly to a DSL.

It is essential that children are reassured they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported.

It should also be noted that, incidents of this type can occur online and offline both physical and verbal and never acceptable.

- Significant harm may be caused to children by the abusive behaviour of other children, however a distinction may need to be drawn between behaviour best dealt with by anti-bullying policies and more complex behaviour where both perpetrator and victim may need specialist help;

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- Advice must be sought from the child protection agencies if there is any doubt;
  - Where behaviour is sexual, a child protection referral must be made to explore the reasons for the behaviour, as it may indicate abuse suffered elsewhere by the perpetrator and possibly the victim. The Police will be involved where a crime has been committed of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault.
- Where sexualised behaviour is identified, a child may need to be placed on a treatment programme, but will still need to be educated in a school setting, in these cases a full risk assessment must be carried out, the management of such situations will need to take into account the likely impact on the whole school, the curriculum as well as on individuals.

*For further advice see Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges December 2017*

## Honour Based Violence (HBV)

The definition of HBV is 'A crime or incident which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community. 'There is no specific offence of HBV. It is an umbrella term to encompass various offences covered by existing legislation. and can be described as a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such violence can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. It is a violation of human rights and may be a form of domestic and/or sexual violence. There is no, and cannot be, honour or justification for abusing the human rights of others.

Staff should not:

- treat such allegations merely as a domestic issue;
- ignore what the Child has told them or dismiss out of hand the need for immediate protection;
- decide that it is not their responsibility to follow up the allegation;
- approach the Child's family or those with influence within the community, in advance of any enquiries by the police, adult or children's social care, either by telephone or letter.

Staff should:

- Contact The Honour Network, which is a confidential helpline providing emotional and practical support and advice for victims and survivors (male & female) of forced marriage and/or honour based violence and abuse. It provides advice and support to potential victims in crisis and professional agencies.

helpline on 0800 5999 247

[www.karmanirvana.org.uk](http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk)

## Domestic Abuse/Violence

In April 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent and introduced a statutory definition for the first time.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (Part 1) defines domestic abuse as any of the following behaviours, either as a pattern of behaviour, or as a single incident, between two people over the age of 16, who are 'personally connected' to each other:

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- (a) physical or sexual abuse;
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour;
- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour;
- (d) economic abuse (adverse effect of the victim to acquire, use or maintain money or other property; or obtain goods or services); and
- (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse.

People are 'personally connected' when they are, or have been, married to each other or civil partners; or have agreed to marry or become civil partners. If the two people have been in an intimate relationship with each other, have shared parental responsibility for the same child, or they are relatives.

The definition of Domestic Abuse applies to children if they see or hear, or experience the effects of, the abuse; and they are related to the abusive person.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

## Barriers to disclosure for children include

- Protective of their mother;
- Protective of their abusing parent;
- Extremely fearful of the consequence of sharing family 'secrets' with anyone. This may include fears that it will cause further violence to their mother and/or themselves;
- Being threatened by the abusing parent;
- Fearful of being taken into care;
- Fearful of losing their friends and school;
- Fearful of exposing the family to dishonour, shame or embarrassment;
- Fearful that their mother (and they themselves) may be deported.

Staff should not press the child for answers but instead SHOULD

- approach the subject with a child with a framing question so that the subject is not suddenly and awkwardly introduced,
- explain that the disclosure cannot be kept confidential and that the information will be shared with social care
- Listen and believe what the child says
- Reassure the child that the abuse is not their fault, and it is not their responsibility to stop it from happening

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Parents/Carers can be given several telephone numbers, including the National Domestic Abuse helpline can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247.

## Forced Marriage

- Education settings often wrongly feel it is not their place to tackle the issue of forced marriage, however forced marriage is recognised as a form of domestic violence and a serious abuse of human rights.
- It is not sanctioned within any culture or religion and is not the same as an arranged marriage in which both spouses can choose whether or not to accept the arrangement.
- In forced marriage, one or both spouses do not consent and some element of duress is involved, including physical and emotional pressure.
- Education staff should be alert to potential warning signs and consider (whilst being careful not to assume) whether forced marriage may be the reason.
- These warning signs can include:
  - a sudden drop in performance;
  - truancy;
  - conflicts with parents over continued or further education;
  - excessive parental restrictions and control;
  - history of domestic violence in the family;
  - extended absence through sickness or overseas commitments;
  - depressive behaviour including self-harming;
  - history of siblings leaving education early and marrying early.

This is not an exhaustive list and if concerned please follow the company/school CP Flowchart.

Further information can be obtained from the Community Liaison Unit (CLU) at the Foreign Commonwealth Office (FCO) – **020 7008 0135/0230/8706** or **020 7008 1500** (out of hours emergency) or the Child Protection Policy Team at the DfES - **01325 392037**.

## Belief in 'possession' or 'witchcraft'

- Belief in 'possession' or 'witchcraft' is widespread and not confined to particular countries, cultures, religions or immigrant communities.
- Children involved can suffer damage to physical and mental health, capacity to learn, ability to form relationships and self-esteem.
- A child/ren may be viewed as different or difficult, and this attributed to their being 'possessed' or involved in 'witchcraft'. Attempts to 'exorcise' the child may be made, that may involve severe beatings, burning, starvation, cutting or stabbing and/or isolation. This usually occurs within the child's household.
- Staff should look for possible indicators and apply basic safeguarding principles, such as information sharing across agencies, so as to be able to identify those at risk of this type of abuse.

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## Child Abduction

- It is an offence for a parent or guardian to take or send their child out of the UK without appropriate consent. Child abduction may arise in situations where a child is the victim of a forced marriage or is forced into prostitution. It is more likely to arise however, when parents of a child divorce or separate.
- When education staff become aware that parents have separated and there are issues regarding child custody, they should seek information as to whether there are any conditions covering the child's custody e.g. do both parents have parental responsibility, is there a court order etc, and whether there are any legal restrictions on either partner collecting the child from school.
- Any concerns or allegations of child abduction or the threat of child abduction should immediately be brought to the attention of the DSL and be the subject of an urgent child protection referral.

## Child victims of trafficking

- Trafficking is defined as 'the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by means of threat, or use of force or other forms of coercion for the purpose of sexual or commercial exploitation or domestic servitude' (AFRUCA/ NSPCC).
- Trafficking in people involves crimes, spanning a variety of countries and involving an increasing number of victims, who can experience considerable suffering.
- There are many factors that may indicate that a child has been trafficked, which can include:
  - going missing, or missing for periods of time;
  - a history with missing links and unexplained moves;
  - attending for a term or so before disappearing (schools need to look out for patterns of registration and de-registration);
  - has limited freedom of movement, is withdrawn or refuses to talk;
  - is known to beg for money; has no money/other financial resources, but has a mobile phone or is driven around by an older male/boyfriend;
  - shows signs of physical or sexual abuse, signs of sexual behaviour or language and/or has contracted a sexually transmitted disease;
  - has not been registered with or attended a GP practice;
- Child protection procedures should always be applied where there is suspicion that a child may be being trafficked and Police or the LSCB or local safeguarding arrangements must be informed;

For helpful additional guidance see the Trafficking Toolkit.  
([www.crimereduction.gov.uk/toolkits](http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/toolkits))

## Child Pregnancy

- The legal age for consent to sexual intercourse is 16. Assumptions should not be made that teenage pregnancies at any age are as a result of consensual sexual intercourse;
- In all cases of a child's pregnancy becoming apparent to staff, consideration should be given to referring the matter to the LSCB or local safeguarding arrangements in accordance with the referral procedures stated above;
  - Staff who have regular contact with pregnant teenagers have a responsibility to consider the welfare of both the prospective mother and her baby.

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## **Prevent Duty– Anti-Radicalisation and Extremism**

Effective from 1 July 2015, we have a duty in the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism.

GEMS promotes fundamental British values as part of broader requirements through our curriculum relating to the quality of education and to promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children.

At GEMS we understand that being drawn into terrorism includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit.

Staff will be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a Prevent referral.

We ensure that GEMS is a safe place in which our children can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas. We understand that the Prevent duty is not intended to limit discussion of these issues, however we are mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues as posed and placed on the proprietors of independent schools, by the Independent School Standards.

We will risk assess all visiting speakers whether invited by staff or by children themselves and ensure that they are suitable and appropriately supervised.

All staff will undergo relevant training including 'Prevent Training' to give them the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideas which can be used to legitimise terrorism and are shared by terrorist groups. Staff will seek further guidance from their DSL who if necessary made a referral to the Channel Programme.

- Our E-safety / Acceptable Use /ICT Policy is robust and sets out clear guidelines on internet use and appropriate levels of filtering.
- The Prevent person in GEMS is the DSL (Eugenie Harvey)

## **How to spot the signs of somebody being radicalised**

The following are some signs that could mean somebody could be at risk of radicalisation or is going through a radicalisation process:

Physical changes:

- Sudden or gradual change in physical appearance
- Sudden or unexpectedly wearing religious attire
- Getting tattoos displaying various messages

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- Unexpectedly shaving their head (skinhead)
- Possesses unexplained gifts and clothing (groomers will sometimes use gifts such as mobile phones and clothing to bribe a young person)

Social changes:

- Cuts ties with their friends, family or community
- Starts to become socially withdrawn
- Becoming dependent on social media and the internet
- Begins to associate with others who hold radical views
- Bullies or demonises other people freely
- Visits extremist websites, networks and blogs

Emotional and verbal changes:

- Advocates violence or criminal behaviour
- Exhibits erratic behaviour such as paranoia and delusion
- Speaks about seeking revenge
- Starts to exhibit extreme religious intolerance
- Demonstrates sympathy to radical groups
- Displays hatred or intolerance of other people or communities because they are different

**Things to consider before assuming that somebody has been radicalised:**

Not everybody will share the same view or opinion. Holding a different view – religious, social or political, does not mean that somebody is radical. The concern is when somebody with an extreme view acts or intends to act upon their view(s) in a way that is harmful to themselves or others. Even if they do not intend to act upon their view, extreme views that are based on lies and misguidance can be extremely damaging to somebody's mental health.

You should always use your professional judgment about somebody and if in any doubt seek advice.

## Upskirting

The Voyeurism Offences Act, which was commonly known as the Upskirting Bill, was introduced on 21 June 2018. It came into force on 12 April 2019.

- Upskirting is a highly intrusive practice, which typically involves someone taking a picture under another person's clothing without their knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear).
- Transportation services have reported a rise in the offence however, it can occur anywhere and involve any gender.
- The new law will capture instances where the purpose of the behaviour is to obtain sexual gratification, or to cause humiliation, distress or alarm.
- The perpetrator can face up to two years imprisonment if found guilty of the offence.
- The law protects those who are victims of the offence from being named in the media
- Staff must report any concerns to the DSL or the Head of School

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## Missing Children from Education (CME)

GEMS has an Attendance Policy in place detailing what to do if a child is missing from education.

All staff should look out for potential indicators of abuse or neglect such as triggers;

- Repeat occasions of absence.
- FGM signs
- Traveling to conflict zones – prevent (radicalisation)
- Force marriage
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Criminal Exploitation – county lines

Staff must report all children missing from education for 10 consecutive days to the DSL who will inform social care

*For detailed information in relation to child missing from education please see the GEMS Admissions and Attendance Policy*

## Allegations Against Staff

We aim to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the wellbeing and very best outcome for our children. We do, however recognise that sometimes allegations of abuse are made.

We recognise that allegations, when they occur, are distressing and difficult for all concerned. We also recognise that some allegations are genuine and that there are adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children.

We take all possible steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that the adults are safe to work with children. We will always ensure that procedures outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children and Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education are adhered to and will seek appropriate advice from Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The LADO can be contacted to request a consultation or to make a referral via email:

**Email:**

[childrens-Lado@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:childrens-Lado@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)

[childrens-Lado@royalgreenwich.gov.uk.cjsm.net](mailto:childrens-Lado@royalgreenwich.gov.uk.cjsm.net) or [mash-referrals@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:mash-referrals@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)

or by phone on: 020 8921 3930 or 020 8854 8888

Allegations that require consultation with the LADO include where an individual who works with children (or volunteers with children) both within the GEMS or externally 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 or children in a way that indicates that they pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates that they may not be suitable to work with children

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*In addition, staff should also alert the Head Teacher if an individual who is working in our school has behaved in a way in their personal life that raises safeguarding concerns. These concerns do not directly relate to a child ie an incident of domestic abuse (see chapter 7 of the London Child Protection Procedures for further guidance)*

The member of staff receiving the information should inform the Head Teacher Immediately This includes concerns relating to agency and supply staff and volunteers.

An allegation made against the Head Teacher this should be reported to the company wide safeguarding lead immediately (if they are not available then reported to the Director of Inclusion and Clinical Services.

An allegation made against the Schools Proprietor the Head Teacher should contact LADO directly and seek advice.

Any staff who does not feel confident to raise their concerns within GEMS should contact LADO directly on: [020 8921 2267](tel:02089212267)

General guidance can be found at <https://protect-advice.org.uk/> who provide confidential advice on whistleblowing and 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 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

**NOTE: for detail, please refer to the GEMS policy on ‘Whistleblowing’.**

## Associated Policies and Guidance Documents:

- Most up to date Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021
- Most up to date Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges, December 2017
- Diversity and Equal Opportunities
- Human Resources: Employment issues, including staff pay and conditions and Continuous Professional Development
- Partnership Working
- E-Safety/Acceptable Use/ICT, General Data Protection Regulation, policies
- Health and Safety, including accident procedures
- First Aid
- Risk assessment and risk management, including 1:1 working, transporting children, work experience, visitors to the project and education outings
- Work Experience
- Curriculum and curriculum development
- Healthy Schools
- Safe Working Practice and Good Practice Guidelines
- Behaviour management: Behaviour policy and code of conduct/ policy on physical intervention/guidelines on managing confrontations with children with challenging behaviours
- Anti-bullying
- Feedback mechanisms and Complaints Procedures
- Whistleblowing

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- Parent Friendly Safeguarding Policy
- Primary Pupil Friendly Safeguarding Policy

## Part Two Child Protection

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare of children. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and how practitioners should conduct the assessment of children.

### Staff must be aware that:

- It is not the responsibility of teachers and other staff in schools or other education settings to investigate allegations or suspected cases of abuse
- Procedures are in place for dealing with allegations against staff members and full details of these can be found in the school's Dealing with Allegations Against Staff policy.
- Procedures are in place for dealing with abuse by children against other children and full details of these can be found in the school's Anti-Bullying policy. Staff must not take any action beyond that agreed in the procedures established by GEMS and the LSCB or local safeguarding arrangements
- Staff cannot promise a child complete confidentiality - instead they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe
- GEMS must ensure that parents are aware that the full texts of the Child Protection and associated policies are available on request;

### Training

All staff within the school receive Safeguarding, including Child Protection, training and updates as appropriate that equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their responsibilities for Safeguarding and Child Protection; this training will be refreshed at two-yearly intervals as a minimum.

The Central Services and School DSL (one of whom is the School Proprietor) will refresh their training at two-yearly intervals, to be able to discharge their duties competently. In addition, all staff will be given an annual update to ensure that they are fully informed on current DfE guidance.

Certificates will be placed on individual staff files on completion of any training provided.

## Section I - Child Protection Procedures

### Guidance on Dealing with Child Protection Welfare Concerns - Good Practice Guidelines

- It is essential that any child abuse issues are not trivialized or exaggerated and that the proper steps are followed.
- Please be aware that words and actions may be open to misinterpretation and therefore you should take great care to avoid situations in which your own words or actions could be misunderstood.

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- You are responsible for ensuring that abusive peer activities such as bullying do not occur or are actively addressed.
- All steps must be taken to ensure that GEMS practices are safe for children, young people, staff and visitors. Any concerns that you may have should be dealt with or reported swiftly.

**You may become aware of possible abuse/child welfare concerns in various ways. You may:**

- see it happening;
- suspect or have concerns because of signs such as those listed in 'Identifying abuse'
- have concerns reported to you by a child or third party.

**It is particularly important** to respond appropriately and to remember always that the best interests of the child or young person - and the need for any abuse to stop - come before the interests of anyone else, including GEMS or a potential abuser. Any member of staff with an issue or concern relating to Child Protection should immediately discuss it with a senior member of staff. It should also be made clear to children that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in respect of child protection issues.

**NOTE:** See '*Listening to Children*' – Section II

## **Procedures - Designated Safeguarding Lead**

There is a DSL based in the school and a deputy to act in their absence (see key contact details). Should they both be absent or unavailable, the matter must be referred to the School's proprietor.

The DSL Role includes:

- referring cases of suspected abuse to social care
- refer to the Head of Safeguarding if an allegation is against member of staff
- work with HR to refer cases where a person is dismissed due to risk/harm to a child to the DBS
- refer cases where a crime has been committed to the police
- liaise with Head of Safeguarding where S47 and/or police investigations are in process
- act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.

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## Immediate Action

There is a difference between immediate danger and concern for a child. If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately (anyone can make a referral) Concern for a child must be raised with your DSL.

Where a concern is reported to/identified by a member of staff, the first priority is to establish whether the child is in need of medical attention and/or protection:

- If urgent action is required, medical assistance should be obtained if needed and an immediate referral made to the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) or local safeguarding arrangements and/or the police;
- If a child is in need of protection, police can initiate a police protection order (PPO) in cases of emergency, while MASH or local safeguarding arrangements can apply to a court for an emergency protection order (EPO);
- The law also allows staff to take all reasonable steps to offer immediate protection to a child at risk of harm e.g., from a violent or incapacitated parent.

## Action by Person Initially Identifying/Receiving a Concern or allegation

Any member of staff receiving details of a concern or allegation should:

- respond with tact and care (remembering to keep an open mind);
- listen and treat the concern seriously, avoiding expressions of shock or disbelief;
- communicate as appropriate to the age and understanding and any communication or language difficulties of the child/person reporting;
- allow the child to tell their own story. Research has shown that this initial telling can be the best therapy if they are able to 'talk it out';
- avoid leading questions;
- avoid expressions of sympathy that may pre-judge issues of potential abuse;
- avoid any promise of confidentiality but reassure the child/young person that the information will only be passed to those who 'need to know'.

## Staff should be aware that:

- the way in which you talk to a child can have an effect on the evidence which is put forward if there are subsequent criminal proceedings;
- while information must be gathered as accurately and thoroughly as possible when recording an allegation made by a child or young person, it is important to attempt to minimise the number of times they have to repeat themselves;
- GEMS employees are only the first in a series of people who will talk to them in the course of an investigation. Having to repeat themselves unnecessarily may be traumatic for the child or young person. While child protection procedures are being followed, the needs of the child/young person may be overlooked and the procedure itself may be experienced by them as abusive.

If a child chooses to tell a member of staff about possible abuse there are a number of things that can be done to support the child:

- stay calm and be available to listen;

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- listen with the utmost care to what the child is saying, and check with them that you have heard what they have said correctly;
- question normally without pressurizing;
- don't put words in the child's mouth but note the main points carefully;
- reassure the child and let them know that they were right to inform us;
- inform the child that the information will have to be passed on.

The person receiving the concern **should not**:

- interrupt the child/person reporting when he/she is recalling significant events;
- make assumptions or interpretations;
- make suggestions or offer alternative explanations; this could be construed as 'coaching' or attempting to dismiss or minimize what is being said;
- use leading questions e.g., 'Did they do .... to you?' or 'What did they do next?' Use open questions only, such as 'What happened?' or 'Do you have anything else to tell me?'
- **DO NOT** attempt to investigate any suspicion of abuse. Only sufficient information should be sought to clarify whether a concern should be referred to the LSCB or local safeguarding arrangements and that decision lies with the Head teacher in consultation with the Proprietor.
- Do not criticise an alleged abuser. The child may love him/her and be very protective of the relationship or confused about their own role in the abuse. There may also be the possibility of reconciliation;
- Do not ask the child to repeat it all for another member of staff.

The person receiving a concern **should**:

- record in writing the information (if applicable, in the child's own words), including times, dates, place of incident(s), persons present and what was said;
- make a note of any accompanying non-verbal behaviour and how the information was imparted;
- be careful to differentiate between fact, observation, allegation and opinion;
- sign and date the written record.

**Staff should be aware** that the notes you make may be disclosed in any subsequent prosecution. You may also be called to give evidence in court proceedings and may be asked to refer to your notes.

**Any member of staff identifying or receiving details of a concern, must immediately:**

- report the matter to the DSL their deputy or appropriate substitute;
- make a written record of decisions made and action taken.
- **Always act in the best interest of the child.**

**Initial Action by the DSL**

- obtain written details, signed and dated, from the person who initially identified or received the concern (not from the child/person reporting the concern) and signed and dated by that person;
- countersign and date the written details;
- record any information about times, dates and location of incident(s) and details of any potential witnesses;

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- **DO NOT** attempt to investigate. Inappropriate questioning could jeopardise a child protection or criminal investigation and may cause immediate distress to the young person/child.

## Initial Consideration of Concern

The member of staff identifying or receiving the concern and the DSL should:

- Discuss the concern and all available information in order to decide on the most appropriate course of action;
- If there is any doubt about the action to be taken, the DSL should seek advice internally from the School Proprietor. This advice will always be to contact the LSCB. or local safeguarding arrangements

## Consent

- In general, any concerns about a child's welfare should be discussed with the family and, where possible, agreement sought to make a referral to the LSCB or local safeguarding arrangements, provided this does not increase the risk of significant harm to the child or lead to the potential withdrawal of a statement or destruction of evidence.
- The child's views should also be considered in deciding whether to inform the family, particularly where he or she is sufficiently mature to make an informed judgment, with the same provisos of due care.
- Where there is doubt about involving the child's family, the DSL should clarify with the Proprietor and MASH whether, and if so when and by whom, the parents/carers should be told about the referral and what action to take where consent is refused. It will not be necessary to disclose personal details of the child and family unless the advice confirms that a referral is needed. In either case, the DSL must keep a record of the advice received and who provided it.
- Action to ensure the safety of children must respect the rights, privacy and dignity of parents/carers as far as possible without jeopardising the child/ren's safety, recognising the stress that such interventions can cause and seeking to ensure that families are supported and services to support parenting/care are put in place.

## Referral to the LSCB or local safeguarding arrangements (MASH)

Where the DSL and School Proprietor decides that a concern needs to be referred to the LSCB or local safeguarding arrangements, he/she should provide as much information as possible about the nature of the suspicions, the child and the family, including:

- Full names, date of birth and gender;
- Family address;
- Name(s) of person(s) with parental responsibility or primary carer(s);
- Names and dates of birth of other household members, if known;
- Any need for an interpreter, signer or other form of communication;
- Any special needs;
- Any current and previous concerns, significant events or involvement of other agencies in the child's life;
- Developmental needs and parents'/carers' ability to respond to these needs.

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If urgent action or referral is required, the collation of such information must not be allowed to cause delay

- The DSL must telephone the LSCB/MASH or local safeguarding arrangements where the child lives or is at the time.
- The referral should be made immediately if urgent action is required but within the same day as the allegation was reported regardless. The DSL should agree with the person receiving the referral what the child and parents/carers should be told and by whom.
- Where the referral is taken by a member of LSCB/MASH or local safeguarding arrangements administration team, the DSL Person should seek to discuss the issue with someone from the LSCB/MASH or local safeguarding arrangements
- The referral should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. The LSCB/MASH or local safeguarding arrangements should then acknowledge the written referral within one working day of receipt.
- The DSL must record the decisions taken and reasons, together with the names of those involved in making those decisions. This record needs to be timed, dated and signed by all parties.

**It should always be remembered that** formal referrals from professionals cannot be treated as anonymous, and a parent/carer will ultimately become aware of the identity of the referrer.

## Concerns Identified or Reported out of Office Hours

- If a concern is identified or reported outside normal office hours, the DSL should contact the LSCB/MASH or local safeguarding arrangements emergency duty team or the local police station. Written confirmation of the referral should be sent to the LSCB/MASH or local safeguarding arrangements Referral and Assessment Team during the next working day.

## Action After Referral

- Following referral, the LSCB/MASH or local safeguarding arrangements or the Child Protection team should, within one working day, consider the next course of action, record their decision on a referral and information record and notify the DSL.

## Outcome of referral to LSCB/MASH or local safeguarding arrangements or subsequently to the Child Protection team:

The decision by LSCB or local safeguarding arrangements or Child Protection team will be either:

- No further action
- A recommendation for an 'Early Help' intervention
- The DSL should record the reasons for this decision and discuss who is best placed to inform the child, if age appropriate and/or parent/carer;
- A Social Worker to conduct an assessment (pursuant to s.17 of the Children Act 1989)
- This assessment may require further information from and discussion with the school. The outcome will be recorded on an assessment record;
- Strategy discussion/meeting - an immediate multi-agency strategy discussion should take place where the information clearly indicates that the child has suffered or is at risk of significant harm.

## Children's Services (Social Work) Assessment

The outcome of an initial assessment will be either:

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- No further action
- A recommendation for an 'Early Help' intervention
- The DSL should record the reasons for this decision and discuss who is best placed to inform the child, if age appropriate and/or parent/carer;
- The child is in need of additional services - this may require a 'CIN' plan in which education is likely to be asked to assist;
- A strategy discussion/meeting where the child has suffered or is believed to be at risk of significant harm.

## Strategy Discussion /Meeting

If a strategy discussion is required, it may take the form of a meeting or a series of telephone calls. This should be chaired by LSCB or local safeguarding arrangements, who will consider involving the following:

- Representative from the appropriate police child protection unit(s) (CPU);
- DSL and/or other member of staff with knowledge of child;
- Social worker for the child;
- Other authorities/agencies as appropriate in cross border cases;
- Other authorities/agencies as appropriate e.g., health.

The strategy discussion/meeting should consider:

- the information provided about the circumstances and context of the concern;
- whether any child or children is/are likely to be at risk;
- whether it is necessary to review any previous concerns;
- whether it is necessary to interview any child(ren), including ex-children of the school or any other schools;
- the response to the child's parents/carers and to the child (if age appropriate);
- appropriate support for the child and family.

The strategy discussion/meeting should decide whether there should be:

- enquiries by the LSCB or local safeguarding arrangements under authority of section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and in accordance with local child protection procedures;
- related police investigations into possible criminal offences;
- no further action.

If the strategy discussion/meeting concludes that there should be an investigation by police and/or the LSCB/MASH, or local safeguarding arrangements roles, timescales and dates for future meetings should be agreed and tasks allocated.

If the decision of the strategy discussion/meeting is that there should be no further action under child protection procedures, the concerns may be referred to alternative agencies, including the school, for consideration of providing services to the child and family as part of an 'Early Help' intervention.

Minutes of the strategy discussion/meeting should be given to those taking part either immediately or as soon as possible thereafter. The DSL and/or other member of staff involved in the discussion/meeting should make a note of any actions required by their education service/GEMS.

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## **Notification of Interested Persons**

The Police or a strategy discussion may decide that child protection enquiries or criminal investigation would be hindered by an approach to parties at an early stage or that certain information should not be divulged to them. The DSL should agree who is to be informed, by whom and what information should be given.

## **Notification of OFSTED**

The school will inform OFSTED as soon as is reasonably practicable but no later than 14 days, of any actual abuse or allegations of abuse on the premises

## **Action by Education Staff during Child Protection and/or Criminal Investigation**

- The LSCB/MASH or local safeguarding arrangements and/or the Police may ask for assistance, including the release of relevant information in order to assist their enquiries/investigation.
- Section 27 of the Children Act 1989 places a duty on schools to assist a borough exercising its duty to provide support and services to children in need.
- Section 47 places a duty on schools to assist boroughs making enquiries into cases of children believed to have suffered or be at risk of significant harm.
- The DSL should check that the MASH and/or Police have requested consent for the information to be shared when a request is received for any personal or sensitive information about the child, other children or members of staff.

Consent will not be needed where:

- it is likely to increase the risk of harm to a child or other person;
- consent is refused but the child welfare concerns override the duty of confidentiality;
- seeking consent is likely to impede a criminal investigation. The DSL should monitor the progress of the case, by seeking regular updates from the Police and/or the MASH .
- The DSL should keep a record of all information collected, decisions made and actions taken. This record will include minutes of any strategy discussions/meetings attended. It should be noted that all records may need to be disclosed under the rules on disclosure in criminal investigations.
- Where the DSL is unsure about the legality of sharing information with any agency, advice should be sought from the Head of Safeguarding who will provide advice or seek the relevant legal advice.

## **Challenging Responses to Concerns/Allegations**

If at any stage a member of staff believes that a child protection concern is not being dealt with properly, he/she should report their concerns to the DSL their deputy, or HR Advisor, and to challenge the response given to those concerns if they remain unsatisfied.

## **Media**

Child protection issues, including allegations against staff, may attract local and/or national media attention, depending on the seriousness of the matter or particular issues of interest at the time. This needs to be managed in a sensitive manner in order to minimise any distress to those involved.

Where a matter has attracted or is likely to attract media attention advice must be sought from the Proprietor, who will consult with the borough press office and other agencies as appropriate e.g., the

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Police, the MASH, etc. No staff member may make an informal or formal response to a media enquiry without the express permission of the Proprietor.

## Record Keeping

It is essential that accurate records are kept where there are any concerns about the welfare of a child (eg referrals, conference minutes, reports). These must be kept securely and separately from a child's educational records. These are exempted from the list of records which are available for examination by parents or children, unless subject to a Court order [*but see below - 'It should be noted that: ...'*].

Staff must keep the Head Teacher informed of:

- poor attendance and punctuality;
- concerns about appearance and dress;
- marked changes in, or unusual behaviour;
- concerns about health and emotional wellbeing;
- deterioration in educational progress;
- discussions with parents about concerns relating to their child;
- concerns about home conditions or situation;
- concerns about child on child abuse (including bullying);
- concerns such as unknown adult(s) meeting a child regularly after school, or issues raised by a child about involvement in illegal drug use, crime or street gangs.

This recording system must be regularly maintained by the DSL and when a child moves to a new school the records must be sent under separate cover to the appropriate DSL. Photocopies of the records may be retained until receipt is confirmed by the child's new school.

All information written about children, or allegations made by children, must be kept to objective comments, verbatim accounts and factual information.

## Keeping Parents/Carers Informed

The Children Act 1989 (2004) and Human Rights Act 1998 have changed the way referrals to the LSCB/MASH are made. Parents/carers now have a right to know that their child is being referred, unless it is reasonable to assume that this will place the child, or a member of staff, in danger or lead to the destruction of evidence.

Parents/carers or a guardian may bring an action for damages against a borough on behalf of a child/young person. The child when an adult may also do this in their own right, within three years of the injury coming to their attention, or longer if a court grants leave. Child records must therefore be kept for nine years after the child has left the education setting.

Data protection legislation gives parents/carers and former children the right to see their school records. Although child protection information is exempt from this requirement, if a parent/carer or former child

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asked to see notes registering any child protection concerns, it is likely that a borough would be obliged to show them, unless to do so would cause individual harm to the parent/carer or former child, except where the case had involved a criminal prosecution, care order or other legal prohibition.

Although this may raise concerns about issues being raised again years after they appear to have been dealt with, it is fair to say that in most instances of good practice, where concerns have been investigated and properly addressed at the time, it is unlikely that they will be revisited years later, unless the child, when an adult, feels that the response was inadequate, biased or unfair.

The following sections focus on:

- 'Identifying Abuse' Section II,
- 'Specific Types of Abuse' Section III

## Section II - Identifying Abuse

### Definition

**Child abuse** can be defined as harm intended, inflicted or knowingly not prevented on a person under the age of 18 years by another in a position of power in relation to that child or young person. This power may be in the form of physical strength, age, status or authority. It can happen to any child regardless of their age, gender, race, religion or ability.

**Children are most commonly abused by someone known to them or close to them** within a relationship of trust, responsibility or authority such as a relative, neighbour, family friend, teacher, group leader, peer group member or acquaintance. They may then be placed under considerable pressure not to reveal what has been happening and may feel guilty and responsible for their involvement.

**Looked After Children** may be at particular risk, both in terms of their life experiences and vulnerability and in the difficulties, they may have in recognising, or alerting people to, forms of abuse occurring in their lives. These children and young people require vigilance and staff must be alert to behaviour that is 'unusual' or a warning sign for any child, such as self-harm, absconding, repeated illness or non-attendance. It is essential that staff do not allow the fact that the child is Looked After to be an excuse for non-action.

Staff must also be aware that:

- it is not their responsibility to investigate suspected cases of abuse;
- any action they take must be in line with the child protection procedures;
- they cannot promise a child complete confidentiality – it must be explained that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe.

***NB: when dealing with child protection issues the word 'disclosure' is often used inappropriately. Always remember that any child protection issue reported by a child or young person remains an allegation or concern until it is substantiated***

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## Grave concern/At risk

This is not a distinct category but is dealt with separately. It covers a number of situations where a child may be vulnerable and at risk; children whose situations do not currently fit the above categories but where social and medical assessments indicate that they are at serious risk of abuse. Grave concern may be felt where a child shows symptoms of stress and distress and any of the following circumstances may apply:

- there is a known abuser in the family;
- another child in the family is known to have been abused;
- there is an adult in the family with a history of violent behaviour;
- the parents are involved with pornography to an unusual degree;
- the child is exposed to potential risk or exploitation via the Internet e.g pornographic material or chat rooms.

*It is important to remember that a child or young person may experience more than one type of abuse, from more than one person who is abusing them and that any act of abuse may encompass more than one of the above categories.*

## Section III - Specific Types of Abuse

Types of abuse and neglect are defined as:

**Abuse:** 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.

### Physical abuse:

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

### Emotional abuse:

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.

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## Sexual abuse

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 (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 often 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.

## Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Staff should be alert to the more specific types of abuse that exist and which may provide an explanation for any signs and symptoms that give rise to concerns.

## Abusive images of children & information communication technology (ICT)

The internet has become a significant means of distributing abusive images of children and as technology develops, the internet and its range of content services can be accessed through various devices; There is a growing concern that children may be abused through:

- Taking, downloading and/or distribution of images of abuse of child/ren;
- Allowing /encouraging a child to have exposure to inappropriate material via ICT e.g. adult pornography and/or extreme forms of obscene material;
- Children engaging in text bullying and use of mobile camera phones to capture violent assaults of other children/young people for circulation;
- Images of abuse of children may be found in the possession of those who use them for personal use or distributed to children as part of the grooming process;
- Internet chat rooms, discussion forums and bulletin boards are used as a means of contacting children with a view to grooming them for inappropriate/abusive relationships. Subsequent communication may be via email, text message, instant messaging or mobile phone;
- For the purposes of child protection, potentially abusive images of children can be divided into:
  - Unlawful material;
  - Material, which although lawful, would give cause for concern and indicate that the person possessing it may pose a risk to children.

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## Unlawful material

- An abusive image of a child under the age of 18 years old includes images in photographs, films, negatives, video tape, data stored on computers that can be converted into a photograph and 'pseudo-photographs' (images made by computers graphics, or other means, which appear to be a photograph). This also covers electronic images used by video phones and texting;
- It is for a court to decide what is 'indecent' by application of recognised standards of propriety;
- Possession of such material is an offence. Taking, showing or distributing such material amounts to a more serious offence.

## Lawful material

- Lawful material falls outside the above definition but may involve children in an indecent or sexual context. This could include pictures, cartoons, literature or sound recordings e.g. books, magazines, audio cassettes, tapes, CDs.
- The Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit (CAIU) can provide advice generally on matters of abusive images of children to other agencies.
- Abusive images involving children in an indecent or sexual context may be found in the possession of those who use them for personal use or distributed or used with children as part of the grooming process.

## Use of the Internet

The internet has become a significant tool in the distribution of abusive images of children, enabling ready access to such material. It may be downloaded and printed off in picture form or stored electronically on the hard drive of a computer, CD Rom, USB etc. Some adults use it to establish contact with children with a view to grooming them for inappropriate or abusive relationships. This may be accomplished through 'chat rooms' or contact by e-mail and may constitute an offence under The Sexual Offences Act 2003.

- Children may be encouraged to access abusive images of children themselves through using apparently innocent words in an internet search engine.
- As part of their role in preventing abuse and neglect, LSCBs or local safeguarding arrangements may offer activities to raise awareness about safe use of the internet and be a key partner in the development and delivery of training and education programmes with the Child Education and Online Protection Centre (CEOP). See [www.ceop.gov.uk](http://www.ceop.gov.uk)
- CEOP has also set up its own website which has been designed and written specifically for young people. It contains games and up to date information on having fun, staying in control and being safer online as well as details on how to report problems. See [www.ceop.gov.uk/children\\_and\\_young\\_people.asp](http://www.ceop.gov.uk/children_and_young_people.asp).
- Staff should inform Police if they are aware that:
- a child has been the recipient of any suspicious contact through the internet or in receipt of pornographic material, as described above;

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- a person may be in possession of abusive images of children or have placed/accessed abusive images of children on the internet;
- a child may have been inappropriately contacted or approached, directly or via the internet;
  - any individual involved in the creation, distribution or possession of abusive images of children may also be actively involved in their abuse. Police are expected to check whether anyone involved has access to children, including family and work settings, or is known to the LSCB or is known to the MASH;
  - a strategy discussion must be held whenever it is suspected a parent or carer of children or someone with access to children in other contexts:
- is in possession of child abusive images of children; and/or has taken, shown or distributed child abusive images of children; and/or has used the internet to make inappropriate approaches to children.

*For full details and guidance please read GEMS E-Safety Policy*

## **Non compliance in child protection/violence towards staff**

- A feature in some serious case reviews has been the lack of co-operation and/or hostile attitude of parents/carers towards professionals. When there are child welfare or protection issues, a failure to engage with the family may have serious implications and non-intervention is not an option. This can lead to difficulties for all professionals working with the various family members.
- In some instances there will be a known history of actual violence.
- Where non co-operation, hostility or violence is an issue, it is important to appreciate the significance for a child living in the family i.e., it will enhance the parent/carer's power and control and the child may fear reprisals if s/he were to speak to professionals.
- Workers may feel extremely vulnerable when visiting hostile families, especially those who challenge effectively and are perceived as a threat.
- Professionals may end up putting more effort into dealing with the resistance than addressing the real problems for the child/ren.
- It is good practice wherever possible:
  - to be clear from the outset about what is known about the family and parents/carers, so as to assess both risks and potential strategies;
  - to establish trust through active engagement, acknowledgement that the family may see things differently and demonstrating a respect for their views, whilst confronting inappropriate attitudes.
- Hostility and violence towards staff is a multi-agency issue, involving potential risks to staff of other agencies.
- If one agency has information that a parent/carer is known to be violent it has a responsibility to alert other agencies of the risks posed by that person.
- The LSCB/MASH or local safeguarding arrangements should then convene a multi-agency meeting to share strategic approaches across agencies in forming an action plan, in accordance with information sharing arrangements.
- All decisions and communications must be recorded clearly and shared.
- Where there are actual threats or incidents of violence the incidents must be reported immediately and local procedures followed for 'Violence at work' in relation to supervision, support, recording and reporting incidents to the Police.

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## Drug and Alcohol Using Parents

- Children of parents who abuse drugs or alcohol may be at risk of harm either directly, e.g access to dangerous substances, or from a lack of boundaries, parental warmth and support and discipline.
- 70% of children taken into care have parents who are suspected of substance abuse.
- Not all parents who misuse drugs or alcohol mistreat their children, however it is known that there is an increased risk of violence in families where parent/carers abuse substances and the children who are most vulnerable are those whose parents are violent, aggressive, neglectful or rejecting.
- Any concerns of this nature should be brought to the attention of the DSL and discussed with the LSCB/MASH or local safeguarding arrangements to decide whether a referral needs to be made.

## Fabricated or induced illness

- Fabricated or induced illness (FII) in a child is a condition whereby a child suffers harm through the deliberate action of her/his main carer and which is duplicitously attributed by the adult to another cause.
- There are 3 main and not mutually exclusive ways of the carer fabricating or inducing illness in a child:
  - Fabrication of signs and symptoms and fabrication of past medical history;
  - Fabrication of signs and symptoms and falsification of hospital charts, records, letters, documents and specimens of bodily fluids;
  - Induction of illness by a variety of means.
  - Harm to the child may be caused through unnecessary or invasive medical treatment, which may be harmful and possibly dangerous, based on symptoms that are falsely described or deliberately manufactured by the carer and lack independent corroboration.
  - The child may additionally suffer emotional harm through limitations placed on her/his development and social interaction e.g. overprotection, limitation of exploration and learning, prevention from participation.

## Parental control issues

- When children come to the attention of Police or others because of behaviour problems, this may indicate vulnerability, poor supervision or neglect.
- The Child Safety Order (CSO) is a compulsory intervention available below the significant harm threshold, designed to assist the child improve her/his behaviour and is likely to be used alongside other methods of intervention with the family. The borough can apply for a CSO where:
  - A child has committed an act which would have been an offence if s/he were aged 10 or above;
  - It is necessary to prevent such an act;
  - The child has caused harassment, distress or harm to others.
- A Parenting Order can be made alongside a CSO or when a CSO is breached. This is designed to engage with and support parents, whilst helping them to develop their ability to undertake parental responsibilities.
- Involvement of family members in prostitution does not necessarily mean children will suffer significant harm and the risks to the children in these circumstances come from the following potential sources:

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- Exposure of the child to unsuitable adults and sexual activity / materials, especially if the parent works from home;
- Being left alone whilst the parent is working;
- Being left with responsibility for younger siblings;
- Inconsistent care – e.g. if the parent is imprisoned;
- Factors associated with drug or alcohol misuse and/or mental health difficulty.

## Parental learning disability

- Parental 'Learning disabilities' or 'learning difficulties' refers to adults who are, or may become parents/carers for children and who meet the 3 core criteria which describe an individual as 'learning disabled' i.e.
  - Significant impairment of intellectual functioning;
  - Significant impairment of adaptive/social functioning, i.e., how an individual cope with every-day demands of community living;
  - Age of onset before adulthood: in order for an individual to be considered as 'learning disabled', impairment of intellectual adaptive/ social functioning usually needs to have been present before the age of 18 years.
- As with any parent, the ability of those who have a learning disability to provide a reasonable standard of care will depend on their own individual abilities, circumstances and the individual needs of the particular child.
- Learning disabled parents may also experience additional stressors e.g., having a disabled child, domestic violence, poor physical or mental health, substance misuse, social isolation, poor housing, poverty and a history of growing up in care. Such stressors, when combined with parental learning disability, are more likely to lead to concerns about the care of children.
- Parents with a learning disability may therefore need positive 'whole family' support to develop sufficient understanding, resources, skills and experience to meet the needs of their child.
- With effective, sustained support over time adjusted to meet the changing developmental needs of a growing family, learning disabled parents are potentially able to provide good enough care (see [www.scie.org.uk/publications/briefings/briefing14/](http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/briefings/briefing14/) or recent research cited at [www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/NorahFry/](http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/NorahFry/))
- Children of parents with learning disabilities may assume some level of responsibility of looking after their parent and/or siblings, one or more of whom may also be learning disabled.
- Individuals who may pose a risk to children sometimes target parents with learning disabilities. In these situations, the children could be vulnerable to neglect and/or other forms of abuse.

## Parental physical and sensory disability

- Though there is no evidence to suggest that physical or sensory disability should be a child protection issue, research does indicate that parents who have such impairments can experience great difficulty in performing a range of domestic and child care tasks.
- Individual/personal factors, levels of support from family, poverty and the degree of social exclusion all impact upon an individual's ability to offer 'good enough' parenting.

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- If a disabled parent cannot fulfil their role as parent to their own and others' satisfaction, it may affect their self-esteem and self image and in turn generate feelings of anxiety, frustration and guilt.
- Impact has been observed on a child/ren's growth, development, behaviour and/or mental/physical health, including alcohol/substance misuse and self-harming behaviour.
- For further practical guidance, see: SCIE's briefing paper number 13 February 2005 '[Helping parents with a physical or sensory impairment in their role as parents](http://www.scie.org.uk)' ([www.scie.org.uk](http://www.scie.org.uk))

## Self harm

- Self-harm, self-mutilation, eating disorders, suicide threats and gestures by a child must always be taken seriously and may be indicative of a serious mental or emotional disturbance.
- The possibility that self-harm, including a serious eating disorder, has been caused or triggered by any form of abuse or chronic neglect should not be overlooked.
- This may justify a referral to the MASH for an assessment as a child in need and/or in need of protection. A staff member who is in doubt about the required response should seek advice from the DSL.
- Consideration must also be given to protect children who engage in high risk behaviour which may cause serious self-injury such as drug or substance misuse, running away, partaking in daring behaviour such as running in front of cars etc, all of which may indicate underlying behavioural or emotional difficulties or abuse.

It is good practice, when a child or young person is known to have either made a suicide attempt or been involved in self harming behaviour, to undertake a multi-disciplinary risk assessment, along with an assessment of need.

## Social exclusion

Many families are multiply disadvantaged and face chronic poverty and social isolation. Additionally, they may experience problems associated with living in disadvantaged areas, e.g high crime rates and poor services, as well as limited employment opportunities. Many may lack a wage earner. Racism and Racial Harassment may provide further stress to families in these circumstances.

Poverty may mean the child/children live in overcrowded or unsuitable accommodation, have poor diets, health problems or a disability, are vulnerable to accidents and may lack ready access to educational and leisure facilities.

Children may be indirectly affected through the association of this social exclusion with parental depression, learning disability and long-term health problems.

Referrals to the LSCB/MASH should be made if the cumulative impact of the child's circumstances indicates that she/he is a child in need or is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm.

## Temporary accommodation and transient lifestyles

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Placement in temporary accommodation, often at a distance from previous support networks, can lead to individuals and families becoming disengaged from services and support systems.

Families who have experienced homelessness and are placed in temporary accommodation by boroughs may have very transient lifestyles.

Families in which children are harmed may move home frequently and avoid contact with caring agencies, so that no single agency has a complete picture of the family.

Along with other indicators of potential risk, the following circumstances associated with some mobile families are a cause for concern:

- Child/Children not consistently registered with a GP;
- Child/Children attending hospital Emergency Departments frequently for treatment, rather than engaging with primary health services;
- Child/Children missing from a school roll, or persistently not attending;
- Information 'patch worked' across a network of agencies with no single agency holding the whole picture of a family history.
- Where there are outstanding child welfare concerns, unusual extended non-school attendance may indicate that the family has moved out of the area.

## Young Carers

A 'young carer' is an individual aged under 18 who has a responsibility for providing primary or secondary care on a regular basis for a relative, often a single parent, or very occasionally a friend, whose needs may arise from:

- Physical or sensory disability;
- Learning disability or mental health related difficulty;
- Chronic or terminal illness;
- Misuse of drugs or alcohol.

Young carers are frequently involved in shopping, cooking, cleaning, ironing, washing clothes, budgeting the household income and nursing responsibilities including provision of intimate personal care, administering medications, as well as providing emotional support.

This situation often leads the young person's needs being overlooked and may on occasions give rise to abusive experiences, which a young carer maybe reluctant to address for fear of intervention and breakup of the relationship.

If there is any concern that a young carer is at serious risk of neglect, abuse or harm, this must be referred to the LSCB or MASH and if appropriate, a strategy discussion held.

## Useful Websites and Source Materials for further information

- Safeguarding Children Board websites:
  - London - [www.londoncouncils.gov.uk](http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk)
  - Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre (CEOP) [www.ceop.gov.uk](http://www.ceop.gov.uk)
- HM Government: multi-agency practice Guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation.
- 'Safeguarding Children Involved in Prostitution' - May 2000 DoH

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- The HBV network [www.karmanirvana.org.uk](http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk)
- Internet Watch Foundation [www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk) invites users to report illegal Web sites New Web site from the Information Commissioner
- GDP
- Internet proficiency through online games for KS2, with a free teacher's pack
- ThinkuKnow.co.uk
- Parentzone.org.uk
- CEOP has also set up its own website which has been designed and written specifically for young people. It contains games and up to date information on having fun, staying in control and being safer online as well as details on how to report problems [www.ceop.gov.uk/children\\_and\\_young\\_people.asp](http://www.ceop.gov.uk/children_and_young_people.asp).

## Part Three: Safer Recruitment (Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure)

### Introduction

For GEMS, the welfare of children is paramount. To this end we operate a safer recruitment procedure which is detailed below.

### Staff selection criteria

Our selection criteria are based on the following:

1. Experience
2. Knowledge
3. Skills and Ability
4. Personality/Social Skills
5. Other factors relevant to the specific position

### Permanent Staff Recruitment Procedure

#### Stage 1 Recruitment Preparation

##### 1. Planning

The Head Teacher should complete a recruitment request form with details for the role requesting to be filled, and once it is authorised, collaborate with the HR department to decide a timetable for the recruitment process of the role required. The job description, person specification and other documents to be sent to applicants should be reviewed and updated as necessary. It should be ensured that the application form seeks all relevant information and includes relevant statements about references etc. The application form should also include the disclosure of any criminal convictions and a question relating to whether the candidate currently has a DBS disclosure.

##### 2. Vacancy Advertisement - *Adverts*

Any adverts to be placed should be sent to the HR department, where it will be put into our standard format and published on nominated websites, or through papers. The standard format includes the statement of commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and a statement to say full references and an Enhanced DBS Disclosure will be carried out on the successful applicant.

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*Agencies* - If the role is to be advertised through agencies, then those suitable agencies on the approved agency list will be contacted by the HR department and provided with the timetable, job description and person specification and asked to source suitable candidates.

## 3. Applications on receipt

All applications should be scrutinised with any anomalies or gaps in employment noted to explore if the candidate is considered for the short-list.

## 4. Once all the applications have been scrutinised a short-list should be drawn up of the most suitable candidates

### Stage 2 Pre- Interview & Interview

#### 1. Seeking References

References should be sought directly from the referees of all the short-listed candidates. Specific questions should be asked which are covered in the GEMS reference form. A statement about the liability for accuracy should be included on all outgoing requests.

#### 2. Receipt of References

Each reference should be checked against the information provided on the application form and scrutinised. Any discrepancy, issue or concern should be noted and taken up with the applicant at interview (if possible).

#### 3. Interview arrangements

A panel of interviewers should be arranged with available times and dates agreed. The panel should consist of at least two people who have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training and the authority to appoint and for more senior roles the panel should consist of 3-4 people. The panel should meet before the interviews and agree the interview format, issues and questions, assessment criteria and standards.

#### 4. Invitation to Interview

Once the available times have been set, candidates should be contacted to arrange a mutually suitable time for interview. Once this is agreed an interview pack should be sent to the candidate. This pack should include

- An invitation to interview including the list of documents to bring
- The list of ID specifying that 3 forms of ID are required with at least 1 of; photographic ID, proof of Date of Birth and proof of address (dated within the last 3 months)
- Job description and person specification
- Details on the company and specific site
- A map and directions of how to get to the interview location
- Policy on employment of ex-offenders
- Policy on Diversity and Equal Opportunities

#### 5. Interview

At the start of the interview the identity and qualifications of the candidates should be verified by scrutiny of the appropriate original documents. Copies of the original documents should be taken and placed on file. The interview should explore the candidate's suitability for working with children as well as their suitability for the post. GEMS has a two-section interview with the first stage being standard questions regarding suitability of the candidate to work with children and young people. This section specifies that the application form should be scrutinised as a check for gaps in employment and any gaps should have the reason for them written on the form including any breaks for raising a family. The first part of Section 1 asks the candidate to confirm that they are

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physically and mentally fit to perform the role, and to confirm that they are able to fully understand all questions put to them in the interview process both verbally and in written form, or if there is anything that would affect their ability to do so.

It also informs them that they will be required to complete a medical questionnaire and may be required to complete a medical examination with a Medical Professional if successful. Another question asks for confirmation that the candidate has understood the need for disclosing any criminal history and the full list of possible sanctions must be read out and the candidate asked to confirm that they have understood the list and have disclosed anything on the list. It is at this stage that any previous convictions, cautions, reprimands, warning, police arrests or Schedule 5 notices including those with no further action taken. It is the GEMS policy that any non-disclosure at interview of any such information as a potential case of gross misconduct and may lead to the termination of the contract of employment at a later date. A further question asks if there is any other information that the candidate should disclose which could affect the candidate's employment or reflect badly on the company. It is the GEMS policy that any non-disclosure at interview of any such information as a potential case of gross misconduct and may lead to the termination of the contract of employment at a later date.

If appropriate after the interview the candidate should be asked for details to enable to HR department to carry out a DBS disclosure application.

The second part of the Interview consists of skill-based questions specific to the role and separate tasks such as a literacy and numeracy test or written question on curriculum or finances may be set depending on the role.

Finally, a confirmation of outcome form is completed with feedback from the interview, confirmation of whether the candidate was successful or not, and if so the starting salary to be offered.

## Stage 3 post Interview

### 1. Conditional offer of employment

The Recruiting Manager should inform the HR department as soon as a decision is reached on the candidate and should send over the interview documentation. The HR department will then make a conditional offer of employment to the suitable candidate following discussions with the recruiting manager and receipt of the interview summary sheet. The offer of appointment is made conditional on the satisfactory completion of the following pre-appointment checks and should be tailored specifically according to which checks are outstanding.

- References – Should be obtained and scrutinised as quickly as possible if not obtained before the interview
- Identity -Three forms of ID should be verified in person if not verified at interview, and should include photographic ID, proof of date of birth and proof of address as required for a DBS disclosure application. Any queries on this should be directed to the HR department.
- Qualifications -Any required qualifications should be verified by original certificates if not verified at interview.
- Permission to work in the UK– Proof of permission to work in the UK should be sort from non-EEA (European Economic Area) candidates. See Appendix A. Any queries on acceptable proof of permission to work in the UK should be directed to the HR department.
- DBS Disclosure – A satisfactory Enhanced DBS disclosure should be received for all those working directly with children. The guidance states that If the candidate's worked in a

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school in England within the last 3 months they can start work providing all other checks are complete and that the candidate is appropriately supervised, however it is the policy that GEMS will only employ a permanent employee once a GEMS DBS has been received, or if the candidate is on the update service and a GEMS DBS has been applied for

- Children's barred list – previously List 99– A check will be carried out by the HR department to ensure the candidate is not prohibited from taking up the post. This will be printed and filed. The Children's Barred list will be checked as part of an Enhanced DBS disclosure.
- Prohibition from Teaching - For candidates applying for a teaching post, including head teacher, or to be a member of proprietor body and is not in regulated activity, a check through the NCTL Secure Access for teachers or others who have been prohibited from teaching is carried out.
- Prohibition from work in Education - All candidates are checked to ensure they are not prohibited from working in education by carrying out a check of the Gov.uk website
- S128 Directive - All staff appointed to work in a management role are checked to ensure there is not a S128 directive against them. This is done by carrying out a DBS with a barred list and by checking the NCTL secure Access site as per the 'Prohibition from management of independent schools: checking for directions' guidance from the DfE
- Declaration of Association - All staff are asked to sign a declaration of Association where they confirm that to the best of their knowledge, they do not reside with anyone who has been convicted or accused of any safeguarding offences or concerns and that should this change, they will notify GEMS immediately.
- Health– The medical questionnaire - Application form appendix A, will be completed by any successful applicants and will be scrutinised to ensure the candidate is medically fit for the post.
- QTS– As an independent School GEMS does not have to employ only teachers with QTS or QTLS, however all qualifications of teachers should be checked, and those with QTS are checked on the NCTL Secure Access database as a confirmation of these qualifications.
- Statutory induction -Evidence of this should be shown by teachers who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999 and is checked against the NCTL Secure Access site
- A suitable overseas check is carried out on those candidates that have lived overseas as deemed necessary by a risk assessment which must be carried out by the HR department

## 2. Induction

All new staff should have an induction plan that covers, in the first instance Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Child Protection, Behaviour Management, Confidentiality and the Emergency Reporting Structure.

The full induction should be carried out over a number of weeks and should include full training and CPD plans.

## Temporary Staff Recruitment Procedures

### Stage 1 Choosing Candidates

#### 1. Planning

The Head Teacher should collaborate with the HR department to confirm that the role is in the budget and then to decide a timetable for the recruitment process of the role required. The job description, person specification and other documents to be sent to applicants/agencies should be reviewed and updated as necessary.

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2. Vacancy Advertisement  
The role is advertised online.
3. CVs on receipt  
All CVs received should be scrutinised with any anomalies or gaps in employment noted to explore if the candidate is considered for the short-list. *If the post is urgent then as much information as possible should be found out on the possible candidates.*
4. Once all the applications have been scrutinised a short-list should be drawn up of the most suitable candidates

## Stage 2 Pre- Interview & Interview

1. Interview arrangements  
A panel of interviewers should be arranged with available times and dates agreed. The panel should consist of at least two people who have undertaken the Safer Recruitment training and have the authority to appoint and for more senior roles should consist of 3-4 people. The panel should meet before the interviews and agree the interview format, issues and questions, assessment criteria and standards.
2. Invitation to Interview  
Once the available times have been set, each candidate should be contacted by HR to arrange a mutually suitable time for interview. The candidates must bring as a minimum, photographic ID with them.
3. Interview  
At the start of the interview the identity and qualifications of the candidates should be verified by scrutiny of the appropriate original documents. Copies of the original documents should be taken and placed on file. The interview should explore the candidate's suitability for working with children as well as their suitability for the post.

## Stage 3 Post Interview

1. Conditional offer of temporary employment  
The Head Teacher should inform HR as soon as a decision is reached on the candidate. The HR will confirm all the relevant vetting checks have been completed on the worker. No temporary worker involved with children can start work until this form is complete and authorised by Central Services. This vetting covers all the same checks as expected on a permanent member of staff.
2. Upon arrival of the chosen candidate on their first day, their photographic should be checked. Each candidate should have an induction that covers Health and Safety, Child Protection, Behaviour Management, Confidentiality and the Emergency Reporting Structure.

### Disability Equality Scheme

In reviewing this policy, we have taken into account consideration of any potential implications of the Disability Equality Scheme.

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## **Appendix 1 Key Contacts**

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

- Eugenie Harvey, Head Teacher

### **Deputy DSL**

- Kyriaki Eleftheriadou, HR Manager

**Royal Borough of Greenwich LADO: 020 8921 3930**

**Royal Borough of Greenwich MASH: 020 8921 3172**

### **CHILDLINE: 0800 11 11**

This contact number is displayed prominently in a number of locations within the school for easy access for our children. A private telephone will be made available for any child who requests to call Childline.

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## Appendix 2 Safeguarding Policy and Procedures - FLOW CHART

*Procedure to follow when you have reason to suspect that a child or young person is suffering, or likely to suffer, some form of significant harm, or when an allegation of abuse has been made:*

You must inform the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy(s) or the Deputy safeguarding Lead in their absence (see above) immediately and seek their guidance. You must make direct contact with one of the above options – leaving messages is not acceptable.

If at any time a pupil gives you information about being harmed, or the prospect of being harmed, you must tell them that the information he or she has given to you will have to be shared with more Senior members of staff and **cannot be kept confidential**. They are likely to need your support with this.

**Record immediately** what the pupil has said and in their own words. If possible, this should be with another suitable adult present, but NOT the person against whom an allegation has been made. Listen carefully, do not ask leading or probing questions but allow them to be clear over what has happened.

The School DSLs (above) MUST:

- **Immediately contact Immediately contact** Eugenie Harvey, GEMS Safeguarding Lead **and state urgent CP matter**.

Following discussion with the above and if agreed, contact the appropriate Local Safeguarding Children's Board or local safeguarding arrangements.

- Allegation regarding external person/**persons**: (non-GEMS) contact the social care department in the borough where the child resides.
- Allegation regarding GEMS staff: contact the LSCB or local safeguarding arrangements in the borough where the school is based.
- Agree with LSCB or local safeguarding arrangements the contacting of parents

Contact the Local Authority SEN Officer

If the allegation is against a head teacher please contact Philip Onwuachi, School Proprietor. If the allegation is against the Schools Proprietor, please contact your local LADO

The School DSLs (above) must provide the following notifications within the timescales given below:

- A written report to **the LSCB** local safeguarding arrangements and the **CWSL** at the earliest opportunity on the day of the allegation.
- It is a statutory duty to inform the **Secretary of State** and **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)** within one month of the person leaving the school if a person ceases to work for the school and there are grounds for believing **she/he** may be unsuitable to work with children or may have committed serious misconduct.

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**Remember:** If at any time you have concerns about a pupil, and especially if you suspect that they are suffering, or likely to suffer, some form of significant harm, **you must tell the School DSL named above immediately and record your concerns clearly and in writing.** Not to do so would be considered a disciplinary offence.

***Please note carefully:*** Any allegation of child abuse against any member of GEMS staff, including an allegation against yourself, **must be treated with the utmost seriousness and passed immediately to a DSL**

Any allegation made against a member of staff, irrespective of the outcome, will automatically result in the member of staff attending a support meeting with the HR Manager and/ or Schools Proprietor.

## Appendix 3 Guidelines on Safe Working Practice

The following guidelines are provided as examples of both good and bad practice that occur. Staff are encouraged to read the guidelines and to discuss with senior staff, colleagues, children and others as a means of raising awareness in safeguarding matters and encouraging staff and child involvement in the development and understanding of safe ways of working. You may wish to develop these guidelines together and add examples of your own, to be shared with others as this is clearly not an exhaustive list.

### Examples of Good Practice

All staff are expected to adhere to the following principles and actions:

- Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets);
- promote fairness, confront and deal with bullying;
- Treat all children and young people equally and with respect and dignity;
- Recognise their developmental needs and capacity of each child/young person;
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism;
- Always put the welfare of the child first, the child's welfare being paramount;
- Be acutely aware of the power that a staff member develops with children and avoid any intimacy (sexual or otherwise);
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with children. Where any form of physical contact or support is required it should be provided openly and with the consent of the child;
- If you accidentally hurt a child or young person, he/she seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions and/or if the child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incidents as soon as possible to another colleague and keep a written record. Parents/carers should also be informed of the incident;
- Gain written parental/carers consent for any significant travel arrangements such as education outings;
- Be an excellent role model. This includes not smoking in the company of children/ young people and reasonable standards of behaviour in respect of discussing alcohol or recreational drugs use.

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## Examples of Poor Practice

The following are regarded as examples of poor practice and are to be avoided:

- unnecessarily spending time alone with a child/young person away from others;
- taking a child/young person alone in a car on journeys, however short;
- taking a child/children to a staff member's home;
- Giving a child/children a staff member's home phone number;
- allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form;
- allowing children/young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- making sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun;
- reducing a child to tears as a form of control;
- allowing allegations made by a child/young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon;
- using personal phones to make calls to parents/carers/children/young people
- Taking photos or other media of children/young people on personal equipment including camera phones
- where it is impractical/impossible to avoid certain situations, e.g. transporting a child in your car, this should be done with the full understanding and consent of the parent/carer and the child/young person involved. The reasons for it should be documented and made available to the relevant people concerned.

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse. It is therefore NOT the responsibility of staff or others to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place. It is, however, their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse, and to act if they have concerns about the welfare of the child/children.

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## Introduction

Given the nature of the work within GEMS and the daily contact with children and young people staff are vulnerable to accusations of abuse by both children and parents/carers. Allegations may be false, malicious or simply misplaced. They may also be well-founded. No groups of people are exempt from being abusers or from being abused.

For all staff, the most important consideration is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people with whom you come into contact. Any allegations of abuse must be taken seriously. It is important to remember that the best interests of the child or young person - and the need for the abuse to stop - come before the interests of GEMS, the school or education project or a potential abuser.

## Abuse of Trust

We know that some people seek access to children in order to abuse, and that abused children very often do not disclose the abuse at the time. We also know that some of the allegations of abuse made against staff are substantiated, and there continue to be a number of cases every year in which teachers and other staff are convicted of criminal offences involving the abuse of children.

### All staff need to know that:

Inappropriate behaviour with or towards children is unacceptable. This includes:

- any form of sexual conduct, including sexually suggestive comments;
- engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games;
- giving children inappropriate drugs or other inappropriate substances;
- lending or borrowing of money or property;
- giving or receiving gifts;
- exclusive or secretive relationships;
- giving of home numbers/personal mobile numbers or home address details to children;
- taking children/project users to a staff member's home
- it is an offence for a person over 18, such as a teacher/TA, to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of the child, even if the relationship is consensual and even if they do not work directly with them [Sexual Offences Act 2003];
- others who work with children and young people, such as drivers or workplace supervisors, are also expected to maintain standards of conduct comparable to those prescribed for colleagues in paid employment.

Staff should also refer to their code of conduct for further guidance on safer working practice.

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## Procedures

### Action by Person to whom a Concern or Allegation is Reported

All allegations or suspicions of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect by staff, including the adoption of restraint, other than permitted by law with GEMS policy, will be considered in line with the responsibilities of employers pursuant to Chapter 7 of the London Child Protection Procedures (LCPP).

### As with any other welfare concern, the first priority is to:

- establish whether the child is in need of medical attention and/or protection;
- If urgent action is required, medical assistance will be obtained if needed/an immediate referral made to the LSCB/MASH where necessary.
- A referral to LADO will then need to be considered in line with the thresholds outlined within Chapter 7 of the LCPP and the 'Allegations Against Staff' process above.

### Any member of staff receiving details of a suspicion or allegation should:

- act with tact and care (always remembering to keep an open mind);
- listen and treat the concern seriously;
- communicate as appropriate to the age, understanding and any communication or language difficulties of the child/person reporting;
- avoid leading questions;
- avoid expressions of sympathy that may pre-judge issues of potential abuse;
- avoid any promise of confidentiality, but reassure the child/person reporting the concern that information will only be passed to those who 'need to know';
- be aware that the way in which they talk to a child can have an effect on the evidence which is put forward if there are subsequent criminal proceedings.

### Managing the Process

The person receiving the concern or allegation **should not**:

- interrupt the child/person reporting when he/she is recalling significant events;
- make assumptions or interpretations;
- make suggestions or offer alternative explanations. This could be construed as prejudging, 'coaching' or acting to defend a colleague;
- use leading questions e.g 'Did they do .... to you?' Use open questions only, such as 'What happened?' and 'Is there anything else you want to tell me?'

**DO NOT** attempt to investigate any allegation or suspicion of abusive behaviour yourself but assure the child/person reporting it to you that what they have said to you will be passed on to someone whose job it is to deal with it.

The person receiving the concern or allegation **should**:

- make a written record of the information (if applicable, in the child's own words), including the time, date and place of incident(s), persons present and what was said;
- sign and date the written record;

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- if any personal views are expressed about the information given, these must be recorded separately and clearly identified as such, signed and dated;
- report the matter immediately to the School's DSL or their deputy;
- if the concern/allegation is against the DSL, report the matter to their deputy and the proprietor
- If the concern/allegation is against the Proprietor, the Head Teacher should contact the LADO directly and seek advice.

## **Initial Action by the Head Teacher or their deputy**

On being informed of the concern/allegation, the DSL should:

- obtain written details of the concern/allegation, signed and dated by the person receiving (not the child/person making the allegation) and being careful to differentiate between fact, supposition and feeling;
- countersign and date the written details;
- record any information about times, dates and location of incident(s) and names of any potential witnesses;
- record any discussions about the child and/or member of staff, decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions.

## **The Head Teacher or their deputy should not interview the member of staff, child or any potential witnesses.**

- No attempt should be made to investigate an allegation as inappropriate questioning could jeopardise a child protection or criminal investigation.
- Advice should be sought from the CWSL, who may seek further advice from the LSCB or local safeguarding arrangements if there is any doubt.

## **In the event of an allegation being received outside normal office hours:**

- the Head Teacher should consult with Children's Social Care Emergency Duty Team or the local Police. Written confirmation of a referral should be sent to the LADO/MASH on the next working day.

## **Trivial Allegations**

- The Head Teacher will need to use their professional judgment to identify at the outset an allegation which is trivial in nature.
- It will then be appropriate for it to be dealt with at that level.
- It is important to record the reasons for this judgment and how the matter was dealt with, including notifications to parents/carers.
- The Head of Safeguarding should be contacted if there is any doubt, and in all cases a written record must be made of the incident within 1 working day.

## **Initial Consideration**

- The Head Teacher and the Head of Safeguarding should conduct an urgent initial consideration of the information available in order to decide on the most appropriate

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course of action. This is to include a risk assessment in conjunction with Human Resources to inform whether any interim measures are required to manage risk.

- If threshold for LADO consultation/referral is required in line with Ch.7 LCPP, advice should be sought from the LADO.

## Referral to the LADO

- Where the Head Teacher and the Proprietor/ Head of Safeguarding decide that the allegation needs to be referred in line with statutory procedures, a telephone call should be made to the LADO at the earliest opportunity (but within a maximum of 24 hours)
- The referral should be confirmed in writing at the earliest opportunity following the consultation with the LADO
- The LADO should acknowledge the written referral within one working day of receipt.
- The LADO should therefore be contacted if no acknowledgement has been received within 3 days of the original referral.

## Notification of Interested Persons

- At a strategy meeting/discussion or LADO ASV meeting/consultation, agencies may decide that child protection enquiries or criminal investigations would be hindered by an approach to parties at an early stage or that certain information should not be divulged to them. The Head Teacher / Head of Safeguarding must therefore ensure that there is no objection by involved agencies before contacting any additional parties.
- Subject to there being no objection, the Head Teacher will inform the:
  - child and/or parent/carer making the allegation and explain the process
  - parent/carer of the child who is the alleged victim and explain the process
  - accused member of staff
- If the member of staff is employed through an agency, the safeguarding lead of the agency should be informed of the concern/allegation provided there is no objection from other agencies.
- Where agencies do object to any persons being notified, the Head Teacher and Head of Safeguarding should arrange with agencies to be informed as to when this can take place.

## Suspension

When an allegation against a member of staff is made, and deemed serious enough, the member of staff may be suspended without prejudice pending further enquiries during the initial consideration stages. During this time the member of staff will receive full pay and any company benefits they may be entitled to. During suspension any contact with children is prohibited and may lead to further disciplinary procedures. Contact with other employees must be arranged and authorised by HR department.

*For further details on the Disciplinary process please refer to the Disciplinary Proceedings section of this policy, or to the Disciplinary and Grievance policy.*

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## Record Keeping

The School DSL and the company wide safeguarding lead(s) keeps a written record of any decisions made, the reasons for those decisions and any action(s) taken, both formal and informal; records to be in the agreed company format and copied to Central Services within 1 working day.

## Action where Allegations are without Foundation (Demonstrably False)

Where an allegation is shown beyond doubt to be demonstrably false, e.g. where there are objective witnesses to say that an incident could not have occurred, or the person accused was not present at the time, or available CCTV evidences that the allegation is demonstrably false, the Head Teacher, in consultation with the Head of Safeguarding and Human Resources Manager, must:

- inform the member of staff orally and in writing of the allegation and that there is no cause for further action to be taken under disciplinary or child protection procedures. The member of staff may be accompanied by a trade union representative or friend
- consider whether support and/or informal professional advice to the member of staff is appropriate and how this might be provided
- inform the parents/carers of the child/ren of the allegation and the outcome in writing
- consider appropriate support for the child or children who made the allegation(s)
- consider the advisability or otherwise of the member of staff concerned having to work with that child again, and how that may be affected and supported
- In particular, consider what follow up action should be taken in regard to a person or child who has made an allegation that is shown to be false or is shown to have been made maliciously, this may include a referral of the child/family to MASH where safeguarding concerns are raised by the demonstrably false allegation
- where a person other than the alleged child victim has made the allegation, consider informing the parents/carers and child/ren and provide support as appropriate
- prepare a report giving reasons for concluding that the allegation is without foundation.

It will be the final decision of GEMS' Senior Management Team (SMT) as to whether any internal disciplinary investigation will be held in abeyance pending the completion of Police and Children's Social Care. This decision will be made in conjunction with advice from the LADO.

## Referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Regulated activity providers and personnel suppliers are required by law to refer a person to the DBS where they have:

- harmed a child or vulnerable adult (engaged in relevant conduct)
- pose a risk of harm to vulnerable groups including children (satisfied the harm test)
- received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence

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Referrals should not be made whilst a member of staff is suspended without prejudice pending an investigation as there would be no evidence at this point to support the thought that a person has engaged in relevant conduct or that the harm test as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, is satisfied.

- Any referral must be made by a member of the SMT by completing the DBS referral Form in consultation with the DBS referral Guidance. The completed and signed DBS Referral form and supporting evidence and documents should be posted to the ISA.
- The DBS will acknowledge the referral by return post within three working days of receipt
- The DBS will commence the decision-making process, and may request additional information or documents
- Following DBS consideration, if the DBS is 'minded to bar', the individual will be written to and provided with all the evidence, they will then be given 8 weeks to make representations to the DBS on why they should not be barred. Current employers and bodies or individuals with a registered interest in the individual concerned will be notified that the DBS is 'minded to bar'.
- Following representation, the individual and any parties with a registered interest in the individual will be notified of the ISA's decision. If the individual is barred it is an offence for that individual to work in regulated activity with the group(s) they are barred from, or for an individual to allow them to work with the relevant group(s).

## Learning the lessons

At the conclusion of any case in which an allegation is substantiated, the Head Teacher should review the circumstances of the case with the Head of Safeguarding, HR Advisor and the LADO (where relevant) to determine whether any improvements can be made to the School or GEMS's practice or procedures to help prevent similar occurrences in the future.

## 'Low Level Concerns'

Concerns may be graded 'low-level' if the concern does not meet the threshold for LADO oversight and the subject of the allegation has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. Example behaviours include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Reports about supply staff and contractors will be notified to their agency/employer, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Staff should be encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

Low-level concerns will be recorded in writing, including:

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- the name of individual sharing their concerns (if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then this will be respected as far as reasonably possible)
- details of the concern
- context in which the concern arose
- action taken

Records will be kept confidentially within the personnel file of the individual, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018.

Records may be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

The records' review might identify that there are wider cultural issues within the school or college that enabled the behaviour to occur. This might mean that policies or processes could be revised, or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of reoccurrence.

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## **Appendix 4 Outcomes of LADO Investigation Definitions**

### **Substantiated allegations**

There is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation that a child has been harmed or there is a risk of harm.

*If the facts of the incident are found to be true but it is not found that a child has been harmed or there is a risk of harm, then consideration should be given to deciding that the outcome is 'unsubstantiated' or 'unfounded'.*

### **Malicious**

There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive. The police should be asked to consider what action may be appropriate in these circumstances.

### **False allegations**

There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation, however, there is no evidence to suggest that there was an deliberate intention to deceive.

False allegations may be an indicator of abuse elsewhere which requires further exploration. If an allegation is demonstrably false, the employer, in consultation with the LADO, should refer the matter to LA children's social care to determine whether the child is in need of services, or might have been abused by someone else.

### **Unsubstantiated allegations**

There is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.

### **Unfounded**

The additional definition of 'unfounded' can be used to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made. It might also indicate that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw. Alternatively, they may not have been aware of all the circumstances.

### **References in cases where the allegation is false, unsubstantiated or malicious**

Cases in which an allegation was proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious should not be included in employer references. A history of repeated concerns or allegations which have all been found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious should also not be included in any reference.

### **Record keeping in relation to the outcome of an investigation**

Details of allegations that are found to have been malicious should be removed from personnel records. However, for all other allegations, it is important that a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a

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note of any action taken and decisions reached, is kept on the confidential personnel file of the accused, and a copy provided to the person concerned. The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference, where appropriate. It will provide clarification in cases where future DBS checks reveal information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction and it will help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time. The record should be retained at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

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## Appendix 5 Recruitment Procedure – Permission to work in the UK

Candidates need to be able to show a valid original of one of the following in order to work in the UK. This should be copied and filed

1. A passport showing the holder, or a person named in the passport as the child of the holder, is a British citizen or a citizen of the UK and Colonies having the right of abode in the UK.
2. A passport or national identity card showing the holder, or a person named in the passport as the child of the holder, is a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland.
3. A Registration Certificate or Document Certifying Permanent Residence issued by the Home Office to a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland.
4. A Permanent Residence Card issued by the Home Office to the family member of a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland.
5. A **current** Biometric Immigration Document (Biometric Residence Permit) issued by the Home Office to the holder indicating that the person named is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK, or has no time limit on their stay in the UK.
6. A **current** passport endorsed to show that the holder is exempt from immigration control, is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK, has the right of abode in the UK, or has no time limit on their stay in the UK.
7. A **current** Immigration Status Document issued by the Home Office to the holder with an endorsement indicating that the named person is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK, or has no time limit on their stay in the UK, **together with** an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.
8. A **full** birth or adoption certificate issued in the UK which includes the name(s) of at least one of the holder's parents or adoptive parents, **together with** an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.
9. A birth or adoption certificate issued in the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or Ireland, **together with** an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.
10. A certificate of registration or naturalization as a British citizen, **together with** an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.

### EEA Countries

Nationals of Gibraltar and of countries within the European Economic Area (EEA) do not need permission to take employment here and can be employed on the same basis as UK nationals. EEA countries are as follows:

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein,

# **GREENWICH ENGINEERING AND MEDICAL SCHOOL**

**31 Thomas Street, Woolwich, London SE18 6HU**

Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the UK. If you have any queries on permission to work in the UK, please contact the HR department.

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## Appendix 6 Forms used during the Recruitment Process

### RECRUITMENT REQUEST FORM

This form must be completed and authorised prior to any recruitment taking place. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken against the recruiter. Please complete all **bold** sections.

<b>Requested by: (name &amp; job title)</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
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<b>Is this role in the budget:</b>	YES / NO (please delete as appropriate)	<i>If no a business need case must be written and attached to this request</i>
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<b>Job Title:</b>		<b>Location:</b>	
<b>Type of Contract:</b> (please circle)	Permanent	Supply	Temp to perm Temp only <b>Duration required:</b>
<b>Type of role:</b> (please circle)	New	Replacement	<b>Name of person currently in role if applicable:</b>
<b>Justification – reason for vacancy</b>		<b>Salary:</b>	
<b>Required Start Date</b>		<b>Working hours</b> Full Time/Part Time (Please delete as appropriate)	
<b>Any additional information:</b>			
<b>Equipment required:</b>	IT:		

Recruitment request from Head Teacher/ SMT

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date

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Recruitment approved by HR

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

GEMS  
APPLICATION FORM

# GREENWICH ENGINEERING AND MEDICAL SCHOOL

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PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

You may wish to enclose/submit your CV, but please complete this application form in full.

## Section 1: PERSONAL DETAILS

1a. Position Applied For:  If applying for a teaching post, please provide your DfES number, and state whether you are QTS/QTLS registered: <b>DFES Number:</b> <b>QTS Registered: Yes/No</b> (Please delete as appropriate)	
1b. Are you interested in full time or part-time?  Full Time or Part Time	1c. Where did you see the position advertised?
2a. Current Surname:	2b. Mr Miss Mrs Ms other(please state)
2c. Forenames please include Middle names:	2d. Other Surnames held and dates used since birth:
3. Nationality 3a. Town of Birth:	4. Do you speak any other languages other than English:
5a. Do you require a visa or work permit to work in the UK? (if no, please provide reason) No 5b. If you currently hold a visa/work permit, when does it expire? 5c. Permission to apply for a Current Enhanced DBS Yes/NO  Please see 'Information to Bring to the Interview' as we need proof of all candidates eligibility to work in the UK.	

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<p>6a. Current Address:</p>   <p>6b. Post Code:</p> <p>Month/Year from:</p> <p>If less than five years please list all previous addresses:</p>   <p>Month/Year from:</p>	<p>If less than five years please list all previous addresses:</p>   <p>Month/Year from:</p> <p>6c. Home Tel No:</p> <p>6d. Mobile Tel No:</p> <p>6e. Work Tel No:</p>
<p>6f. E-mail address:</p>	<p>7. National Insurance Number:</p>
<p>8a. Next of Kin:</p> <p>8b. Relationship to you:</p> <p>8c. Address:</p> <p>8d. Post Code:</p> <p>8e. Telephone:</p>	<p>9a. Are you currently working?</p>       <p>9b. If yes does your contract allow you to work either full or part-time during term-time school hours?</p>
<p>10a. Would you consider work outside of your local area?</p> <p>10b. Nearest Tube Station/BR</p>	<p>10c. Do you have a current driving licence?</p> <p>10d. Do you have your own transport</p>

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## Section 2: EDUCATION

Please include details of all examinations which you have taken and the results you achieved listing the most recent first.

Name of Secondary School with start and finishing date	Qualification	Subject	Grade	Awarding Body	Date
Further Education (college/university) including addresses	Qualification	Subject	Grade	Awarding Body	Date

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Other Qualifications			Awarding Body	Date

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## Section 3: WORK HISTORY SINCE LEAVING SCHOOL / COLLEGE

Please provide a full history, in chronological order, since leaving secondary education.

You should include periods of post-secondary education and training, part time or full time voluntary work, as well as full time employment.

You must also include an explanation for periods when you were not in employment, education or training.

### **CURRENT WORK SITUATION / PAID OR VOLUNTARY WORK:**

From (mm/yy)	To (mm/yy)	Full or part time	Employer	Address	Position and nature of Work	Reasons for leaving

### **PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE / VOLUNTARY WORK: (Please list the most recent first)**

From (mm/yy)	To (mm/yy)	Full or part time	Employer	Address	Position and nature of Work	Reasons for leaving

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Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary

## **Section 4: SUPPORTING STATEMENT**

Please review the person specification and job description. Record below details of any personal qualities and relevant skills, experience, training or qualifications, which make you particularly suited for this position.

Where applicable you should describe your experience of working with young people with SEN/SEMH/ASC.

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Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary

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## Section 5: REFEREES

The company requires a minimum of two relevant, satisfactory references prior to employment.

*Please complete the section below in full*

Please give details of your last two employers or of your employers over the last 3 years.

College leavers should provide the name of a lecturer/tutor/professor, where appropriate. If this is not possible, please give the names of professional persons best able to write a reference in support of your application. *Friends/relatives cannot act as referees.*

**NB: If you are applying for a position where you will be working directly with young people, we generally require two references relating to your previous work in this area. If either or both of your last two employers cannot provide a relevant reference please provide additional names of referees under Referee 3 and Referee 4**

References may be taken up before interview. If you are not willing for your current employer to be contacted at this stage, please write NO in the space provided here: .....

<b>Applicant Name:</b>	
Referee 1	Referee 2
Company Name:	Company Name:
Referee's Name:	Referee's Name:
Position in Company:	Position in Company:
Address	Address:
Post Code:	Post Code:
Telephone no:	Telephone no:
Fax No:	Fax No:
Email:	Email:
Date employment started:	Date employment started:
Date employment finished:	Date employment finished:

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Position held by you:	Position held by you:
Did you have direct contact with young people in this position? YES/NO (please circle / delete as appropriate)	Did you have direct contact with young people in this position? YES/NO (please circle / delete as appropriate)

*Please note that we reserve the right to take up references from any previous employer.*

## REFEREES continued

Referee 3	Referee 4
Company Name:	Company Name:
Referee's Name:	Referee's Name:
Position in Company:	Position in Company:
Address:	Address:
Post Code:	Post Code:
Telephone no:	Telephone no:
Fax No:	Fax No:
Email:	Email:
Date employment started:	Date employment started:
Date employment finished:	Date employment finished:

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Position held by you:	Position held by you:
Did you have direct contact with young people in this position? YES/NO (please circle / delete as appropriate)	Did you have direct contact with young people in this position? YES/NO (please circle / delete as appropriate)

## Section 6: DBS DECLARATION

Do you hold an Enhanced DBS Disclosure? Yes/No (please circle)

If yes please give the Disclosure Number and Date of issue

Number: ..... Date of Issue: ..... Update service Yes/No  
(please circle)

Counter Signatory.....

Registered Body.....

If no, are you in the process of applying for one? Yes/No (Please circle)

### DISCLOSURE STATEMENT OF CONVICTIONS

In accordance with current legislation you are required to provide the following information, which will be passed on to the Criminal Records Bureau to check the existence and content of any criminal records including cautions, reprimands and final warnings. Due to the nature of the work for which you are applying the provisions of section 4(2) of the rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 do not apply by virtue of the rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (exemptions) order 1975. This in effect means that you must declare below any previous convictions, including cautions, reprimands and final warnings and including all those which for other purposes are 'spent'.

Have you ever been convicted of any offence, including cautions, reprimands and final warnings or had an endorsement on your driving licence?

**(PLEASE CIRCLE)** YES NO If you have answered 'yes' to the above, please give details.

*(Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.)*

I consent to the information that I provide on the Criminal Records Bureau form being checked against all relevant records and I am aware that any 'spent' convictions will be disclosed by the CRB. Should I have any convictions, I consent to Transitional Care Ltd passing on details of these convictions to any prospective Local Authority and Local Education Authority.

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I also confirm that I am not on the children's barred list, disqualified from working with children, nor under sanctions imposed by a regulatory body

I am aware that providing false information is an offence and that doing so may lead to my application being rejected, summary dismissal if I have been selected for the post and possible referral to the police.

Signed..... Name..... Date.....

Please be aware that all successful candidates will be required to apply for an enhanced DBS Disclosure before employment with the company commences.

## Section 7: GEMS MONITORING INFORMATION

We will treat the information provided as strictly confidential and will only use it for monitoring purposes. The information you provide will be used to produce anonymous statistics to help us with equal opportunities **Vacancy details**

Position applied for \_\_\_\_\_

How did you find out about this vacancy?

GEMS Website		Newspaper Advert		(Please state which paper)	
Word of mouth		Website Advert		(Please state which website)	

Sex		Are you		Age Range		Are you					
Male		Female		18-24		25-35		35-45		45-60	60+

White	British		Irish		
	Other		Please give details		

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Mixed	White and Black Caribbean		White and Black African		White and Asian		
	Other mixed group		Please give details				
Asian or Asian British	Indian		Pakistani		Bangladeshi		Tamil
	Other Asian		Please give details				
Black or Black British	Caribbean		African				
	Other Black background		Please give details				
Chinese or other ethnic group	Chinese						
	Any other ethnic group		Please give details				

## Ethnic Origin

How would you describe yourself? (Categories are based on the 2001 census)

## Disability Have you had any of the following difficulties?

Diabetes	Mild		Moderate		Severe	
Dyslexia	Mild		Moderate		Severe	
Hearing Difficulties	One		Both		Severe	
Deafness	Mild		Moderate		Severe	
Difficulty with speech	Mild		Moderate		Severe	
Visual difficulties	One		Both		Severe	
Blindness	Mild		Moderate			

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Limited use of arms or Legs	Yes		No		Severe	
Use a Wheelchair	Yes		No			

Do you consider yourself to have a disability? (The disability Discrimination Act defines a disabled person as someone with 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities').

Yes		No		Prefer not to say	
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**Religion** What is your religion? (Categories are based on the 2001 census)

None		Buddhist		Christian		Hindu		Muslim		Jewish		Sikh	
Other		Please give ails det											

**Sexuality** What is your sexuality? (Categories are based on the 2001 census)

Heterosexual		Gay or Lesbian		Bisexual		Prefer not to say	
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## Appendix A: MEDICAL HISTORY

The following information will be kept confidential:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

1a. Have you currently, or ever had any of the following medical conditions	YES	NO
Heart trouble		
Lung Disease		
Stomach / bowel trouble		
Jaundice / hepatitis		
Joint Problems		
Headaches / Migraines		
Diabetes		
Allergies		
Severe stress reaction		
Serious accident		
High blood pressure		
Asthma		
Hernia or rupture		

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Kidney / bladder disorder		
Back /neck problems		
Fits / blackouts / epilepsy		
Depression / anxiety		
Hearing / sight problems		
Skin problems		
Surgical operations		
Mobility problems		
Are you registered as disabled		
Has your employment ever been terminated on the grounds of ill health?		

1b. Approximately how many days sickness absence did you have in the last 12 months \_\_\_\_\_

1c. If you have answered 'yes' to any of the above questions, please give details. This is particularly important where you have a qualifying disability under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as it will enable us to identify what, if any 'reasonable adjustments' can be made.

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(Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.)

2	What is your height?		What is your weight?	
	What is your weekly consumption of alcohol?			
	Do you smoke?			
	Are you currently taking prescribed medication?			
	Are you currently under the care of a doctor or other medical professional?			
	Name and address of GP			

**DECLARATION (Please sign before returning)**

I hereby declare that the information given is true and complete. Furthermore, I am not aware of any condition, medical or otherwise, which would limit or affect my employment or performance. I understand that if, at a later date it is discovered that I have knowingly withheld medical information, disciplinary action may be taken against me, which may include dismissal

Signed..... Date: .....

Please Print Name.....

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## Statement of safe recruitment practice

*"It is important that thorough checks are made on anybody who will be working in a school ... both to prevent unsuitable people from gaining access to children and young people and to maintain the integrity of the teaching profession and confidence that schools .. are safe places for children and young people"* DfES guidance 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' DfES 2007

In accordance with the Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses Regulations 2003 (the Conduct Regulations), we confirm that:

we have made checks to ensure that any supply staff offered to GEMS have the qualifications required for the post GEMS as the hirer is seeking to cover

all appropriate checks have been undertaken in line with those GEMS would be required to carry out for its own permanent staff employees, including Children Barred checks and DBS enhanced disclosures

**in line with the above and with the further requirements placed on agencies where the position involves working with vulnerable persons, in this case school children, we have in all cases obtained, and will provide to GEMS as the hirer, copies of the work seeker's relevant qualifications or authorisations, and two independent references**

a DBS disclosure no. will be given and, where DBS disclosures contain information, a copy of the disclosure will be provided to the appropriate named person within GEMS

*"Where there is disclosed information, the school or FE college must obtain a copy of the DBS Disclosure from the agency before the individual starts work"*

*where a DBS disclosure contain information a copy of the risk assessment carried out by the agency will be forwarded to the appropriate named person within GEMS Group*

*"While the Conduct Regulations do not spell out what "all reasonable steps" means, the School Staffing (England) (Amendment)(No2) Regulations 2006 and the Further Education (Providers of Education)(England) Regulations 2006 specify that a DBS Disclosure must be obtained, and a copy supplied for supply staff to the relevant [education setting] where the Disclosure includes information."*

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## Confirmation of pre-employment checks

Employee name \_\_\_\_\_

Role and Location \_\_\_\_\_

Start Date \_\_\_\_\_

Check	Section location	Applied for	Complete and in Cascade	Comments
<b>Job Description and Person Specification</b>	2			
<b>Application Form</b>	3			
<b>Personal Profile</b>	3			
<b>Fit for Work</b>	3			
Any required adjustments sent to Head Teacher and School Business Manager	4			
<b>Children's Barred List</b>	4			
<b>DBS</b>	4			
<b>Prohibited from Education check</b>	4			
Prohibited from Teaching check	4			
Section 128 check	4			
Overseas Police Check (if required or RA)	4			
<b>Proof of entitlement to work in the UK</b>	5			
<b>Proof of DOB</b>	5			
<b>Proof of address</b>	5			
Qualifications ( <b>Non-negotiable for Teachers</b> )	6			
<b>Reference 1</b>	7			
<b>Reference 2</b>	7			
<b>Reference 3</b> (if required)	7			
<b>Reference 4</b> (if required)	7			
Additional References if required	7			
<b>Supplementary Questions</b>	8			
<b>2 x Interview questions</b> (2 sets required for Safer Recruitment)	8			
<b>Safer Recruitment (at least 1 person on panel) Name/s</b>				
<b>Tests (if in school and not a qualified Teacher and other roles)</b>	8			
<b>Lesson Observation (If Teacher)</b>	8			
<b>Offer Letter</b>	9			

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Contract	9			
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**NB: Items in bold are non-negotiable and must be present, those in italics are depend on individual role and circumstances, and those in plain text are ongoing through the life of the employee**

**I confirm the above checks have been carried out with satisfactory results**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Policy Sign Off

**This policy was agreed and implemented by Philip Onwuachi on behalf of GEMS:**



**Date of next formal review: September 2022**

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This policy was agreed and implemented by Philip Onwuachi on behalf of GEMS:

Date of next formal review: September 2021