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1. Introduction

Herne Hill School is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for children, staff and visitors and promoting a climate where children and adults will feel confident about sharing any concerns which they may have about their own safety or the well-being of others. We promote a whole school approach to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies operate with the best interests of the child at their heart. We aim to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as they emerge; protecting them from maltreatment, whether it is within or outside the home, including on-line; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. In our practice we must keep in mind that where indicators of abuse are mentioned, they may relate to pupils at our school, or their siblings, or other familiar persons known to them.

This policy is applicable to all on and off-site activities undertaken by pupils whilst they are the responsibility of the school, including EYFS, holiday provision and wrap-around care. It is consistent with all other policies adopted by the school and available to all parents and prospective parents via the school website, with printed copies being available upon request.

We acknowledge our responsibility to safeguard and promote the well-being of our pupils, paying particular attention to:

- Their physical and mental health and emotional well-being
- Protection from harm and neglect
- Their education, training and recreation
- The contribution made by them to society

This policy draws upon duties conferred by the following principal legislation and regulations:

- Children Acts 1989 and 2004
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- S175 of the 2002 Education Act
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Education and Skills Acts 2008
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2026
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools 2018
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010 (including 2014 and 2018 advice for schools)
- Online Safety Act 2023 (and proposed changes)
- Crime and Policing Act 2026
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (March 2024)
- The Crime and Policing Act 2026

It also has regard to the following principal guidance issued by Department for Education (DfE):

- Keeping children safe in education (September 2026)
- Working together to safeguard children (March 2026)
- Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools (April 2026)
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (2018)
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (September 2026)
- Special educational needs and disability code of practice (updated September 2024)
- The Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales (May 2024)
- Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools (September 2025)
- Preventing and tackling bullying (July 2017)

- Safeguarding and Remote Education (November 2022)
- Behaviour in Schools (February 2024)
- Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges (June 2026)
- Teaching on-line safety in schools (January 2023)
- Generative artificial intelligence (AI) in education (August 2025)
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (July 2026)

Furthermore, this policy has regard to procedures produced by the London Safeguarding Children Board ([LSCB](#)) and the Southwark Safeguarding Children Partnership ([SSCP](#)), including Southwark's [Neglect Strategy](#) and [Neglect Toolkit](#). In addition, it has regard to advice contained in DfE's '[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Advice for practitioners](#)' and '[Information Sharing – Advice for practitioners](#)'.

All staff must read 'Part one; Safeguarding information for all staff' of DfE statutory guidance '[Keeping children safe in education 2026](#)' (KCSIE). Those working directly with children should also read Annex A.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Identify the names of responsible persons in the school and explain the purpose of their roles
- Describe what should be done if anyone in the school has a concern about the safety and welfare of a child who attends the school
- Identify the particular attention that should be paid to those children who fall into a category that might be deemed 'vulnerable'
- Set out expectations in respect of training
- Ensure that those responsible for recruitment are aware of how to apply safeguarding principles in employing staff
- Set out expectations of how to ensure children are safeguarded when there is potential to come into contact with non-school staff, e.g. volunteers, contractors, etc.
- Outline how allegations against staff will be handled
- Set out expectations regarding record keeping
- Clarify how children will be kept safe through the everyday life of the school
- Outline how the implementation of this policy will be monitored

2. Safeguarding and child protection (S&CP) procedures

Staff are committed to fostering an ethos which:

- Encourages and supports parents/carers and works in partnership with them
- Listens to and values pupils – appreciating each one as a 'unique' child
- Ensures all staff are aware of signs and symptoms of abuse, know the correct procedures for referring concerns or allegations and receive appropriate training to enable them to carry out these requirements
- Maintains a safe school environment for all pupils
- Exercises their duty to work in partnership with other agencies and to share information with them in accordance with legislation

We recognise that, because of their contact with and knowledge of the children in their care, our staff are well placed to identify concerns and report appropriately. Statements about or allegations of abuse or neglect made

by children will always be taken seriously and acted upon. We also recognise that the school is an agent of referral and not of investigation; no action will be taken knowingly which might undermine a criminal investigation.

3. Responsibilities and immediate action

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in our school is the responsibility of the whole school community. All adults working in this school (including supply staff, visiting staff, volunteers and students on placement) are required to report instances of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (see Section 7 for further details on how to report concerns).

The Director of the School is: Dominik Magyar

The Director assumes ultimate legal responsibility for the safeguarding, welfare and wellbeing of all children under the care of Herne Hill School, as set out in the Education and Inspections Act (S157). His leadership focus for safeguarding is primarily at a strategic and scrutiny level, as opposed to the operational leadership of the Designated Safeguarding Lead. His role is to champion S&CP issues at the highest level within the school and ensure a suitable safeguarding policy and S&CP procedures, which have proper regard to prevailing regulations, guidance, standards and advice, are in place and properly implemented. The policy and S&CP procedures will be reviewed annually.

As good practice, the Director will meet on a regular basis with the DSL and DDSLs in order to:

- Monitor the school's safeguarding arrangements
- Enable the DSL to report any safeguarding issues and the outcome of any cases that may have arisen, duly respecting the confidentiality of any person(s) involved
- Monitor both the volume and progress of cases where a concern has been raised to ensure that the school is meeting its duties in respect of safeguarding

Concerns about the Director

Safeguarding concerns or allegations of abuse made against the Director should be referred directly to the Local Authority's Designated Officer (LADO) (see Appendix 2 for contact details).

The appointed Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is: Carla Diego

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place), including looked-after children, children with SEND, as well as children in the EYFS. Our DSL is also the special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo), so is involved in and has oversight over any concerns involving children with SEND. She provides advice and support to other staff on child welfare and S&CP matters, takes part in strategy discussion and inter-agency meetings when required, and contributes to the assessment of children. She works with the Headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college.

The designated safeguarding lead:

- Acts as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff,
- Acts as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners.
- Liaises with the Headteacher or principal to inform her of issues.

- Liaises, as required, with the school's "case manager" and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member.
- Liaises with staff on matters of safety, safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety), when deciding whether to make a referral and by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically.
- Liaises with the middle leadership team where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- Promotes supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.

The DSL is also the first point of contact for external agencies that are pursuing S&CP investigations and co-ordinates the school's representation at S&CP conferences and core group meetings (including the submission of written reports for conferences). Any safeguarding concerns should be reported directly to the DSL or emailed via safeguarding@hernehillschool.co.uk.

Where there is any doubt as to the seriousness of a concern, or disagreement between the DSL and the member of staff reporting the concern, advice will be sought from the following:

- DDSLs – Louise Lomax (Head of Kindergarten) and Ngaire Telford (Headteacher)
- Southwark's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub MASH (020 7525 1921)
- Southwark Safeguarding in Schools Lead – Emma Geiringer (020 7525 5377, 07860 354 934, emma.geiringer@southwark.gov.uk)

If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately. Anyone can make a referral. Where referrals are not made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the DSL will be informed, as soon as possible, that a referral has been made.

Concerns about the DSL

Safeguarding concerns or allegations of abuse made against the DSL should be referred to the Director, who will report to the LADO (see Appendix 2 for contact details).

The appointed Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) are: Louise Lomax and Ngaire Telford

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) are trained to the same standard as the DSL and are able to support the DSL with the aforementioned duties. The DDSLs also act as point of contact should the DSL not be available. Whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for S&CP, as set out above, remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead; this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

Where the DSL or DDSL is unavailable we will have robust cover arrangements, this includes having a confidential shared mailbox (safeguarding@hernehillschool.co.uk) to ensure safeguarding concerns are received, monitored and acted on without delay.

What all staff should know and do

At Herne Hill School we take a child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding and it is the responsibility of everyone to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. **All** staff are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating. Any staff member should be prepared and able to identify children who may benefit from Family Help, including Early Help.

Early help

All staff should be aware of the process for community-based Family Help assessments, including the criteria and level of need for when a case should be referred to the local authority. Any child may benefit from support before statutory intervention. Universal services and community based early help play a crucial role in identifying emerging problems and providing support at an early stage.

Staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for Early Help for a child who:

- Is disabled or has certain health conditions, or has specific additional needs
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- Has a mental health need
- Is a young carer
- Has exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours
- Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- Has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- Is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- Is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- Is a privately fostered child

Abuse, neglect and exploitation

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation (see below), understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home, and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

All staff should also be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

All staff should consider whether children, or their siblings, or other familiar persons known to them, are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent

images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content.

In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL or a deputy.

4. Indicators of child abuse, neglect and exploitation

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. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others, particularly when children see, hear or experience domestic abuse and its effects. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly on-line, or technology may be used to facilitate off-line abuse. 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 verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling, or name-calling, as well as 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 from 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.

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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by anyone regardless of gender or age.

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.

5. Safeguarding issues

All staff should have an awareness that safeguarding issues often overlap and can put children at risk of harm, including, amongst others, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education.

Additional information on these safeguarding issues and information on other safeguarding issues is included in KCSIE 2026 Annex A

Child on child abuse (including harassment and violence)

Children are capable of abusing other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse). All staff should be aware that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online, and should recognise the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

All staff should understand that even if there are no reports, it does not mean child-on-child abuse is not happening. It may be the case that abuse is not being reported. As such it is important that when staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse (whether these concerns are thought to have taken place on or off-site) they should speak to their DSL or DDSL. As part of this, schools should also try to be alert to when children might be at highest risk around the school day (for example immediately after school).

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature. Examples of which are listed below. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, misogyny, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it. At Herne Hill School we are strongly committed to the school's Anti-bullying policy and will consider all coercive acts and child on child abuse within a S&CP context.

All staff should be aware that child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and alleged perpetrator.

Although our children are very young, we understand that harmful sexual behaviour can occur between two or more children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into college. It can occur also through a group of children towards a single child or towards another group of children. Harmful sexual behaviour exists on a continuum and may escalate into sexual harassment or sexual violence, it can occur online or face-to-face (both physically and verbally) and is never acceptable.

All such incidents require a safeguarding response, with a proportionate approach that considers the age, development, and circumstances of the children involved, as well as any elements of coercion, exploitation or vulnerability. Early intervention in inappropriate behaviour such as misogyny can help to prevent escalation to more serious abuse such as sexual harassment and sexual violence. Advice on stages of typical sexual development and behaviour for different age groups can be found in [Sexual development and behaviour in children | NSPCC Learning](#).

As well as knowing how to respond to concerns, all staff should know that child-on-child abuse is preventable. As well as knowing how to recognise behaviours and indicators of risk early, staff should know that timely, evidence-based support can be key to preventing children from going on to commit abuse or violence.

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

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Serious physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon
- Sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm, and
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

We recognise that some pupils will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of other pupils, and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's Behaviour policy. As a school, we will minimise the risk of allegations against other pupils by providing a developmentally appropriate Relationships & Personal, Social, Health and Economic (R&PSHE)

syllabus which develops pupils' understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe, having systems in place for any pupil to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, believed and valued, delivering targeted work on assertiveness and keeping safe to those pupils identified as being at risk, developing robust risk assessments and providing targeted work for pupils identified as being a potential risk to other pupils.

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

Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal or sexual activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. This can be committed or facilitated by an organised network or gang, and the victim may identify as being part of this group. CCE and CSE can affect children, both male and female, and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. This may constitute modern slavery, and further information is available in the [Modern Slavery statutory guidance](#). In accordance with this guidance, a relevant child protection and modern slavery referral should be completed where a potential victim of CCE or CSE is identified.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

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 in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or 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 specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. Children who are criminally exploited should have their vulnerabilities recognised by adults and professionals and should be treated as victims. It is not possible for a child to consent to be exploited, abused or trafficked, and they may not recognise that it is happening to them.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

A child under the age of 13 is not legally capable of consenting to sex (it is statutory rape) or any other type of sexual touching. Where it comes to our notice that a child under the age of 13 is, or may be, sexually active, whether or not they are a pupil of this school, this will result in an immediate referral to Children's Services.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge, for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. This can be committed by an individual or an organised network and most sexual abuse is committed by those previously known to the victim. Some children do not realise they are being exploited and may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship. As with CCE, victims are not always recognised and can be criminalised for actions they take whilst under coercion. This remains a significant concern, as professionals continue to encounter cases where children are manipulated, groomed, and exploited without fully understanding the abuse they are experiencing.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. Exposure to domestic abuse is child abuse and children are now recognised as victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse, all of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn. Herne Hill School has trained in and participates in Operation Encompass.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is a procedure where the female genital organs are injured or changed even though there is no medical reason for this. It is frequently a traumatic and violent act for the victim and can cause harm in many ways and is therefore an unacceptable practice for which there is no justification. It is child abuse and a form of violence against women and girls. Moreover, it is illegal in the UK.

Whilst all staff should speak to the DSL or DDSL with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific **legal duty on teachers**. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police. Staff must see page 174 of [KCSIE](#), for further information.

Mental health

The school has a strong commitment to promoting emotional wellbeing and good mental health. All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This could include self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. They could also be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Our staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

If a child is struggling with their mental health, self-harming, has an eating disorder or is experiencing suicidal ideation and making plans to end their life, there are likely to be potential warning signs which our staff are well placed to recognise. These could include:

- Significant changes in behaviour
- Ongoing difficulty sleeping
- Withdrawing from social situations
- Not wanting to do things they usually like
- Physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves

Not every child who exhibits these behaviours is suicidal or has a mental health concern. However, by identifying these and other potential warning signs, education staff can identify children who may be struggling with their mental health and contemplating suicide and offer support and vital early intervention. If staff have a concern about a child's mental health that is also a safeguarding concern, they should follow our safeguarding policy and speak to the DSL or one of the deputy DSLs. The DSL teams will ensure that any interventions offered are evidenced as safe, effective and appropriate for the needs of the pupil.

Where children have suffered abuse, neglect and exploitation, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that

our staff members are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

Serious violence

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

Serious violence is a continuing safeguarding concern. It may involve physical assault, carrying, threatening with, or using weapons, often in the context of peer conflict or bullying, and it can also be associated with criminal exploitation. Staff should report any concerns about a child carrying or using a weapon (or expressing intent to do so) to the DSL or DDSL. The DSL should assess the risk to both the individual pupil and others in the school, considering wider information or concerns, and take appropriate action. Depending on the risk, they should put in place a safety and support plan, and where relevant, consider action to de-escalate peer conflict.

Schools play a key role in protecting children from violence, safeguarding victims, as well as those who may be at risk of, or are involved in committing violence (who may also be victims themselves). Staff should be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of or involved in serious violence. These risks are higher for children with disrupted education (e.g. suspensions, permanent exclusions, time in alternative provision) or a history of offending. Schools should also try to be alert to when children might be at highest risk around the school day (for example, immediately after school).

Additional information and support

Department for Education (DfE) advice [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners](#) provides more information on understanding and identifying abuse and neglect. Examples of potential indicators of abuse and neglect are highlighted throughout that advice and will be particularly helpful for staff. The [NSPCC](#) website also provides useful additional information on abuse and neglect and what to look out for.

In [KCSIE](#), Annex A contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse, exploitation, and safeguarding issues.

6. Children potentially at greater risk of harm

Whilst all children should be protected, we recognise that some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm than others (both online and off line).

Children who need a social worker ('Child in Need' or 'Child Protection' Plans)

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse and/or neglect and/or exploitation and/or complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged including barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health. Particular vigilance will be exercised in respect of pupils

who are subject to any involvement from social care service and any incidents or concerns involving these children will be reported immediately to the allocated Social Worker and confirmed in writing.

Children who are absent from education

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, or may increase known safeguarding risks, including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation – particularly county lines.

We will liaise with Southwark's Education Inclusion Team (EIT) who provides advice and intervention on attendance and inclusion, and leads on statutory attendance processes across all schools and provisions in Southwark with children of statutory school age. We note the [Education Inclusion Handbook](#) that explains more about EIT's work and the support available. We also note the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance [Working together to improve school attendance](#), which sets out how schools must work with local authority children's services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns.

We will help identify children missing education (CME) by informing the Local Authority of any children that may come to our notice and who we believe may be missing education. If we think a child is missing from education because they do not have a school place, or are not getting any kind of education, we will inform the Local Authority in accordance with Southwark's [Children Missing Education \(CME\) Protocol](#). We also note the DfE's statutory guidance [Children Missing Education](#).

When a parent or carer expresses intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, a meeting may be convened to consider what is in the best interest of the child and ensure the parent /carer knows the implications of choosing to home educate. The Local Authority will be informed when a child's name is removed from the admissions register. We note the guidance for local authorities and schools about children educated at home [Elective home education](#).

Children requiring mental health support

As a school we have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils. We take an active role in promoting wellbeing throughout the school. Our R&PSHE and Golden Rules coordinator, and middle leadership team, work closely with the SENDCo and safeguarding team, to support children with their mental health. However, all staff are expected to be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This could include self-harm, signs of an eating disorder, suicidal ideation or suicide. They could also be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, still have an important role to play. Specifically, they can support the fulfilment of 4 key roles:

- Promoting good mental wellbeing and preventing the onset of mental illness
- Observing pupils and identifying early those who may be experiencing mental health problems or being at risk of developing one
- Ensuring early targeted support is provided
- Liaison with/referral to specialist services where needed

Where support is needed, the DSL or DDSL should consider whether to inform parents or carers to support the child's wellbeing, where doing so would not place the child at additional risk.

Looked after children and previously looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after by a local authority is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. We will ensure that our staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe. In particular, we will ensure that appropriate staff have access to the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status.

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff will have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, we will work together with all agencies and take prompt action when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

Care leavers

If we have any care leavers in our school, our DSL will have details of the local authority Personal Advisor appointed to guide and support the care leaver, and liaise with them as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

Young carers

We will be alert to the needs of any young carers in our school, recognising that caring responsibilities can impact on their attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing. We acknowledge that early identification is essential to ensure young carers receive support at the right time and by the appropriate services including additional support from external partners, or local authority and health services.

Children with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues

We acknowledge that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline and the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in this group of children. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration
- These children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
- The potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without necessarily outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges risks that they do not understand that what is happening to them is abuse
- The need for intimate care or that these children are isolated from others
- That these children are more likely to be dependent on adults for care
- These children may have issues over cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so

Our DSL is also the special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo), so is involved in and has oversight over any reports of abuse involving children with SEND. We will consider extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place. We note further information in the DfE's [SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years](#).

Safeguarding children with medical conditions

An incident relating to the management of a child's medical condition (including allergies) would not in and of itself warrant a referral to local safeguarding partners. A safeguarding referral would only be needed where an incident highlighted concern that the child might be at an increased risk of being neglected, abused or exploited by persons inside or outside of their family because of their medical condition. This might occur where relevant information about a child's medical condition is not provided or where they are repeatedly sent to school without essential medication, thereby putting them at risk. We note the further information in the DfE's statutory guidance on [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#) and [Allergy safety in schools](#), which includes requirements for some settings to have a dedicated allergy safety policy, staff training, and Individual Healthcare Plans.

Children who are lesbian, gay or bisexual

A child or young person being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself a risk factor for harm; however, they can sometimes be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying or other risks. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are. We will consider how to address vulnerabilities and take steps to prevent risk and harm, including putting appropriate sanctions in place for bullying. We will work with appropriate agencies to counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse and to provide support to lesbian, gay, or bisexual children.

Children who are questioning their gender

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of children who are questioning the way they feel about being a boy or a girl, including the physical attributes of their sex and the related ways in which they fit into society. We will take time to understand the thoughts and feelings of children who are questioning their gender and will be appropriately professionally curious about the full range of the child's experiences. We will remain aware of the potential vulnerabilities of children who are questioning their gender, including the possibility of complex mental health and psychosocial needs, for example relating to relationships with family, peers or their broader social environment, including discriminatory bullying. We will consider adopting policies across school life that maintain flexibility and avoid rigid rules based on gender stereotypes.

Toilets and changing facilities

If a gender-questioning child does not want to use the toilet/changing facilities designated for their biological sex, we will treat the situation with sensitivity, providing an appropriate toileting/changing facilities without compromising single-sex toilet provision. We will keep a clear record of these situations, communicate them appropriately and review them regularly.

7. What staff should do if they have concerns about a child

Staff should maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the **best interests** of the child.

If staff have **any concerns** about a child's welfare, they should act on them **immediately**. The following options will be considered:

- Managing any support for the child internally via our school's own pastoral support processes, including considering where doing so does not place the child at additional risk, whether the DSL or DDSL should inform parents or carers to further support the child's wellbeing
- Undertaking a family help assessment, this could involve an Early Help referral
- Making a referral to statutory services via MASH, for example as the child could be in need, is in need or is suffering, or likely to suffer harm

If a staff member has any safeguarding concern about a child, s/he must speak to the DSL or DDSL as soon as possible. No concern will be treated as trivial. The DSL will then consult the London Safeguarding Children Board's [Threshold Document: Continuum of Help and Support](#), as recommended by Southwark, to inform their decision. If an Early Help referral is required, refer to section 8. If the child is deemed to be in need, the DSL will refer the child to children's social care via MASH, see section 8. If the child is deemed to be at risk of significant harm, the DSL will report to the police (if a crime has been committed within the previous 24 hours) or to children's social care (if no crime has been committed). Details of Southwark (LA) contacts are listed in this policy (see Appendix 2). Further information and guidance on when to call the police and what to expect during the process has been produced by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) '[When to Call the Police](#)'.

Guidelines for staff

If a member of staff thinks a child at Herne Hill School is in need because they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, they **MUST** do the following:

- Don't make assumptions – keep an open mind
- Don't ask any leading questions and don't cross-examine the child. Only ask simple and open questions – Who? What? Where? When? etc.
- Don't physically examine the child (other than in an emergency)
- Never promise to keep "secrets". Explain that you can listen, but make it clear that if you perceive that the child is in any danger of harm, then you will have to seek advice because you have a duty to protect children. Reassure the child that it can be helped and kept safe. Make it clear to them that you are taking it seriously
- Maintain confidentiality for the child. It is important that you don't contact parents/carers directly, nor ring home. Instead you must consult with the DSL as to next steps
- Don't say anything that may place the child or yourself at risk
- Make a note of what you have seen or been told that is accurate, factual and professional
- Act quickly and share the information verbally as soon as possible with the DSL and/or DDSL. Please inform the DSL, Carla Diego, in the first instance, or DDSL Louise Lomax, or DDSL Ngaire Telford if she is not available.
- Be discreet and respectful with the information as per professional standards
- If the disclosure or your concern relates to a member of staff, this must be shared with the DSL as soon as possible and nothing should be said to the colleague involved. If your concern relates to the DSL you should refer it to the Director, Dominik Magyar
- If for any reason you have been unable to speak to any of the safeguarding team, you should call the MASH team within 24hrs (020 7525 1921)

Record keeping

All concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing on our safeguarding management platform 'CPOMs'. Information is kept confidential and stored securely. Our records include:

- Date and location
- Staff and pupils involved
- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached, rationale for decisions reached, and any outcome
- Follow up actions
- The tagging of categories on CPOMs

Brief and accurate written notes will be kept of all incidents and S&CP or child in need concerns relating to individual pupils. These notes are significant especially if the incident or the concern does not lead to a referral to other agencies. This information may be shared directly with other agencies as appropriate. All contact with parents and external agencies will be logged and these will be kept as S&CP records. The school will take into account the views and wishes of the child who is the subject of the concern but staff will be alert to the dangers of colluding with “secrets”.

S&CP records are not open to pupils or parents. All S&CP records are kept securely by the DSL and separately from educational records. They may only be accessed by the DSL, the DDSLs and the senior managers of the school.

The content of any S&CP Conference or Review reports prepared by the school will follow the headings recommended by Children’s Services and will, wherever possible, be shared with the parents/carer in advance of the meeting.

Any S&CP records will be sent to receiving schools separately from the main pupil file and under a confidential cover when pupils leave the school as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term ensuring secure transit and a confirmation of receipt will be obtained.

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports

If a report is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to children’s social care may be appropriate. If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, we will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it as per our behaviour policy. All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified, and addressed.

8. Referrals

When addressing a safeguarding concern, there are many avenues of support available. Support typically falls into the following categories:

- Universal services and community-based early help
- Family Help, including targeted Early Help (under Sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 1989) and statutory Child in Need services (under section 17 of the Children Act 1989)
- Child Protection (under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989)

Any child may benefit from support before statutory intervention. Universal services and community based early help play a crucial role in identifying emerging problems and providing support at an early stage.

Targeted Early Help is support for children of all ages that improves a family’s resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. It may be provided before and/or after statutory intervention, and may be appropriate for children and families who have several needs or whose circumstances might make them more vulnerable. It is a voluntary approach, requiring the family’s consent. Our staff will be alert to the potential need for Early Help for any child. If Early Help is pursued, the member of staff who reported the concern may be required to help with information following disclosures from the child. An [Early Help Referral Form](#) should be used

to request additional Early Help for a family when the needs of a child are beyond the level of support that can be provided by universal services.

When there is a clear concern that a child may need protection, a safeguarding referral will be made to Southwark's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub ([MASH](#)) by submitting the online referral form or to the social care department of the Local Authority where the child resides. Such contact is usually made by the DSL. For all referrals, we also note the [Referring to Southwark MASH: best practice guidance](#) and will provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. Prior to submitting an online referral to social care, there may be a verbal consultation with the MASH social worker or manager on **020 7525 1921**, to ensure that making a referral is an appropriate action.

The parent/carer will normally be contacted to offer awareness before a referral is made. However, if the concern involves, for example, alleged or suspected child sexual abuse, honour-based violence, fabricated or induced illness, or if the DSL has reason to believe that informing the parent at this stage might compromise the safety of the child or a staff member, nothing should be said to the parent/carer ahead of the referral. In these circumstances, a rationale for the decision to progress without consent should be provided with the referral.

In circumstances where a child has an unexplained or suspicious injury that requires urgent medical attention, the referral process should not delay the administration of first aid or emergency medical assistance. If a pupil is thought to be at immediate risk because of parental violence, intoxication, substance abuse, mental illness or threats to remove the child during the school day, for example, urgent police intervention will be requested.

Where a child sustains a physical injury or is distressed as a result of reported chastisement, or alleges that they have been chastised by the use of an implement or substance, this will immediately be reported for investigation.

In situations where pupils sustain injury or are otherwise affected by an accident or incident whilst they are in the responsibility of the school, parents will be notified of this as soon as possible.

Herne Hill School recognises the need to be alert to the risks posed by strangers or others (including the parents or carers of other pupils) who may wish to harm children in school or pupils travelling to and from school and will take all reasonable steps to lessen such risks.

9. Staff recruitment and training

The Director has strategic leadership responsibility for all safeguarding arrangements and ensures compliance with all duties under legislation. He is aware of his obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. He has regard to [KCSIE](#) 2026 and ensures policies, procedures and training are effective and comply with the law at all times. The Director has appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training, which is updated regularly.

The Headteacher ensures that policies and procedures, adopted by the Director (particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation), are understood, and followed by all staff.

All newly appointed staff will be provided with the relevant induction training related to safeguarding and child protection. This will include, but is not limited to:

- The school's Safeguarding policy, including information about the identity and role of the DSL and DDSL
- The Staff Code of Conduct/Behaviour policy including the 'Whistleblowing' procedure and the 'IT Acceptable usage' policy
- The 'Behaviour' policy
- The school's safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
- Online safety, including an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring
- A copy of Part 1 of [*KCSIE September 2026*](#), including Annex A for those who work directly with children

In addition, all staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection refresher training (including online safety), with updates provided as appropriate and at least annually. Importantly, this will include how staff should respond to and manage a report from a child. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

The DSL (and DDSL) will attend refresher training at least every two years. The DSL will also undertake Prevent awareness training. In addition to this formal training, their knowledge and skills will be refreshed as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their roles. Designated staff will be encouraged to attend appropriate network meetings and to participate in the multi-agency training programme organised by the Southwark Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP).

Herne Hill School is committed to the principles of safer recruitment and adopts recruitment procedures that help deter, reject and/or identify people who might abuse children. These procedures are detailed in the school's Recruitment policy which can be found in the School Handbook. All staff (e.g. contractors) who have an opportunity for regular contact with children who are not engaging in regulated activity, will require an enhanced DBS certificate - which does not include a barred list check.

Herne Hill School will only use employment agencies which can demonstrate that they positively vet their supply staff and will report the misconduct of temporary or agency staff to the agency concerned and to Southwark.

Volunteers

Any parent or other person/organisation engaged by the school to work in a voluntary capacity with pupils will be subject to all reasonable vetting procedures and Criminal Records Checks. We will obtain an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information for any person volunteering in our school in a role that involves teaching, training, instructing or supervising children frequently (on more than 3 days in a 30-day period), as they are now in regulated activity. Under no circumstances should a volunteer on whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Whilst volunteers play an important role and are often seen by children as being safe and trustworthy adults, the nature of voluntary roles varies, so schools and colleges should undertake a written risk assessment and use their professional judgement and experience when deciding what checks, if any, are required.

The risk assessment should consider:

- The nature of any work with children
- What the establishment knows about the volunteer, including formal or informal information offered by staff, parents and other volunteers
- Whether the volunteer has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where referees can advise on their suitability, and

- Where the role is not regulated activity, whether another level of DBS check might be appropriate, such as:
 - an enhanced DBS check without barred list information, for volunteers who would be in regulated activity but do not volunteer frequently, or
 - a basic DBS check for any other volunteer who may have access to children.

Under no circumstance will a volunteer be left unsupervised or allowed to provide personal care. We will obtain an enhanced DBS certificate (which will include barred list information) for any volunteer working in regulated activity. Volunteers will be subject to the same code of conduct as paid employees of the school.

Visitors

Entry to school premises will be controlled by doors that are secured physically or by constant staff supervision or video surveillance. Our Headteacher will use their professional judgement about the need to escort or supervise visitors such as children's relatives or other visitors attending a sports day. In the case of individuals visiting the school in a professional capacity e.g. educational psychologists, social workers etc., we will check their ID and be assured that the visitor has had the appropriate DBS check depending on the activity they are here to carry out (or that the visitor's employers have confirmed that their staff have appropriate checks). We note that where a visitor will have no contact with children, it is unlikely that a DBS check will be required. They will be logged into and out of the premises and will be asked to wear their identity badges or be issued with school visitor badges. Unidentified visitors will be challenged by staff or reported to the Headteacher or school office. Carelessness in closing any controlled entrance will be challenged. Visitors will not be allowed to use their personal cameras (digital or otherwise), camera phones or other recording devices (including smart glasses) or media for taking and transferring images of pupils or staff without permission.

All visiting speakers or workshop delivery partners are captured in our internal form 'Visiting Speaker and Workshop Provider Risk Assessment and Checklist', this includes an assessment of the education value, the age appropriateness of what is going to be delivered and whether relevant checks are required.

Contractors

Where we use contractors to provide services, they should set out their safeguarding requirements in the contract between the organisation and our school.

Staff will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is due to work at our school, has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. Contractors engaging in regulated activity relating to children will require an enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information). Contractors working for a company will provide a letter to confirm their employment and that all vetting has been completed to a satisfactory level.

Contractors who are self employed will have two references carried out and they will need to share their relevant qualifications and the registration number of the relevant professional body to verify their suitability for the role. If an individual working at a school is self-employed, we will either obtain the DBS check, or request to see the certificate if the self-employed person has obtained their own check and ensure that the DBS check is at the level required.

All contractors will be required to show their enhanced DBS certificate and photo ID the first time they visit our school, except employees from Southwark Council Children's Services. Following the 'Staff Assurance Letter' from Southwark Council dated 24 September 2025, Southwark employees from Children's Services only, will

provide their council ID "as confirmation that they have also undergone the appropriate checks as part of our safer recruitment processes will not need to show their DBS certificate".

For all other contractors who are not engaging in regulated activity relating to children, but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children, an enhanced DBS check (not including children's barred list information) will be required. In considering whether the contact is regular, it is irrelevant whether the contractor works on a single site or across several sites. In cases where the contractor does not have opportunity for regular contact with children, a basic DBS check will be appropriate.

Under no circumstances should a contractor on whom no checks have been obtained be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity relating to children. Staff will determine the appropriate level of supervision depending on the circumstances.

We will always check the identity of contractors on arrival at the school or college.

Voluntary and third sector groups

Voluntary and third sector groups that operate within this school or provide off-site services for our pupils or use school facilities will be expected to adhere to this policy or operate a policy which is compliant with the procedures adopted by the Southwark Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP). Premises lettings and loans are subject to acceptance of this requirement.

If it comes to our attention that an allegation or complaint of mistreatment has been made against an employee or volunteer of such an organisation, this will be reported by our School to the LADO.

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, we will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with our school on these matters where appropriate. We will also ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

We note the DfE's guidance on [Out-of-school settings: safeguarding guidance for providers](#), which has been produced to help out-of-school settings operate safely and protect the children attending them from harm.

10. Safeguarding code of conduct for staff

All teachers, peripatetic instructors, support staff, supply staff, volunteers and visiting staff working with pupils on and off-site are required to:

- Place the welfare of pupils as their first and paramount consideration
- Accept responsibility for their own actions and behaviour and avoid any conduct that might lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- Be 'fit' and ready to work, free from the influence of drugs, alcohol, physical/emotional/mental health needs or a preoccupation with personal life
- Work in an open and transparent way
- Apply the same professional standards, regardless of gender, race or sexual orientation

- Understand that any breaches in the law or professional expectations might lead to criminal or disciplinary action and barring
- Model and at all times adhere to the school's Golden Rules

They must also adhere to the 'safeguarding guidelines for staff conduct' attached to this policy, the rules of conduct in the Employee Handbook, and have regard to all policies relating to the safeguarding and welfare of pupils.

11. Complaints/allegations made against staff including supply teachers, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors

Herne Hill School takes seriously all allegations, complaints made against/concerns raised in relation to any member of staff, including supply teachers, trainee teachers, volunteers, contractors and organisations or individuals using school premises. Procedures are in place for pupils, parents and staff to share any concern that they may have about the actions of any member staff or volunteer.

In some circumstances we will have to consider an allegation against an individual not directly employed by us; for example, supply teachers, trainee teachers or contracted staff provided by an employment agency or business. Where this applies, we will share safeguarding responsibilities with the employment agency or business. We remain responsible for gathering the facts and managing the safeguarding process, while working closely with the employment agency or business, which will usually lead on any disciplinary action.

Whilst we are not the employer of supply teachers, they will ensure that allegations are dealt with properly. In no circumstances would we decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome.

All staff have a responsibility to voice their concerns about the inappropriate or worrying behaviour of a colleague or other professional working with children, in good faith and without fear of repercussions (see the Whistleblowing policy in the School Handbook).

The LADO should be informed of any allegation that comes to the school's attention and appears to meet the criteria described in the Whistleblowing policy. This includes allegations of those who pose a 'transferable risk', who have behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. Contact can also be made with Southwark's Safeguarding in Schools Lead, Emma Geiringer, or Schools Safeguarding Coordinator, Apo Çağırıcı, (see Appendix 2 for contact details) who will liaise with the LADO.

The school has a legal duty to make a report to the DBS concerning any person (whether employed, contracted or volunteer) who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm to a child, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) with children, or would have been removed had he or she not left earlier. Referrals will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual. Consideration will be given to making a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) where a teacher has been dismissed for misconduct (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned first).

For children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) the school will also inform Ofsted, as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days, of any allegation of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse

committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations.

The full procedures about dealing with allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff can be brought to the attention of the Director, without informing the Head. If the complaint/allegation concerns the Director, this should be brought directly to the attention of the LADO. Southwark's LADO is Eva Simcock: **020 7525 0689**.

There is also a duty system, with one of the CP Coordinators in Quality Assurance Unit being on duty each day to deal with LADO issues when the LADO is unavailable. The duty telephone number for enquiries/referrals is **020 7525 3297**.

Southwark's Strategic Lead Officer for safeguarding in education services is Alasdair Smith: **020 7525 0654**.

Southwark's Safeguarding in Schools' Lead Emma Geiringer: **020 7525 5377**.

Southwark's Schools Safeguarding Coordinator is Apo Çağırıcı: **020 7525 2715**.

We also note the '[Safeguarding information for professionals and the community in Southwark](#)' on Southwark Council's website.

The DfE dedicated telephone helpline and mailbox for non-emergency advice for staff is **0370 000 2288**.

The online form for suspected radicalisation is <http://report-extremism.education.gov.uk/>.

The non-emergency number for police is **101**.

Low-level concerns

At Herne Hill School, our aim is to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the school's values and expected behaviours set out in the Staff Code of Conduct are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff. As such, it is crucial that all concerns about adults no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately.

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the harms threshold set out in paragraph 434 of [KCSIE](#). Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being over friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- 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

Low-level concerns about a member of staff, supply staff, volunteer or contractor should be reported as per section 3 of this policy. Reports about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified. All low-level concerns are recorded in writing, including details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken.

12. Safety in the school

The school maintains accurate records of those with parental responsibility and emergency contacts. Pupils are only released to the care of those with parental responsibility or someone acting with their consent.

No internal doors to classrooms will be locked whilst pupils are present in these areas. In rare circumstances, the only exception to this rule might be where a child is severely distressed and where keeping them in a safe space, whilst minimising their access to other spaces, is proportionate for their own safety and the safety of others. In any such instances parents will be informed as soon as possible and the incident will be logged. This will be in line with DfE guidance [Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools](#). Where there is a pattern of severe physical dysregulation, triggers and support will be explored, and the child will have a risk assessment to ensure all hazards and potential risks have adequate measures.

Entry to school premises will be controlled by doors that are secured physically or by constant staff supervision or video surveillance. Authorised visitors, including supply staff, will be logged into and out of the premises and will be asked to wear their identity badges or be issued with school visitor badges. Unidentified visitors will be challenged by staff or reported to the Head or school office. Carelessness in closing any controlled entrance will be challenged.

The presence of intruders and suspicious strangers seen loitering near the school or approaching pupils, will be reported to the police by calling 101 or 999, depending on the circumstances and the urgency of the case. Brief information about the incident will be sent to Southwark's Schools' Safeguarding Coordinator, Apo Çağırıcı (see Appendix 2), with a view to alerting other local schools in liaison with the police and through appropriate systems.

13. Measures for internet safety and mobile phone usage

Online safety is paramount in today's world of technology. To this end, Herne Hill School ensures there are appropriate filtering and monitoring procedures on school devices and school networks. Our children are young and not permitted to bring mobile phones to school. Staff monitor this through close supervision of the children and their possessions.

All staff are trained to understand safety and legal requirements around their use of generative AI in teacher-facing and pupil-facing materials.

In conjunction with our IT providers 'Softegg', we strive to keep pupils safe from potentially harmful and inappropriate content or contact online. Softegg's role is to help ensure that:

- Systems are in place for appropriate filtering and monitoring (see below)
- ICT systems are secure and protected against viruses and malware, and that such safety mechanisms are updated regularly
- Security checks and monitoring of the school's ICT systems are carried out on a regular basis
- Security protection procedures are in place to safeguard systems, staff and learners, reviewed periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies

Staff are provided with clear guidelines as to acceptable online usage in a specific policy in the Employee Handbook, and in the Staff Code of Conduct. The same policy also covers the usage of mobile phones.

In addition to employees, peripatetic instructors, supply staff and volunteers, it is important that parents, visitors and contractors also use their mobile phones in an appropriate and sensible manner in line with the mobile phone policy whilst visiting the school. Parents are advised of this in the parent handbook, and visitors and contractors are informed of our expectations upon signing in. The key expectations are:

- Visiting adults should use their mobile phones only when children are not present, e.g. in the office, staff room, empty classrooms, etc. They should have their phones in silent mode throughout their school visit
- Adults either in school or accompanying children on school trips should not use their cameras or mobile phone cameras to take pictures of pupils unless it is at an event open to parents such as Sports Day, Summer Fair, play/drama performance, school service/festival, class demonstration, etc. Once the images they have taken have been uploaded to school files, they should delete these from their personal cameras/mobile phones.
- Parents should preferably only take pictures of their own children and images should not be published (e.g. on social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram or other platforms) that include any children other than their own

Since staff are in regular contact with parents and carers, particularly where remote education is being used, those communications should be used to reinforce the importance of children being safe online and parents and carers are likely to find it helpful to understand what systems we have in place to filter and monitor online use. Parents and carers are made aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

Filters and monitoring

As part of his responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, the Director does all he reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the risks from the school's IT system. As part of this process, he ensures the school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and regularly reviews their effectiveness. He ensures that the DSL and all relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified. To ensure robust measures are in place, the school is committed to ensuring that they:

- Identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems
- Review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually
- Block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning and prevent the downloading of potentially dangerous files, where possible
- Have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs

14. Teaching children how to stay safe (including online)

Herne Hill School acknowledges the important role that its curriculum can play in the prevention of abuse and in the preparation of our pupils for the responsibilities of adult life and citizenship.

At the beginning of the academic year, all children are taught, through an initial assembly, what they can do to stay safe, including online. These messages are then reinforced through on-going discussions in class throughout the year. KS1 children are reminded of our 'Worry Box', in which they can post their anxious thoughts to be then addressed sensitively and appropriately by the relevant staff members. It is also expected that all curriculum co-ordinators will consider the opportunities that exist in their area of responsibility for promoting the welfare and safety of pupils. As appropriate, the curriculum will be used to build resilience, help pupils to keep

safe and to know how to ask for help if their safety is threatened. As part of developing a healthy, safer lifestyle and emotional literacy, pupils will be taught, for example:

- To recognise and manage risks in different situations and then decide how to behave responsibly
- To judge what kinds of physical contact are acceptable and unacceptable
- To recognise when pressure from others (including people they know) threatens their personal safety and wellbeing; including knowing when and where to get help
- To use assertiveness techniques to resist unhelpful pressure
- The importance of fundamental British values

The mandatory Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (HE) is delivered through our Relationships and Personal Social Health and Economic (R&PSHE) curriculum.

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. Herne Hill School's approach to online safety empowers the protection and education of our pupils and staff in their use of technology and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

The four areas of risk in online safety are:

- **Content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- **Contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- **Conduct:** online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, other explicit images and online bullying, and
- **Commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

Importantly, pupils will also be taught about how to stay safe online, and how to avoid potential dangers of the internet (including cyberbullying). This teaching will be facilitated in a range of ways such as assemblies, circle times, Safer Internet Day events, invited speakers, NSPCC charity events, etc. Specifically our curriculum aims to teach:

- That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not
- That the same principles apply to online relationships (even if anonymous) as they do to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others
- The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them
- How information and data is shared and used online, and how it shouldn't be
- How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know

In Key Stage 1, we consider the pupils to be sufficiently mature to understand that they:

- Are responsible for using the school digital technology systems in accordance with the School's "IT Acceptable Use Policy for Herne Hill School Pupils", which we suggest they discuss with a parent/carer and sign
- Understand the importance of reporting abuse, misuse or access to inappropriate materials and know how to do so

- Know what to do if they or someone they know feels vulnerable when using online technology
- Understand the importance of adopting good online safety practice when using digital technologies out of school and realise that the school's Online Safety Policy also covers their actions out of school when carrying out school-related activities

We have also devised our own set of five, age-appropriate online safety rules which we actively teach the children, as follows:

1. I will always ask permission from a trusted adult before using a device
2. If I see something upsetting, I will turn the screen off or iPad over and tell an adult straight away
3. I will only use the websites that a trusted adult has told me are OK
4. I will never share my personal information (name, address, phone number) without permission from a trusted adult
5. I will always be kind to people online, just like I would on the playground

15. Complaints and monitoring

All complaints arising from the operation of this policy will be considered under the school's complaints procedure, with reference to Southwark's Strategic Lead Officer for safeguarding in education services as necessary.

The policy and procedures relating to safeguarding at Herne Hill School will be reviewed annually by the Director, the Headteacher and the DSL. This review will assess how efficiently the related duties have been discharged.

Any deficiencies or weaknesses in Safeguarding and Child Protection arrangements will be remedied without delay.



Dominik Magyar (Director)

Ngaire Telford (Headteacher and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead)

September 2026

Appendix 1: Safeguarding guidelines for staff conduct

This appendix provides additional guidelines to the 'Safeguarding code of conduct for staff' outlined in Chapter 9. It should also be read in conjunction with the Employee Handbook (Rules of conduct) and the professional standards for teachers and teaching assistants, as appropriate.

Confidentiality

- Staff must not use confidential or sensitive information about a child or their family for their own benefit or to humiliate or embarrass a child
- Confidential information about pupils or the school should not be shared casually
- Information that might suggest that a child is in need or at risk of significant harm must be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, in accordance with the safeguarding policy

Behaviour

- Staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence and must uphold high standards of personal conduct to do so, both within and outside of their work setting
- They must not do or say anything that might bring the school into disrepute
- Model and at all times adhere to the school's Golden Rules

Dress and appearance

- Staff should dress decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks that they are required to undertake

Gifts

- Whilst there may be occasions when parents or pupils may wish to give a small token of appreciation to staff at religious festivities or the end of a placement, for example, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis
- Personal gifts should not be given by staff to pupils and any reward to a child should be consistent with the school's behaviour policy, recorded and not based upon favouritism

Power and positions of trust and authority

All staff should not:

- Use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and/or a pupil's or family's detriment
- Use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce and undermine pupils
- Use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with pupils which are of a sexual nature, or which may become so

Infatuations

- It is not unusual for pupils or, sometimes, their parents to develop infatuations or 'crushes' towards trusted staff. All such situations must be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of those concerned and any indications that this might be happening reported to the Headteacher

Social contact

- Staff should maintain professional boundaries when having social contact with a pupil or their parents/carers
- Staff should consider carefully before disclosing their personal telephone numbers and e-mail addresses to pupils or parents

- No member of staff should enter into extra or private tuition or childcare arrangements with parents without the permission of the Head
- Staff should notify the Head of any existing or previous family or social relationship with a pupil or their parents/carers. A log will be maintained of such relationships

Physical contact

- When physical contact is made with pupils, it should be in response to their needs at that time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background
- Physical contact should never be secretive, for the gratuity of the adult or represent a misuse of authority
- Extra caution should be exercised where a child is known to have suffered previous abuse or neglect. Such experiences may sometimes make a child exceptionally needy and demanding of physical contact and staff should respond sensitively by deterring the child through helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries
- Any extreme attention-seeking or behaviour by pupils that makes staff feel uncomfortable should be reported to a line manager
- Staff supervising PE and games or providing music tuition may be required to initiate physical contact with pupils, the principle of 'limited touch' should be applied, with understanding of pupils' sensitivities and with the pupil's agreement
- Children are entitled to respect and privacy whilst they are changing or showering after games or swimming

Pupils in distress

- On those occasions when a pupil may be in distress and in need of comfort and re-assurance, staff should ensure that they remain self-aware at all times and that their contact with the pupil is not open to misunderstanding
- Such incidents must always be recorded and shared with the DSL

Care, control and physical intervention

- The school is committed to the use of positive behaviour management and staff will not use any form of physical punishment, threats, sarcasm or demeaning comments to deal with unacceptable behaviour
- When children need to be restrained for their own protection or the protection of others, this must only be undertaken in accordance with the school's policy on 'Use of Force to Control/Restrain Pupils', which can be found in the School Handbook
- Any such incidents and physical interventions will be recorded and reported according to procedures outlined in that policy

One-on-one situations

- Staff working individually with children should recognise the potential vulnerability of pupils and adults in such situations and ensure that they manage these situations with regard for the safety of both the child and themselves
- Individual work with pupils should not be undertaken in isolated areas or rooms where there is no external visual access. Where it is necessary to close doors for reasons of confidentiality, a colleague should be made aware of this and asked to remain vigilant
- In general, staff will not be expected to transport or accompany pupils off-site on their own. If staff use their own cars for transporting pupils, they will ensure appropriate escort arrangements and that they have in place motor insurance that covers business use
- All first aid will be administered only by suitably trained and accredited staff except in an emergency where the illness or injury is such that to delay assistance might cause harm to the child
- Children who require any form of intimate care are entitled to privacy, dignity and safety. Pupils with ongoing health problems will be treated in accordance with any Medical Plan that has been put in place

- Lone members of staff should not be placed in a position where they are expected to provide any form of intimate care without the safeguard of having a colleague in the same room or area

Curriculum

- The curriculum can sometimes lead to unplanned discussion of sensitive subject matters. Responding to pupils' questions requires careful judgments and guidance should be sought from the Head or lead teachers, as appropriate

Photography, videos and other creative arts

- Staff must follow the school's 'IT Acceptable usage policy', which can be found in the Employee Handbook. Relevant key points to remember are summarised below
- Whilst photographic and video images can play a valuable role within the curriculum, after-school activities and to celebrate achievement, there is potential for such images and opportunities to be misused by adults with ulterior motives
- Cameras, including mobile phones with cameras, should not be taken into an area where intimate care is given
- Staff should be sensitive to the needs of pupils who may have been abused in this way or who appear uncomfortable when asked to participate in photography or filming
- Staff should be able to give account of the rationale behind any images of pupils that are in their possession. They should be stored securely and only used by those authorised to do so
- Permission from pupils and their parents/carers must be obtained for the use of images of pupils for publicity purposes and, in general, names of pupils should not be published

Internet use

- Staff must follow the school policy on 'IT Acceptable usage policy', which can be found in the Employee Handbook. Relevant key points to remember are summarised below
- Staff should under no circumstances access, or allow pupils to access, inappropriate material or images
- If pupils are found to have accessed such images, this should be reported to the Headteacher
- Staff should not access social networking sites on school computers
- If staff contribute to internet blogs or access social networking sites such as Facebook outside of the school, they should neither mention Herne Hill School nor make any reference to their employment, activities, etc. at the school

Whistle blowing

- Staff can find the school's 'Whistle blowing procedures' in the School Handbook
- All staff should remember that they have a responsibility to voice their concerns about the inappropriate or worrying behaviour of a colleague: in good faith and without fear of repercussions
- Staff must raise any **low-level concerns** they may have about a member of staff, supply staff, volunteer or contractor as per the guidelines outlined in chapter 10 of this Safeguarding Policy. Further details can also be found in Part 4 of [KCSIE](#) 2026
- Where allegations are made about the mistreatment of a pupil by a member of staff or volunteer, the Head will follow the procedures set out in the school's safeguarding policy. If the complaint concerns alleged abuse by the Head, this should be brought to the attention of the Director, without informing the Head. If the complaint/allegation concerns the Director, this should be brought directly to the attention of the LADO

Appendix 2: Key Contacts

Key school contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and SENDCo	Carla Diego Carla.Diego@hernehillschool.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) and Headteacher	Ngaire Telford Ngaire.Telford@hernehillschool.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) and Head of Kindergarten	Louise Lomax Louise.Lomax@hernehillschool.co.uk
ICT coordinator and Teacher	Bradley Clay Bradley.Clay@hernehillschool.co.uk
Nominated lead governor for safeguarding and Director	Dominik Magyar Domink.Magyar@hernehillschool.co.uk

Key external contacts

Southwark Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Eva Simcock (020 7525 0689; 07943076608, Eva.Simcock@southwark.gov.uk) LADO can also be contacted via Qau.Safeguarding@southwark.gov.uk . There is also a duty system and one of the CP Coordinators in Quality Assurance Unit is on duty each day to deal with LADO issues when LADO is unavailable. Duty telephone number for enquiries/referrals is 020 7525 3297
Southwark Strategic Lead Officer for safeguarding in education services	Director of Children's Services Alasdair Smith (020 7525 0654, alsadair.smith@southwark.gov.uk)
Southwark Safeguarding in Schools Lead	Emma Geiringer (020 7525 5377, 07860 354 934, emma.geiringer@southwark.gov.uk)
Southwark Schools Safeguarding Coordinator	Apo Çağırıcı (020 7525 2715, 07946 453527, apo.cagirici@southwark.gov.uk)
Southwark Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	020 7525 1921, mash@southwark.gov.uk Southwark MASH Online Referral Form
Southwark Family Early Help Service	020 7525 1922, earlyhelp@southwark.gov.uk Family Early Help referral form
Southwark Virtual School Head	Usha Singh, 020 7525 54076, 07548 712129 usha.singh@southwark.gov.uk
Southwark Specialist Private Fostering Senior Social Worker	Joab Keatley-Whyte (020 7525 7239, 07523 944253, Joab.Keatley-Whyte@southwark.gov.uk)