

# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Adopted Sep 2019, reviewed September 2026

(To be reviewed Sep 2027)

This policy is based on the recommended model policy drafted by Bi-borough Safeguarding and Child Protection, guidance for school/education settings in Kensington and Chelsea, Hammersmith and Fulham, and City of Westminster.

## Overview and headline summary of TBMH's approach to Safeguarding and Child Protection

We believe that education settings, including Music Education Hubs, can contribute to the prevention of abuse. All children have the right to be safe and protected from harm. To meet this approach, all adults should:

- Be familiar with the child protection policy, including issues of confidentiality, for each setting they teach in. For a Music tutor this could involve visiting multiple settings each week.
- Share any concerns with the Designated person/s
- Deal with disclosure of abuse from a child in line with the setting's policy
- Be subject to enhanced DBS vetting through the update service

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All staff and Freelance Practitioners (including volunteers and visitors) should be aware of the common signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection.

### There are 5 main categories of abuse:

1. Abuse: maltreatment of a child. This may be abuse or neglect to a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include non-physical maltreatment, witnessing domestic abuse for example, online abuse, or technology used to inflict offline abuse.
2. Physical Abuse: Deliberately hurting a child through actions such as hitting, punching, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning or burning.
3. Emotional Abuse: Persistent emotional maltreatment of a child that can lead to insecure attachment, low self-esteem or a lack of self-worth.
4. Sexual Abuse: Any activity involving a child such as the viewing of sexual images and the encouragement of sexual activity, including AI deepfake images and sextortion, and child-on-child abuse.
5. Neglect: Failure to protect a child from harm or the persistent failure to provide the basic needs of the child, including neglect by absence of boundaries/lack of care.

### Signs and Symptoms:

1. Abuse: Examples include changes in children's behaviour that could be a warning sign, being more withdrawn or increased in anxiety or fear around parent/carer (in the case of domestic abuse).
  2. Physical Abuse: Children with frequent or unexplained injuries.
  3. Emotional Abuse: Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful or anxious about doing something wrong, uncharacteristic responses towards others.
  4. Neglect: Children who are hungry or dirty, have inadequate clothing, or whose basic medical needs are not being met, or who are left home alone without supervision.
  5. Sexual Abuse: Children who use sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you would not expect them to have, low self-esteem, changes in behaviour with phone use/device.
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### Disclosures:

1. Always take pupils seriously if they make a disclosure to you.
  2. Never promise confidentiality – explain that you will need to tell DSL/someone else.
  3. Do not ask leading questions, ask open questions if necessary – remember this could end up with legal cases and it is important to not put pressure on the child.
  4. Reassure them that they have done the right thing; and write up the disclosure immediately and pass on to the relevant DSL/authority.
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### Concerns:

In addition to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in a setting, all concerns should be directed immediately to:

- Katie Stuffelbeam, DSL for the TBMH and/or
  - Katie.Stuffelbeam@rbkc.gov.uk
  - 07967762114
- Stuart Whatmore, Deputy DSL for the TBMH, and/or
  - Stuart.Whatmore@rbkc.gov.uk
  - 07976060148
- Hannah Taylor, Deputy DSL for the TBMH
  - Hannah.Taylor@rbkc.gov.uk
  - 07739315839

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## Introduction

All services working with schools are required to have a Safeguarding Child Protection Policy that guides the procedures and practices of staff and Freelance Practitioners when safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. The Tri-borough Music Hub takes very seriously its duty towards all its pupils who have been entrusted to its care, and seeks to provide an environment where all children are safe, secure, valued, respected and listened to.

The Tri-borough Music Hub understands that our work in safeguarding and protecting children must always have regard for the national guidance issued by the Secretary of State and should be in line with local guidance and procedures.

We understand the term Safeguarding to mean that we take all reasonable measures to ensure the risk of harm to children's welfare is minimised. We also understand that where we have any concerns about a child's welfare, we take all appropriate action to address those concerns by working in full partnership with other agencies.

All staff and Freelance Practitioners believe that a range of other service policies are central to many aspects of the Child Protection Policy, and this document should therefore be read in conjunction with our policies for:

- Freelance Music Practitioner Agreement: 2026-27 Academic Year
- TBMH Tutor/Staff code of conduct
- [Part 1 of KCSIE 2026](#) (\*part 1 - pages 1-26 are now statutory for everyone to read)
- [Working together to safeguard children](#) (statutory guidance) updated March 2026

Our Child Protection Policy is written with due regard to the Department of Education Statutory Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015), and includes updates from KCSIE 2022, KCSIE 2023, KCSIE 2024, KCSIE 2025, and [KCSIE 2026](#), as well as the Statutory Guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015), including updates through March 2026.

Our procedures for safeguarding children will always be compliant with the London Child Protection Procedures produced by the London Safeguarding Children Board.  
<https://www.londonscb.gov.uk/about-the-board/>

Our procedures will be followed by all adults, including volunteers, working with us or on our behalf.

Our policy was adopted in September 2019 and is reviewed regularly by the strategic managers of the Tri-borough Music Hub and Local Authority services. The most recent review and update took place September 2026. Please refer to the [most recent KCSIE](#) for further information and guidance.

## Preface

### ***Top Tips on Child Protection and Safeguarding***

Below is a set of guidelines that staff and Freelance Practitioners should take on board when dealing with individual / small groups of students. It is important to be mindful at all times of your behaviour in relationship to students, particularly individual / small groups of students, and of the potential risk of an allegation. Staff and Freelance Practitioners should take necessary precautions to minimise the opportunity for an allegation to be made against them.

- Whenever possible try not to be alone in a room with a pupil, regardless of gender. If you are on your own with a pupil, you may leave the door open if there is no window, and inform a colleague if possible. Always keep an appropriate distance between you and the pupil.
- Keep boundaries very clear between you and pupils, particularly if the conversation involves relationships, emotions, and sexual content.
- Do not exchange mobile phone numbers with students. If possible, do not have your mobile phone out when dealing with pupils.
- Do not video or photograph pupils, or lessons with pupils, or rehearsals.
- Do not accept students as friends on Facebook/Instagram/Snapchat or any other social media sites or apps, or email or call pupils directly.
- If a pupil wishes to disclose personal information to you, ensure that they understand that you cannot guarantee confidentiality. Do not probe a pupil about their personal life unless they approach you. Avoid giving advice to pupils about their relationships.
- Do not teach individuals / small groups of pupils outside of normal lessons unless there is another member of staff or another Freelance Practitioner in the department at that time.
- Be aware of pupils forming attachments to you as a teacher and maintain professional boundaries if they appear particularly needy of your attention. It is imperative that you do not appear to be encouraging the relationship, as this can often lead to misunderstandings.
- Do not engage in conversations about your personal life with pupils.
- Be aware of conversations that you have with pupils and avoid sexual innuendo at all times. Older pupils are particularly conscious of staff and Freelance Practitioners making sexual inferences and this can place you in a vulnerable position.
- Do not have any physical contact with any pupil at any time. Use descriptive language and assist verbally with positioning, technique etc.
- When in any doubt, if something was disclosed (or partially disclosed), report to DSL or deputy DSL. Writing up a report or expressing a concern is never a problem or burden. It is always better to let us know of any concerns, however minor they may seem.

## 1. TRI-BOROUGH MUSIC HUB CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

**The Tri-borough Music Hub is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils, and expects all staff, Freelance Practitioners and volunteers to share this commitment by demonstrating their understanding of how each individual adult working on behalf of the Tri-borough Music Hub contributes to providing a safe environment, protecting children from harm and promoting their welfare.**

1.1 All staff and Freelance Practitioners must be clear about their own role and that of others in providing a caring and safe environment for all pupils, and must know how they should respond to any concerns that may arise about an individual child.

1.2 To this end the Tri-borough Hub will ensure that all staff, Freelance Practitioners (whether permanent or temporary), and volunteers know the members of staff within the senior leadership team who have designated overall responsibility for child protection and safeguarding (Designated Safeguarding Leads): Katie Stuffelbeam, SMS lead of the Tri-borough Music Hub, who has received the required training in order to undertake the role.

In the absence of Katie Stuffelbeam, the alternate designated safeguarding leads are Stuart Whatmore and Hannah Taylor. If these members of staff are not available, then any concern should be reported to a member of the Senior Leadership of the relevant Local Authority.

1.3 All staff and Freelance Practitioners will receive training during their induction period which is then updated on an annual basis. Training is provided for all staff and Freelance Practitioners at the start of the academic year and updated for new staff and Freelance Practitioners throughout the year. As part of the training, staff and Freelance Practitioners are made familiar with the DfE Statutory Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education, first published in 2015, then updated annually.

1.4 The Tri-borough Music Hub will always follow safer recruitment procedures so that we can be confident that all adults recruited to work in the service are safe to do so in a context of ongoing vigilance concerning professional conduct.

## 2. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN: PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential in setting which promotes their safety and welfare. All staff and Freelance Practitioners teach students who experience discrimination in their daily lives, and who are from cultures different our own. We must all aim to be inclusive and promote anti-racist teaching and learning; assumptions and stereotyping must not be part of our practice. Every effort must be made to ensure that cultural contexts are understood and that each individual case is dealt with on its own merits.

All persons who have any contact with students will undergo vetting checks including an enhanced DBS check prior to working for the Music Hub in a school or any setting.

Delivery of safeguarding responsibilities will also be included as part of ongoing performance management processes for staff and Freelance Practitioners.

## 3. KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

### 3.1 Child Protection - Responding to Concerns About Individual Children



3.1.1 All children engaging in Tri-borough Music Hub activities can place their trust and confidence in any adult working in the service. They can speak about any worries or concerns they may have and know they will be listened to, taken seriously and responded to appropriately. All staff and Freelance Practitioners must therefore know what to do if a child chooses to talk to them about any matter which raises child protection concerns.

3.1.2 All staff and Freelance Practitioners must:

- Listen to what the child is saying without interruption and without asking leading questions
- Respect the child's right to privacy but not promise confidentiality
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Explain to the child that in order to keep them safe from harm the information that has been shared must be passed on
- Report what was disclosed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible
- Record, as soon as is practicable, what was said using the child's actual words including any observations of an injury and child's overall presentation
- Sign and date the record

3.1.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will assess the circumstances liaising with the Local Authority Social Care Teams including accessing points of contact for consultation and taking advice as needed.

3.1.4 The Designated Safeguarding Lead must keep a written record of all contact with other agencies and action taken.

## 3.2 Safeguarding – Providing a Safe Environment

3.2.1 **Code of conduct:** All parents and carers of children accessing Tri-borough Music Hub services can feel secure in the knowledge that they are entrusting their children to adults who are working to keep them safe. We will do this by adhering to the following:

- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment
- Ensuring that our staff and Freelance Practitioners are appropriately trained in safeguarding and child protection according to their role and responsibilities
- Keeping a record of all safeguarding training undertaken
- Ensuring that staff and Freelance Practitioners receive training in basic child mental health awareness
- Ensuring members of core team are trained as mental health first aiders
- Working in partnership with all other services and agencies involved in the safeguarding of children
- Always following Safer Recruitment procedures when appointing staff and Freelance Practitioners or volunteers to work in our settings
- Welcoming visitors in a safe and secure manner
- Undertaking risk assessments when planning Hub activities or events
- Making clear expectations that staff and Freelance Practitioners adhere to all relevant Professional Codes of Conduct
- No tolerance policy for mobile phone use, including no photos or videos of any lessons (occasional audio/voice note recordings will be allowed on a case by case basis).  
*\*Please note that tutors may take attendance on their mobile phones*
- No tolerance policy for vaping/vape devices or smoking of any kind

**3.2.2 Pupil Behaviour.** We will always aim to maintain a safe and calm environment by expecting good behaviour from our pupils in line with our behaviour policy.

We are aware that any physical response from a member of staff and Freelance Practitioners to a pupil's poor behaviour could lead to a child protection concern being raised by the child or parent / carer.

- No member of staff or Freelance Practitioners will use any physical contact when dealing with a pupil's breach of our behaviour policy unless in an extreme case when it is necessary to keep the child or others around them safe
- We will always record any occasion when physical intervention has been necessary
- We will always notify parents or carers of any such incident

### 3.2.3 Bullying

We understand that bullying is very harmful to children. We will always take seriously any reports of bullying and respond appropriately.

We understand that bullying may take different forms and may include racist or homophobic behaviour. Any such reported or observed incident will be dealt with in accordance with our safeguarding policy.

### 3.2.4 Online Safety and Phone/device Use

We recognise that children's use of the internet is an important part of their education but that there are risks of harm associated with its use. We have a no pupil phone/device use policy at TBMH in line with DfE statutory guidance put in place for all schools starting Autumn 2026.

Please note: *unfortunately, electronic/online registers are required to be taken on mobile devices, but this is the exception to the use policy.*

We also recognise that all members of staff and Freelance Practitioners and volunteer staff must always be mindful of the need to follow acceptable use of IT equipment.

Phone use while teaching must only be used in an emergency, or if absolutely necessary for accessing a backing track. No videos or photos may be taken in any teaching setting. Please also refer to school/setting policies for any in-school teaching.

### 3.2.5 Health & Safety

We have a Health & Safety Policy which demonstrates the consideration we give to minimising any risk to children when attending Hub venues and when undertaking activities out of school under the supervision of our staff and Freelance Practitioners.

### 3.2.6 Confidentiality

Information about children given to us by the children themselves, their parents or carers, or by other agencies will remain confidential. Staff and Freelance Practitioners will be given relevant information only on a 'need to know' basis to support the child when necessary and appropriate.

We are, however, under a duty to share any information which is of a child protection nature. We understand that this is in the best interests of the child and overrides any other duties we have regarding confidentiality and information sharing.

### 3.2.7 Referrals to Partner Agencies



If we have a reason to be concerned about the welfare of a child we will always consult with Social Care and access points of consultation including the Tri-borough Safeguarding and Child Protection, Schools and Education Lead.

#### 4. OVERVIEW OF SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

All staff and Freelance Practitioners should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to the following issues can all be signs that children are at risk:

- Domestic Abuse – Children who witness domestic abuse are also victims. Witnessing domestic abuse can have a lasting impact on a child. Children can be victims, and perpetrators in their own relationships too. Domestic abuse can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or emotional.
- Child-on-child abuse including sexual violence and sexual harassment and the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos, AI deep-fake images/videos, or live streams online by young people under the age of 18 (also known as ‘sexting’ or youth produced sexual imagery). Child-on-child abuse is the new name for peer-on-peer abuse to highlight there could be an age imbalance. Guidance has been incorporated into KCSIE.
  - child sexual exploitation (CSE)/child criminal exploitation (CCE)
  - the risk of radicalisation
  - female genital mutilation (FGM) and honour based abuse (HBA)
  - children deliberately missing education (this is a high-risk group and can include home educated pupils or pupils who were never enrolled at any school)
  - children absent in education (these are children on school roll but who have poor attendance)
  - mental/physical health
  - serious violence
  - those children potentially at greater risk of harm including:
    - children with special educational needs
    - those who need a social worker and
    - looked-after children
    - lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning (LGBTQ+), or perceived to be, may be at greater risk of harm
  - drug and/or alcohol misuse
- Online Safety: As of September 2023 there is more emphasis on filtering and monitoring systems on all school computers and devices to protect pupils and staff and Freelance Practitioners from harmful content. This may include:
  - Pornography (and deep fake AI generated content)
  - Promotion of self-harm and/or suicide
  - Misogyny
  - Racism/antisemitism/islamophobia
  - Fake news
  - Extremist views
  - Radicalisation
  - Hate speech
  - Pupils and staff and Freelance Practitioners need to be aware that harmful or illegal content is never permitted, and all staff and Freelance Practitioners have to report any problems to DSL and monitor anything happening on screens in school/on site.
- It is now a crime (as of February 2023) for a child to be married before the age of 18, and any such marriage is considered forced if before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. This also applied to ‘non-binding, or unofficial marriages’, as well as legal marriages

All staff and Freelance Practitioners should have an awareness of additional safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. See KCSIE. These include:

- children involved in the court system or with family members in prison;
- child criminal exploitation such as county lines criminal activity;
- domestic abuse - see above
- Homelessness.

**4.1 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) & Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) - referred to jointly as Child Exploitation (CE):** Both CSE and CCE are forms of sexual abuse. Both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child under the age of 18 into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases this may be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or may be for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when the activity appears consensual. Exploitation can be physical and be facilitated and/or take place online. A significant number of children who are victims of exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.

**4.2 Children at risk of Radicalisation:** Staff and Freelance Practitioners have a duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (***the Prevent duty***), and should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. If it appears that a pupil is at risk of radicalisation, or displays any indication that they have been exposed to extremism, the DSL must be informed immediately.

The DSL will consider the level of risk to identify the most appropriate referral, which could include referral to the local Channel Panel, children's social services in the area of the child's residence, the police, or other avenues of help and support offered through the Bi-Borough Prevent team. Normal referral processes are available when there are concerns about children who may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism.

Channel is an early intervention multi-agency process designed to safeguard vulnerable people from being drawn into violent extremism and/or terrorism. Channel works in a similar way to other safeguarding partnerships such as case conferences for children in need. Channel is a pre-criminal process that is designed to support vulnerable people at the earliest possible opportunity, before they become involved in illegal activity. A referral to the Channel Panel will normally be made by the DSL but anyone can make a referral in exceptional circumstances such as emergency or when there is a genuine concern that appropriate action is not being taken.

**4.3 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and other forms of so-called 'honour- based' abuse (HBA):** All staff and Freelance Practitioners should raise any FGM related concern with the DSL, (or in their absence the Deputy DSL), who will involve the children's social services in the area of the child's residence as appropriate. Unless there is a reason not to, teachers should also follow local safeguarding procedures. **There is a specific legal duty on teachers to report to the police cases where, in the course of their work, they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18 – it is an illegal practice and must be reported to police/legal services.** Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all those to whom the legal duty applies.

HBA encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so-called HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such.

Staff and Freelance Practitioners need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA. If in any doubt staff and Freelance Practitioners should speak to the DSL who should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

#### **4.4 Children absent from education**

A child being absent or going missing from education, particularly persistently, is a potential indicator of a range of safeguarding issues. This may include neglect, sexual abuse, CSE or CCE. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of FGM or forced marriage. Individual triggers to be aware of include travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding abuse and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as on a child in need or child protection plan, or as a looked after child), where going missing from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

***Staff and Freelance Practitioners must report to the DSL any unexplained absences that are prolonged (for more than 2 weeks) and any indication that a pupil/family has a planned absence in term time that has not been approved.***

**4.5 Mental Health:** All staff and Freelance Practitioners should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff and Freelance Practitioners, 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.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is important that staff and Freelance Practitioners are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. See DfE [Mental health and behaviour in schools guidance](#), and the [Link Programme](#).

**If staff or Freelance Practitioners have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, and they should report to the DSL or a Deputy DSL.** Staff and Freelance Practitioners must also be alert to symptoms of mental ill-health, such as eating disorders, low mood or self-harming and behaviours linked to the likes of drug and alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education, and the sharing of nude and semi-nude images.

**4.6 Serious Violence:** All staff and Freelance Practitioners should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious 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 criminal exploitation.

All staff and Freelance Practitioners should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these.

**4.7 Children potentially at greater risk of harm:** Whilst all children should be protected, some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm and in some cases may find it particularly difficult to communicate what is happening to them. These include: Children with SEND/LDD or physical health issues; Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans); Children Missing Education (CME); Children requiring mental health support; Looked-after children and children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning (LGBTQ+) or perceived to be, has a parent or carer in custody, may be at greater risk of harm.

#### **4.7.1 Children with Special Educational Needs and disabilities (SEND), Learning Differences and Disabilities (LDD) or physical health issues:**

Children with SEND/LDD and/or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and vulnerability including peer-on-peer abuse. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children, including:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration;
- being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children;
- the disproportionate impact - without any outward signs - upon children with SEND/LDD by behaviours such as bullying; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

Staff and Freelance Practitioners should never assume that an indicator of a safeguarding concern is caused by a child's individual learning needs and should report any safeguarding concerns arising from SEND/LDD, including the intimate care of a child, immediately to the DSL, who will consider extra pastoral support and attention for these children.

#### **4.7.2 Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans):**

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs and this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks). Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, education, behaviour and mental health.

Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the DSL should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This should be considered as a matter of routine. The DSL should ensure that staff and Freelance Practitioners know who these children are, as appropriate in order to understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting teaching staff and Freelance Practitioners to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children.

#### **4.8 Drug and/or alcohol misuse**

Any child may benefit from early help, but all staff and Freelance Practitioners should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who is in a family circumstance presenting



challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse; or if the child is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.

#### **4.9 Children involved in the court system or with family member in prison**

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families which can be stressful for children. Children with a family member in prison are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health.

#### **4.10 Child county lines criminal activity**

'County lines' is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools. Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network

#### **4.11 Domestic abuse**

The statutory definition of domestic abuse, captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be "personally connected".

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child on child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'.

Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and /or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships.

#### **4.12 Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. In most cases, School may be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support.

**4.13 Child-on-child abuse:** All staff and Freelance Practitioners should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside

and outside of school or college and online. All staff and Freelance Practitioners should understand that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff and Freelance Practitioners have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) It is essential that all staff and Freelance Practitioners understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children, many of which are listed below, that are abusive in nature. 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 behaviours, 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.

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), 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)

## 5. ADULTS WORKING WITH CHILDREN

### 5.1 Safer Recruitment

All staff and Freelance Practitioners and volunteers working with children in our service will be recruited in line with Safer Recruitment procedures:

#### Preparation

- We will always consider the vacancy that has arisen within the context of safeguarding children and ensure that we include the responsibility to safeguard children within the requirements of the role.
- We always consider carefully the knowledge, skills and experience required to safeguard children and include these within a person specification.

#### Advertising

- We will always advertise our vacancies in a manner that is likely to attract a wide range of applicants.
- The advertisement will always include a statement about our commitment to safeguarding children and our expectation that all applicants will share that commitment.
- The advertisement will state that the post is subject to an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check.

#### Applications

- We will ensure that our application process enables us to gather information about the candidates’ suitability to work with children by asking specific and direct questions.
- We will scrutinise all applicants during the application process.

#### References

- We will not accept open references or testimonials.
- We will ask for the names of at least two referees one of whom should be the most recent employer.



- We will take up references prior to interview and ask specific questions about the candidate's previous employment or experience of working with children.
- We will follow up any vague or ambiguous statements.
- We will verify previous employment history.
- Appropriate checks are applied to staff and Freelance Practitioners and volunteers who come to work as part of the Tri-borough Music Hub.
- For statutory disclosure checks we will ensure sensitive and confidential use of the applicant's disclosure.
- Appropriate Risk Assessments are carried as per the CIPD guidance.

### **Interviews**

- We will always conduct a face to face interview including in circumstances where there is only one candidate.
- Our interview panel will always contain at least one member trained in safer recruitment practice.
- Our interview questions will seek to ensure we understand the candidate's values and beliefs that relate to children.
- All candidates will be asked to bring original documents which confirm their identity, qualifications and right to work.

### **Appointments**

- Our offer of appointment will be conditional on all requested checks having been returned as satisfactory.
- We will refer to the DBS and the NCTL (National College of Teaching and Learning) any person whose checks reveal that they have sought work when barred from working with children.

### **Induction**

We will always provide newly appointed staff and Freelance Practitioners with appropriate guidance about safe working practice, boundaries and propriety and explain the consequences of not following the guidance including disciplinary procedures.

### **Continuing Professional Development**

We will ensure that all staff and Freelance Practitioners receive regular training in Child Protection and Safeguarding including key updates to Keeping Children Safe in Education.

### **Supervision**

We will always supervise staff and Freelance Practitioners and act on any concerns that relate to the safeguarding of children.

### **Allegations**

We will always follow appropriate procedures for the management of allegations against staff and Freelance Practitioners including notifying the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

### **Dismissal**

We will always refer to the DBS and NCTL any member of staff, including Freelance Practitioners, who is dismissed because of misconduct relating to a child.

## **5.2 Safe Practice**

5.2.1 We understand that all adults working in or on behalf of our service have a duty to safeguard children and promote their welfare. We aim to provide a safe and supportive environment for our children through the relationship we have with them and their parents or

carers, and will always seek to ensure that all adults working in our school behave in a manner that fosters this relationship.

5.2.2. We will ensure that all staff and Freelance Practitioners are clear about the expectations we have of their behaviour towards all children, and that any incident that falls below our expected standards will be dealt with appropriately.

Staff and Freelance Practitioners will be made aware of the Whistleblowing policy.

## **6. MONITORING AND REVIEWING OUR POLICY AND PRACTICE**

6.1 Our Designated Safeguarding Lead will continually monitor our child protection and safeguarding practices and bring to the notice of Senior Leadership team any weaknesses or deficiencies to ensure these are addressed and remedied in a timely way.

6.2 The Tri-borough Music Hub and strategic partners will work together on any aspect of Safeguarding and Child Protection that is identified as an area for development over the coming year.

6.3 Our Policy will be reviewed annually and formally updated every two years

6.4 This Policy was last reviewed in Sep 2026

## **7. USEFUL CONTACTS**

Royal Borough Kensington and Chelsea  
Social Work Line for referrals 020 7361 3013

NSPCC 0808 800 5000 (staff)

Childline 0800 1111 (pupils)