



# Safeguarding & Child Protection

## Policy 2024-2025

*(Aligned with Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023)*

Headteacher: Mr Gulam Abbas Hussain

Policy reviewed: **August 2024** | Next review: **August 2025 (as and when required)**

<b>Named personnel with designated responsibility for child protection 2023 - 2024</b>	
<b>Designated safeguarding lead</b>	<b>Mr Gulam Abbas Hussain</b>
<b>Deputy designated safeguarding lead(s)</b>	<b>Ms Hanila Ali Syed Ms Farhana Begum Ms Ghaida Mustafa</b>
<b>Chair of Trustee Governance Board</b>	<b>Mr Amran Hussain Ruhel</b>

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**1. Useful Contacts and Links**

**CAF**

**0208 708 2071**

[CAF Duty@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:CAF Duty@redbridge.gov.uk)

[CAF Admin@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:CAF Admin@redbridge.gov.uk)

**Child Protection & Assessment Team**

**020 8708 3885**

[CPAT.Referrals@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:CPAT.Referrals@redbridge.gov.uk)

**Children Missing from Education**

**020 8708 6047 / 86029**

[cme@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:cme@redbridge.gov.uk)

**Children with Disabilities Team**

**020 8708 6092**

[Admin.CWDT@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:Admin.CWDT@redbridge.gov.uk)

**Children's Services Complaints**

**0208 8708 5174**

[ChildrensComplaints@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:ChildrensComplaints@redbridge.gov.uk)

**Families Together Hub**

**0208 708 2071**

[Early.Intervention@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:Early.Intervention@redbridge.gov.uk)

**Emergency Duty Team EDT**

**(Out of hours: after 5pm & weekends)**

020 8708 5897

**Local Authority Designated Officer**

020 8708 5350

[lado@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:lado@redbridge.gov.uk)

**Local Safeguarding Children Board**

020 8708 5282

[LSCB@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:LSCB@redbridge.gov.uk)

**Web links:**

**Ofsted** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-safeguarding-in-early-years-education-and-skills-from-september-2015/inspecting-safeguarding-in-early-years-education-and-skills-settings>

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**Redbridge LSCB**

Worried about a Child? [https://www.redbridgescp.org.uk/wp](https://www.redbridgescp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Redbridge-SCP-Multi-Agency-Thresholds-Document-September-2018-Final.pdf)

[content/uploads/2015/09/Redbridge-SCP- Multi-Agency-Thresholds-Document-September 2018-Final.pdf](https://www.redbridgescp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Redbridge-SCP-Multi-Agency-Thresholds-Document-September-2018-Final.pdf)

[https://www.redbridgescp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Redbridge-SCP-Multi Agency Thresholds- Document-September-2018-Final.pdf](https://www.redbridgescp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Redbridge-SCP-Multi-Agency-Thresholds-Document-September-2018-Final.pdf)

**Escalation and Resolution Policy,**

[https://www.redbridgescp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Redbridge-LSCB-Escalation-and-Resolution-Policy-3rd-Edition May-2019-Final.pdf](https://www.redbridgescp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Redbridge-LSCB-Escalation-and-Resolution-Policy-3rd-Edition-May-2019-Final.pdf)

**Department for Education**

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Advice for practitioners (March 2015)

**Working together to safeguard children 2023**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65803fe31c0c2a000d18cf40/Working\\_together\\_to\\_safeguard\\_children\\_2023 - statutory guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65803fe31c0c2a000d18cf40/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023_-_statutory_guidance.pdf)

**Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024**

[Keeping children safe in education 2024](#)

[Key changes to Safeguarding KCSIE 2024](#)

**Updates for KCSIE 2024 include:**

amending the definition of 'safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children' in line with Working together to safeguard children 2023

additional information around when children may require early help, in accordance with the guidance in

Working together

a recommendation for school staff, governors and trustees to use the DfE Data Protection guidance for schools<sup>3</sup> to understand data protection

clarification that schools continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of pupils they place with an alternative provision provider

## 2. Introduction and Definition

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility and Read Academy take a whole school approach to safeguarding. This policy applies to all staff (including those not directly employed by this school), volunteers, and governors in this school. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.
- Our children/young people have the right to be protected from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Our children/young people have the right to experience their optimum mental and physical health
- Every child has the right to an education and children/young people need to be safe and to feel safe in school
- Children/young people need support that matches their individual needs, including those who may have experienced abuse
- Our children/young people have the right to express their views, feelings and wishes and voice their own values and beliefs

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- Our children/young people should be encouraged to respect each other’s values and support each other
- Our children/young people have the right to be supported to meet their emotional, social and mental health needs as well as their educational needs. Our school will ensure clear systems and processes are in place to enable identification of these needs. Including consideration of when mental health needs may become a safeguarding need.
- Our school will contribute to the prevention of abuse, risk/involvement in serious violent crime, victimisation, bullying (including homophobic, biphobia, transphobic and cyber bullying), exploitation, extreme behaviours, discriminatory views, and risk-taking behaviours.

### **WE WILL ALWAYS ACT IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD**

#### **Definitions:**

**Safeguarding** is what we do for all children and young people to keep them safe whilst in our care. **Child protection** describes the policy and procedures specifically for those young people who are at risk of serious harm or have been seriously harmed.

We use the terms “**must**” and “**should**” throughout the guidance. We use the term “**must**” when the person in question is legally required to do something and “**should**” when the advice set out should be followed unless

there is a good reason not to.

### 3. Statutory Framework, Legislation and Guidance

In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, this policy and our safeguarding and child protection procedures have been developed in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

[The Children Act 1989 \(and 2004 amendment\)](#)

[The Children Act 2004 \(section 10 and section 14B\)](#)

[London Child Protection Procedures](#)

[Working together to safeguard children December 2023](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\)\(DfE September 2024\)](#)

[Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information.](#)

[Mental Health & Behaviour in Schools](#)

[General Data Protection Legislation \(2018\)](#)

[Children and Families Act 2014](#)

[Protecting Children from Radicalisation: The Prevent Duty, 2015](#)

[Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education](#)

[Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)

[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people Voyeurism Offences Act 2019](#)

[DfE statutory guidance on Children Missing Education](#)

[The Sexual Offences Act 2003](#)

[Teaching Online Safety in Schools](#)

[Preventing and Tackling Bullying](#)

[Redbridge Local Safeguarding Children Board Multi-Agency Thresholds Documents \(Are you worried about a child?\) \(March 2018\)](#)

[The Education Act 2011](#)

[Education Act 2002 \(section 175 and 157\)](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2005](#)

[Regulation 9 of the School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009 Regulated activity in relation to children:](#)

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[scope \(Factual note by HM Government\) Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#)

[Help, protection, education: concluding the children in need review 2019 School inspection handbook](#)

[Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings: Guidance for inspectors undertaking inspection under the common inspection framework \(September 2019\)](#)

### 4. Linked Policies and Procedures

The following or similarly named policies and procedures are relevant to child protection and safeguarding.

- Administration of medicines policy
- Anti-bullying or peer on peer abuse policy
- Attendance policy
- Behaviour policy\*
- Central record of recruitment and vetting checks\*

- Children missing from education policy and procedures\*
- Complaints procedure statement\*
- Data protection policy\*
- Drug and alcohol education policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage policy\* (including safeguarding and welfare)
- Equalities information and objectives (public sector equality duty) statement\*
- First Aid policy\*
- Freedom of information policy\*
- Health and safety policy\* and risk assessments
- ICT acceptable use policy
- Keeping records of child protection and welfare concerns protocols
- Offsite activities and educational visits policy and risk assessments
- Mobile Phone Usage Policy
- On-line safety policy
- Pastoral care policy
- Personal, social and health education policy
- Physical education and sports guidance
- Positive handling and use of reasonable force policy
- Premises inspection checklist
- Prevention of radicalisation, extremism and terrorism
- Pupil images policy
- Recruitment and selection policy and procedures
- Register of pupils' attendance\*
- Remote learning policy
- Safer recruitment policy
- Sex\*(and relationship education) policy
- Sexual Violence and Sexual harassment policy
- Special educational needs and disabilities policy\*
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development policy
- Staff code of conduct/behaviour policy\* - including Acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupils' relationships and use of social media)
- Staff discipline, conduct and grievance (procedures for addressing) \*
- Statement of procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff\*

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- Supporting pupils with medical conditions\*
- Teachers' standards, Department for Education guidance available on GOV.UK website
- Whistleblowing procedures\*
- Work experience handbook

## **5. Our policy aims/ principles and values**

### **Aims**

Our policy aims to provide staff with the framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and in so doing ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities; to ensure consistent good practice across the school; and to demonstrate our commitment to protecting and supporting our vulnerable children, children who need support through early help, children in need and children who have a child protection plan.

### **Principles and values**



We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We make every effort to provide a safe and welcoming environment underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, able to talk and believe that they are being listened to. We maintain an attitude of “it could happen here” where safeguarding is concerned. We will adopt a ‘child-centred’ approach to safeguarding and child protection and we will always act in the best interests of our children.

We ensure that everyone is aware of their safeguarding responsibilities.

We provide staff, volunteers and governors with the framework, training and support they need in order to keep children safe and secure in our school and to inform parents and guardians how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care.

## **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Roles and responsibilities of our Senior Development Leaders (SDL) Governing Body** Our Safeguarding

SDL Governor is Dr Kiran Rahim.

Our Chair of SDL Governors is Mr Sameer Abbas.

Our SDL governing body will ensure they comply with their duties under legislation. They will have regard to **Keeping Children safe in Education 2024** to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in our school are effective and comply with the law at all times and facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding.

Our SDL Governors will be subject to an enhanced DBS and section 128 check.

### **Our SDL governing body will ensure that:**

#### **a) Safeguarding policies and procedures**

- appropriate policies and procedures are in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children’s welfare and these are shared with all appropriate persons.
- our safeguarding/child protection policy will reference procedures which are in accordance with government guidance and local safeguarding arrangements; will be updated annually (as a minimum), and be available publicly either via our school website or by other means.

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- policies and procedures are followed by all staff.
- appropriate safeguarding responses are in place to children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.
- they are aware that the Data Protection Act and GDPR place a duty on organisations to process personal information fairly and lawfully and keep any information they hold safe and secure. • they receive an annual report regarding safeguarding and that this on the agenda for discussion and review at least once a year.
- Safeguarding updates will also be added to the agenda on a termly basis. • the safeguarding lead SDL governor meets with the DSL/deputy on a termly basis in order to carry out an internal monitoring check on safeguarding procedures in the school.
- school submit the local S157 audit to evidence compliance with current legislative requirements, including any implications and learning from local regional or national safeguarding issues.
- all staff hold a current DBS.

## 2. B.

- Our Trustee Governing body will ensure that all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety training to ensure that staff has full understanding of the expectations and applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.
- Our Trustee Governing body should consider the number and age range of children, those who are potentially at greater risk of harm and how often these children access the IT system in order to promote the welfare of children.

### b) Role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

- they appoint an appropriate senior member of staff, from our school leadership team, to the role of designated safeguarding lead. The designated safeguarding lead will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection matters and their role will be made explicit in the job description.
- the DSL (and any agreed deputies) will be given the time, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and to contribute to the assessment of children.
- the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies will liaise with the local authority and work with other agencies as required. During term time the designated safeguarding lead and or a deputy will always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies will undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. The training will be updated
- every two years and all members of the safeguarding team will be trained to the same required standard.

## 2. A

- Part of DSL safeguarding responsibilities is understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes which are in place as well as online Safety. Refer to D f E Guidance [Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- All staff working directly with children should read and understand their statutory responsibilities outlined in Part 1 and Annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance.

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They should review the guidance of [[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE 2024\)](#)] at least annually.

### C) Multi-agency working

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- be prepared to supply information, as requested by the three safeguarding partners. • work with social care, the police, health and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a coordinated offer of early help, when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans.

- where necessary, and in liaison with the headteacher, use local escalation policies where the actions of other agencies have not been sufficiently timely.
- share information with appropriate staff in relation to the child's looked after (CLA) status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.
- local authorities should share that a child has a social worker with the DSL.
- ensure s/he has details of the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after her/him. The designated safeguarding lead should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school headteacher in the authority that looks after the child.
- The DSL and deputies will need to have in place clear systems and processes to identify these needs around mental health and to consider when they become a safeguarding concern.
- If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the DSL should press for re consideration. Concerns should always lead to support for the child at the earliest possibility. If a disagreement arises about the way or timeliness of how concerns are being addressed, please refer to the Redbridge [LSCB Escalation and Resolution Policy](#).

#### **d) Training:**

- all staff members undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction. All staff members will receive level 1 safeguarding training annually along with regular, termly safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings), as required, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively
- all SDL governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction, which equips them with the knowledge to challenge and assure themselves that safeguarding in our school is effective. This training should be regularly updated.
- our SDL Governing body recognise the expertise staff build by undertaking safeguarding training and managing safeguarding concerns on a daily basis. Opportunity will therefore be provided for staff to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and child protection policy.

#### **e) Online Safety:**



2.C.

- Appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place which consider that blocking does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding; and that these are monitored to review their effectiveness.

#### **f) Opportunities to Teach Safeguarding:**

- children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This should include covering relevant issues through Personal, Social, Health and Emotional education, Relationships and Sex Education and British Values.

### **g) Inspection:**

- they are familiar with the Ofsted New Common Inspection Framework and safeguarding: Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings.

### **h) Safer Recruitment:**

- In line with **part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024**, they prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with children by adhering to statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required; and ensuring volunteers are appropriately
- supervised. Our school has written recruitment and selection policies and procedures in place. • At least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken appropriate safer recruitment training.
- The SCR is monitored termly to ensure it meets statutory requirements.

### **i) Managing Allegations:**

#### **Allegations or concerns about staff**

- This procedure must be used in any case in which it is alleged that a member of staff, SDL Governor/Trustee, visiting professional or volunteer has:
- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child/young person or may have harmed a child/young person
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child/young person; or behaved in a way that indicates s/he may not be suitable to work with children/young people.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicated s/he may pose a risk of harm to children.
- The new provision as set out in part 4 of KCSIE should apply to anyone working in the school who has behaved, or may have behaved, in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.
- Although it is an uncomfortable thought, it needs to be acknowledged that there is the potential for staff in school to abuse pupils/students. In our school we also recognise that concerns may be apparent before an allegation is made. All staff working within our organisation must report any potential safeguarding concerns about an individual's behaviour towards children and young people immediately.
  - Allegations or concerns about staff, colleagues and visitors (recognising that schools hold the responsibility to fully explore concerns about supply staff) must be reported directly to the Head Teacher who will liaise with the Local Area Designated Officer Children's Trust Designated Officer

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(LADO) Team who will decide on any action required. (Where a Head Teacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school it is mandatory to report to the LADO) **and report to the Ofsted within 14 days of the allegations being made.**

- If the concern relates to the Head Teacher, it must be reported immediately to the Chair of the SDL Governing Body, who will liaise with the LADO and they will decide on any action required. • If the safeguarding concern relates to the proprietor of the setting, then the concern must be made directly to the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) Team who will decide on any action required.
- We remind all staff to maintain the view that 'it could happen here' and to immediately report any concern, no matter how small, to the DSL or Headteacher.
- Any staff or volunteers from outside our setting will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of the risks and know what they need to do if they are concerned.

## **Redbridge LADO**

- Helen Curtis, - 020 8708 5350 - lado@redbridge.gov.uk
- The school whistle blowing policy is available and a paper copy can be requested from the school office.
- there are procedures in place to handle allegations against all staff, headteachers, volunteers and any other adults that work in our school. Such allegations will be referred to the designated officer(s) at the local authority by the appropriate person.
- procedures are in place to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed from working (paid or unpaid) due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned. Our SDL governing body is aware that this is a legal duty and failure to refer when the criteria are met is a criminal offence.

### **j) Allegations of abuse made against other children:**

- our safeguarding/child protection policy includes a specific section regarding child on-child abuse; procedures to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse; and sets out how allegations of child-on-child abuse will be investigated and dealt with.

### **k) The Child's wishes:**

• the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems are in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Systems and processes will operate with the best interests of the child at their heart. **l) Children in**

### **Care:**

- staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep children safe and that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status. the SDL governing body should recognise that children previously in care remain vulnerable and that staff have the skills and knowledge to keep them safe.
- they appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of children in care and to ensure that this person has the relevant qualifications, experience and appropriate training.

### **Designated Teacher for Looked After Children:**

- The Designated Teacher for Children Looked After is:  
Mr G A Hussain – 07957777786 – headteacher@readacademy.co.uk
- Work with the Virtual School to provide the most appropriate support utilising the pupil

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- premium plus to ensure they meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan.
- Work with the Virtual School headteacher to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children.
- In non-maintained schools and colleges, an appropriately trained teacher should take the lead. • The Virtual Headteacher in LB Redbridge is Acting Head - Sholah Steele  
Sholah.Steele@redbridge.gov.uk

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Designated Safeguarding Lead and Safeguarding team**

The designated safeguarding lead takes the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to

appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead. This responsibility will not be delegated.

Our DSL also holds the responsibility to ensure that children who have or have had a social worker maintain academic and attendance standards.

***Our Designated Safeguarding Lead is:***

Mr Gulam Abbas Hussain (Headteacher) – 07957 777 786 - [headteacher@readacademy.co.uk](mailto:headteacher@readacademy.co.uk) Our Deputy

***Safeguarding Officers are:***

Hanila Ali Syed (Deputy Head) – 07405956152 – [hanila@readacademy.co.uk](mailto:hanila@readacademy.co.uk)

Farhana Begum (SLT) –07405956152 – [farhana@readacademy.co.uk](mailto:farhana@readacademy.co.uk);

Ghaida Mustafa (SLT) – 07405956152 – [ghaida@readacademy.co.uk](mailto:ghaida@readacademy.co.uk)

**Our Designated Safeguarding Lead and Safeguarding Team are expected to:**

**a) Manage referrals:**

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to refer all cases of suspected abuse to children's social care and to:

- the police (where a crime may have been committed); Guidance on when to call the police may be found here. [When to call the police](#)
- the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern.
- the Disclosure and Barring Service where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child. • The DSL must also understand the mandatory reporting duty for FGM.
- be aware of 'NPCC - When to call the police' which has been designed to support DSLs to understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do; and understand the role of the Appropriate Adult within a police investigation
- ensure paperwork is completed in a satisfactory manner and stored confidentially b) Work with others:
- act as a point of reference with the three local safeguarding partners and with other agencies in line with Working Together to safeguard Children;
- be fully engaged, co-operate and included in safeguarding arrangements with the three safeguarding partners;
- liaise with the headteacher to inform of any issues;
- as required, liaise with the case manager and the designated officer(s) at the local authority in all cases which concern a staff member;

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- liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies;
- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff.

**c) Training:**

- undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training will be updated at least every two years. The designated safeguarding lead and deputies should undertake Prevent awareness training. In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills will be refreshed at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role; understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention;
- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so; ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;
- be alert to the specific needs of vulnerable children, those with special education needs, children who are (or have previously been) in care and young carers.
- keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- understand and support the school with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and be able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation; • obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses. • encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.

#### d) Staff knowledge and understanding:

- ensure the school's Safeguarding policies and procedures are known, understood and used appropriately;
- ensure the school's Safeguarding policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this;
- ensure the Safeguarding policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this.
- link with Redbridge Local Authority to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding;
- at induction, ensure all staff, volunteers etc are aware of systems within our school which support safeguarding. These should include Safeguarding policy, behaviour policy, staff code of conduct, the role of the DSL including their identity and that of any deputies;
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children are experiencing with teachers and school staff; supporting staff to understand the challenges these children might face and identify any additional support that staff could make to best support these children.

#### e) Safeguarding Records:



5.B

- Ensure a child's safeguarding record is transferred to any new school within 5 days for an in-year

transfer and within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained; • In addition to the child protection file, the DSL should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school in advance of the child leaving, e.g information that would allow the new school to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives;

- know where individual children have come from (i.e. previous school or new to the country) and also where they go upon leaving our school.

- Ensure records are stored confidentially and securely.

#### f) Availability:

- be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking our designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will be available in person, there may be occasions, in exceptional circumstance when this is not possible however they may be available via e-mail, phone and or Skype or other such mediums;
- ensure adequate and appropriate cover arrangements will be made for any out of hours'/term time activities which may take place. The LA will be informed of up-to-date contact numbers and e-mail contacts should such activities take place;
- submit a safeguarding report to Trustee Board **termly**.

#### g) Alternative provision

- continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of any pupil that has been placed in alternative provision, ensuring that the provider meets the need of the child.

#### Roles and Responsibilities of all staff

The Teacher Standards (2012) state that teachers, including headteachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties. We extend this level of duty to include **ALL** of the staff and volunteers who work at Read Academy.

This means that:

- **ALL** staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn; • **ALL** staff have a responsibility to identify children who may be in need of extra help, including children who may benefit from Early Help, or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. All staff have a responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed;
- in addition to working with the designated safeguarding lead, staff members should be aware that they may be asked to support social workers to take decisions about individual children; • during induction all staff members will be made aware of the systems within our school which support safeguarding and these will be explained to them as part of their induction. This includes: the safeguarding/child protection policy; the behaviour policy; the staff code of conduct; KCSIE 2023, the role of the DSL and the names of the designated safeguarding lead and deputies;
- all staff members will receive appropriate safeguarding/child protection updates regularly, but at least annually;
- all staff members will be made aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection;
- **staff should be aware that children can be at risk of harm inside or outside school and online;** • staff members working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the best interests of the child and talk to the DSL;

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- staff should ensure that if a child has made a disclosure, the child is aware that the information will only be shared with the DSL and other adults who wish to keep them safe, in an age-appropriate manner. Under no circumstances, should staff agree to keep information a secret, even if they intend to share it;
- staff should be aware that a child going missing from an education setting is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff members should follow the school procedures for dealing with children who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions. This includes reporting concerns of absence;
- any member of staff who has a concern about a child's welfare should follow the school's



referral process.

- all staff should be aware of the local Early Help process and understand their role in it. All staff in

**school are required to have read and understood:**

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 Part 1 or Annex A
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding & Child Protection policy
- Behaviour policy

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Volunteers, Work experience and Students:**

A member of the Safeguarding team will explain to volunteers, work experience and students the responsibility of reporting any concerns about children's safety and welfare to the DSL. Further, they will be briefed on the required policies which include code of conduct, behaviour, safeguarding and child protection and the confidentiality standards that we expect from all in our school.

Therefore, volunteers and students have the responsibility to:

- Work within the school's code of conduct, KCSIE 2024, safeguarding/child protection policy and confidentiality/information sharing expectations; and
- Immediately share any concerns about a child's welfare with the DSL.

### **Parental Responsibilities**

At Read Academy we have an open-door policy where we encourage parents to share any concerns regarding their own children or any other child/children who they feel may be at risk of harm. All concerns will be explored in a sensitive and timely manner. Parents /carers should ensure their child attends school and that they arrive on time and are collected on time. We expect parents/carers to notify us of any changes in family circumstances and inform us of any changes of address and contact numbers.

### **Children's Responsibilities**

In our school we respect our children.

We aim to ensure that the atmosphere within our school is one that encourages all children to do their best and to talk freely about any concerns or worries. We provide opportunities that enable our children to take and make decisions for themselves. Children will always be taken seriously and listened to if they seek help from a member of staff. Our school encourages all pupils to share any worries or concerns with any adult in the school at any time. To support this, there are posters around school which clearly identify members of the safeguarding team.

In addition, we have a team of children who have undergone Safeguarding Ambassador training and are available for pupils to talk to about any worries or concerns, if they do not feel comfortable talking to an

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adult. The Safeguarding Ambassadors will then report directly to the safeguarding team. The Safeguarding Ambassadors will be identified on posters around the school.

## **7. Confidentiality and Information sharing**

Our school adopts the principles outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, DfE

## Information Sharing 2018 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

We recognise that all matters relating to safeguarding/child protection are confidential. All information and data is stored securely and any information or data is shared on a need to know basis only. All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other statutory agencies in order to safeguard children.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing. If a child wishes to confide in a member of staff/volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, the member of staff/volunteer will tell the child, in an appropriate manner to the individual needs of the child, that they cannot promise confidentiality and may need to pass the information on to help keep the child or other children safe.

If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the DSL or deputy. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent or limit the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent.

Further guidance on data protection and compliance with GDPR can be found in 'Data protection: toolkit for school' on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

Staff should be aware of the 7 Golden Rules for sharing information which are that the information you share is:

*Necessary. Proportionate. Relevant. Adequate. Accurate. Timely. Secure.*

## 8. Communication with Parents

Our school will always discuss concerns with parents/carers, where possible, and consent for any referrals should be sought unless to do so would:

- place the child at risk of significant harm or further risk of significant harm;
- place a vulnerable adult at risk of harm; and
- compromise any enquiries that need to be undertaken by children's social care or the police.

The school will endeavour to ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibilities placed on the school and staff for safeguarding children.

In the best interests of safeguarding children there may be occasions when the school has to consult with other agencies without a parent or carers' prior knowledge. Our first concern and responsibility is the child's welfare and **we have a duty to protect children first and always**. Such consultation may result in a formal referral which could prompt visits from social care and/or the police. We fully understand that this can be a

very distressing set of circumstances. Our school will follow the procedures required by the local authority.

Our school will employ the services of an interpreter if required.

## 9.Types and signs of abuse

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

All staff are expected to be vigilant at all times and refer any safeguarding concerns without delay, taking account of the following:

**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. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact of children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or by others. Abuse can take place wholly online or technology may be used to facilitate offline 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.

Some signs:

- Bruising
- Bite marks
- Burns and scalds
- Fractures in non-mobile children
- Injuries in unusual areas or with well - defined edges
- Old injuries or scars
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Inconsistent explanations
- Talk of punishment which seems excessive
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Reluctance to remove clothing for PE or swimming

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

Some signs:

- Physical, mental or emotional development delay
- Abnormal attachment to parents/carer
- Low self-esteem/ Lack of confidence
- Over-reaction to making mistakes
- Fear of new situations
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Self-harm

**Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education (see section on child-on-child abuse).

Some signs:

1. Aggression
2. Withdrawn
3. Self-harming, including eating disorders
4. Distrust of familiar adult
5. Wetting or soiling day and night
6. Fear of undressing for sport or swimming
7. Sleep disturbances or nightmares
8. Apparent secrecy about social activities or special friends
9. Inappropriate sexualized conduct
10. Drawings of sexual behaviours
11. Sexually explicit behaviour

**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.

Some signs:

1. Inadequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
2. Failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
3. Inadequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)

4. Failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
5. neglect of or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs
6. Underweight for age
7. Hungry
8. Tired
9. Poor state of clothing for the child's size, weather or time of year
10. Persistently dirty with a body odour
11. Frequent lateness or non-attendance
12. Compulsive stealing or scavenging
13. Poor health and untreated medical problems/ frequently missed appointments
14. Lack of immunisations

The list of signs is not an exhaustive list. If staff recognise any of these signs they should not presume that the child is being abused, but **MUST** report their concerns to the DSL or DDSL.

## 10. Early Help Assessment

Early Help is the support we all offer to potentially vulnerable children, young people, and their families. The purpose of Early Help is to put in the right support, at the right time, so that the additional vulnerabilities and needs that families may be facing are addressed and are less likely to escalate to a point where intrusive statutory interventions are required.

Any child may benefit from Early Help but staff should be particularly alert to the *potential need* for early help for a child who

- has a mental health need.
- is at risk of honour-based abuse
- is persistently absent or late
- has a family member in prison or has been affected by parental offending - is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- is a young carer (refer to school's young carers policy)
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is a privately fostered child

The school works alongside all agencies to deliver Early Help. LB Redbridge Early Intervention and Family Support Service (EI&FSS) can be contacted via

[Early.Intervention@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:Early.Intervention@redbridge.gov.uk)

## 11. Specific safeguarding issues

### Mental Health

Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils. In recognition of this, and in line with current DfE guidance, the school will appoint a Mental Health Lead (Ms

Amina Ali) with the responsibility of

- Overseeing the help, the school gives to pupils with mental health problems.
- Helping staff to spot pupils who show signs of mental health problems.
- Offering advice to staff about mental health.
- Referring children to specialist services.

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

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however are well placed to observe children day to day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences (ACES) or bereavement and separation, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

Staff should be aware of the range of services available to support children with mental health.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the Mental Health Lead, DSL or a member of the safeguarding team.

### **Contextual safeguarding**

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside the school.

All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead and deputies should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and serious youth violence. The school assesses the risks and issues in the wider community when considering the well-being and safety of our pupils. When making a referral to children's social care school will provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process to allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

### **Children Missing from Education**

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

Staff at Read Academy are aware that a child going missing in education is a potential indicator of a range of safeguarding possibilities, which may include abuse and neglect, sexual abuse or exploitation, radicalisation and child criminal exploitation. It may also indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of and follow the school's attendance policy and

procedures for dealing with children missing education. We monitor attendance carefully and address

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poor/irregular attendance without delay.

Our school has appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. We will always follow up with parents/carers, when pupils are absent from school. To support this, we will always request at least two up to date contact numbers. If we are unable to contact parents or carers and there are concerns around their absence a home visit will be carried out by the attendance officer and a member of the safeguarding team. If we are still unable to contact parents or carers and have cause for concern, then we may request a safe and well check be carried out by the police.

Our school has an admission and attendance registers and all pupils are placed on both registers. Our school will inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be removed from the admission register where the pupil:

- has been taken out of school by their parents and the school has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- has been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or, • have been permanently excluded.

Our school will notify the local authority if it is to remove a pupil from its register for any of the five grounds above. This will be done as soon as these grounds for removal from the register are met, and in any event no later than removing the pupil's name from the register.

Our school will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for 10 school sessions or more, within a five-week period. Where a child has been absent for a continuous period of 10 days (local authority guidelines suggest 20 days), without receiving any communication whatsoever from Parent/Carer, a referral will be made to children missing education. During this period, school will continue to follow our policy for making contact including a request for safe and well checks if necessary.

Children absent from education or missing/absconding during the school day can also be a sign of a range of safeguarding concerns including sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or child criminal exploitation.

In the event that a parent informs us that a pupil will live at another address, we will record:

- The full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live
- The new address
- The date this move will take place

In the event that a parent notifies us that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in the future, we will record:

- The name of the new school
- The date on which the pupil first attended or will be attending that school We have a

separate Attendance policy that reflects latest policy and procedures.

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

Both CSE and CCE 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 sexual or criminal activity, in 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. CSE and CCE 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.

### **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

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

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, local businesses such as car washes, nail bars and beauty salons, being coerced into moving drugs, or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket or to threaten other young people. 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.

As children involved in CCE often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

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 a higher risk of sexual exploitation.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact: it can also occur through the use of technology.

Like all forms of child sex abuse, child sexual exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex;
- can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;
- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and noncontact sexual activity;
- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both;



- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media);

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- 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; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. 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.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of child exploitation:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions such as money, clothes, mobile phones etc
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation,
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends,
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant,
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being,
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol,
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late,
- Children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education, • Exclusion or unexplained absences from school,
- Gang association and/or isolation from peers/social networks,
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late, • Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls,
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour,
- Evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault,
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups,
- Concerning use of internet or other social media,
- Increasing secretiveness in behaviours,
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers)

Staff should also recognise that these signs may indicate that children have been approached by or involved with individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs/serious violent crime.

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

- having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse
- lack of a safe/stable home environment now or in the past (domestic violence, parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality)
- recent bereavement or loss
- social isolation or social difficulties
- absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality
- homelessness or insecure accommodation status

- economic vulnerability
- connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited - having a learning or physical disability
- being in care
- family members or other connections involved in adult sex work
- sexual identity/LGBTQ+

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## County Lines

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

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move (and store) drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as plugging (where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection). Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes in school, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered.

### **Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:**

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years; • can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and • is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

## Domestic abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.

The statutory definition of domestic abuse, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional, and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Under the statutory definition, 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" (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act). The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional.

At Read Academy, we recognise that exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious,

long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

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At Read Academy our safeguarding team undergo Operation Encompass training, which is a Police and Education early intervention safeguarding partnership which supports children and young people exposed to domestic abuse. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse where there are children in the household, they will share intelligence with LA Education reps, who then notify the school's designated safeguarding lead that a child/ren has been or may have been exposed to domestic abuse. This notification will be received by school on the day that this information is shared by police enabling us to offer support dependent on how the child presents at school that day taking account of their needs and wishes.

Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse helpline which can be called free of charge 24 hours a day on 0808 2000247. It also has a website which provides guidance and support not only for potential victims but also for friends and loved ones with concerns.

Any disclosures or indicators regarding domestic abuse noticed or identified by staff should be referred to the safeguarding team, using the school's safeguarding procedures, so that support and the appropriate referral can be made.

More information can be found using the below links.

[Operation Encompass](#)

[National Domestic Abuse Helpline NSPCC](#), [Refuge](#) and [Safe Lives](#)

### **Homelessness**

At Read Academy, we are aware that a number of our families can experience housing issues, which, if resulting in being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless, presents a real risk to a child's welfare.

Where we are aware that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm from this issue, a safeguarding referral will be made by the designated safeguarding lead (or member of the safeguarding team) to the local authority. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) is aware of contact details and referral routes in to the Local Housing Authority so they can also raise concerns or discuss support available with them. 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.

### **Honour based abuse**

So-called 'honour-based' abuse encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

Abuse committed in the context of preserving 'honour' often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamics and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies and individuals and groups in relevant communities need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered HBA.

If staff have any concerns, they must speak to the designated safeguarding lead without delay. Female

## Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs.

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It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. The Serious Crime Act 2015 places a statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#).

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

### Risk factors for FGM include:

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

Staff should not assume that FGM only happens outside the UK.

### Some warning signs to look out for:

- Difficulty walking, sitting or standing;
- Unusual behaviour after an absence from school;
- A young girl may visit the bathroom more frequently or spend more time than usual in the bathroom;
- A young girl may have frequent, urinary, menstrual or stomach problems;
- Prolonged or repeated absence from school;
- A young girl may try to avoid PE lessons;
- Travel to a country known to practise FGM (School holiday times);
- An Elder family member visiting from a country known to practise FGM;
- Over hearing conversations related to FGM;
- A young girl may disclose, ask questions or ask for advice;
- Reluctance to undergo normal medical examination; and
- Girls that are withdrawn from PSHE or SRE.

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

The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: [FGM Fact Sheet \(FGM the facts\)](#) found on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

At Read Academy, teachers must also report their concerns and share the information with the DSL following the school's procedures for recording and reporting. The teacher then will be supported by the DSL to fulfil their duty to report FGM cases to the police and social care.

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Our staff will contact the police on 101

## **Forced Marriage**

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage.

The Forced Marriage Unit has published multi-agency guidelines, with pages 32-36 focusing on the role of schools and colleges. School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information. Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email: [fmu@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fmu@fco.gov.uk).

Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. Our staff are familiar with the issue of forced marriage, Honour Based abuse and FGM.

If staff have any concerns regarding FGM, Forced Marriage and Honour Based abuse they will report to the DSL. The DSL will support the individual to fulfil their duty to report to the police and/or social care.

## **Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism**

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk is a part of our school's safeguarding approach.

**Extremism** is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

**Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

**Terrorism** is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people causes serious damage to property or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media) and settings (such as the internet). However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a referral to the Channel programme

From 1 July 2015 specified authorities, including all schools, are subject to a duty under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (“the CTSA 2015”), in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard” to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the **Prevent** duty and is a part of the wider safeguarding obligation.

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### **At Read Academy we will:**

- assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology;
- work in partnership with parents, children, families and statutory agencies;
- assess the risk in our local area and as a minimum our DSL and safeguarding team will undertake Prevent awareness training to provide advice and support to other members of staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation; and



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- ensure that suitable filtering and monitoring is in place. Our pupils are taught to stay safe on-line and on line-safety is integral to the school’s IT curriculum.

### **Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:**

- showing sympathy for extremist causes;
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures;
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school;
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature;
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups;
- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent);
- secretive behaviour;
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles;
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality;
- graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes;
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others;
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views; and
- advocating violence towards others.

At Read Academy, we aim to build the children’s resilience to radicalisation by providing a safe environment, an effective behaviour policy and pastoral support system and through aspects of the curriculum including SMSC, British Values, PSHE and RSE. We will always challenge any forms of sexism, misogyny, homophobia, biphobia and sexual violence harassment.

Training on Prevent will be delivered as required to the relevant staff.

The Department for Education has also published advice for schools on the Prevent duty. The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts other sources of advice and support. The Government has launched ‘Educate against hate’ a website designed to equip school and college leaders,

teachers and parents with the information, tools and resources they need to recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people. The website provides information on training resources for teachers, staff and school and college leaders, such as Prevent e-learning, via the Prevent Training catalogue.

## Channel

Channel is a voluntary, confidential programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to

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people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. In addition to information sharing, if a staff member makes a referral to Channel, they may be asked to attend a Channel panel to discuss the individual referred to determine whether support is required

Our staff should understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel programme. Channel guidance is available at: [Channel Guidance](#). E-learning channel awareness programme for staff is available at: [Channel General Awareness](#).

## Child on Child abuse

At Read Academy we believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other children. We recognise that some children will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's relevant policy e.g. behaviour policy/ anti-bullying policy.

We also recognise that children can abuse other children and this is referred to as child-on child abuse and **that it can happen inside or outside school and online.** It can take many forms including - but not limited to – abuse within intimate partner relationships, bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals. This also includes gender-based violence.

All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in our school, it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. If staff have any concerns they should speak to the safeguarding team.

**ALL** child on child abuse is unacceptable and **all** allegations will be taken seriously. At Read Academy we understand that **'abuse is abuse' and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up"**. **It is essential then that all staff challenge any inappropriate behaviour between children.**

ALL allegations will be carefully considered and all decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis in consultations with social care. Referral under safeguarding arrangements may be necessary, key specific considerations will include the age, maturity and understanding of the children and any disability or special needs of the children.

**We recognise that child on child abuse can take different forms, such as:**

- **Bullying, including cyber bullying, prejudiced based and discriminatory**
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- **causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent**
- **consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos**
- **up skirting**
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical

harm

- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery): Causeway Green will follow guidance given to schools by UK council for child internet safety (UKCCIS 2017- sexting in schools and colleges responding to incidents and safeguarding young people.
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

## **Preventing, assessing and minimising the risks**

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At Read Academy, we will minimise the risk of allegations against other children by:

- providing a developmentally age appropriate PSHE, SRE, British Values curriculum which develops children's understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe;
- having systems in place for any child to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, believed and valued;
- delivering targeted work on assertiveness, protective behaviours and keeping safe to those children identified as being at risk;
- developing robust risk assessments & providing targeted work for children identified as being a potential risk to other children; and
- providing training and awareness sessions for staff.

## **Procedure to record, investigate and manage **child on child** allegations**

When an allegation is made by a child against another child, members of staff should consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern.

### **If there is a safeguarding concern:**

- the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) will be informed;
- a factual record will be made of the allegation, but no attempt at this stage should be made to investigate the circumstances;
- the DSL should contact social care/multi-agency agency safeguarding hub (MASH) to discuss the allegation and seek advice;
- the DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a referral where appropriate.

If the allegation indicates that a potential criminal offence has taken place, this will be referred to the multi agency agency safeguarding hub MASH where the police will become involved. Following advice from Social Care and/or the police, parents of both the child being complained about and the alleged victim, should be informed and kept updated on the progress of the referral. The DSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a copy in the files of both children's files.

It may be appropriate to exclude the pupil being complained about for a period of time according to the school's behaviour policy and procedures. Where neither social services nor the police accept the complaint, a thorough school investigation should take place into the matter using the school's usual behaviour procedures.

In situations where the school considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment should be prepared along with a preventative, supervision plan; and the plan should be monitored and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned.



## **Support and care for all children involved**

At Read Academy we recognise and understand that child on child allegations will be very distressing situations for all concerned - children, family members and staff. We also recognise that both the victim and perpetrator may need support and so will seek to provide any support required by making any necessary referrals for counselling and support services, including use of outside agencies and services where appropriate.

## **Allegations against other children which are safeguarding issues.**

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Some allegations may be of such a serious nature that they raise safeguarding concerns. These allegations may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation and sexting. Other gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with child on child abuse could, for example, include girls being sexually touched or assaulted or boys being subject to initiation or hazing type violence. It is also likely that incidents may involve older students and their behaviour towards younger students or those who are vulnerable.

It is likely that, to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a child, some of the following features will be found. **If the allegation:**

- Is made against an older child and refers to their behaviour towards a younger child or a more vulnerable child;
- Is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence;
- Raises risk factors for other children in the school;
- Indicates that other children may have been affected by this child; and
- Indicates that young children outside the school may be affected by this child.

## **Examples of safeguarding issues against a child could include:**

### **Physical Abuse**

- Violence, particularly pre-planned;
- Forcing others to use drugs or alcohol; and
- Initiation and hazing violence.

### **Emotional Abuse**

- Blackmail or extortion;
- Threats and intimidation; and
- Cyber-bullying.

### **Sexual Abuse including sexting and gender-based violence**

- Indecent exposure, indecent and inappropriate touching or serious sexual assaults;
- Forcing others to watch pornography or take part in sexting; and
- Initiation and hazing violence.

### **Sexual Exploitation**

- Encouraging other children to engage in inappropriate sexual behaviour (For example - having an

older boyfriend/girlfriend, associating with unknown adults or other sexually exploited children, staying out overnight); and

- Photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts.
- Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment
- When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. This includes rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault without consent.
- When considering what is consent, this is about having the freedom and capacity to choose.
- Consent can be withdrawn at any time.

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When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline as outlined in [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#). Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, **sexual harassment can include:**

- Sexual comments, telling sexual stories
- Calling someone sexualised names
- Sexual jokes or taunting
- physical behaviour such as deliberately brushing up against someone
- Displaying pictures of a sexual nature
  - Online sexual harassment such as sharing images, unwanted sexual comments and up skirting.

At Read Academy we hold a **zero-tolerance** approach to sexual violence and harassment and it will not be tolerated under any circumstances. We recognise that even if there are no reports it does not mean that it is not happening, it may be just the case that it is not being reported.

We will challenge inappropriate physical behaviours and touching in order to ensure such behaviours are not normalised. Addressing inappropriate behaviour, even if it appears to be relatively innocuous, can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

Training on sexual violence and sexual harassment is done with staff as part of their annual safeguarding update. They will be aware that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment.

Schools should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside of school.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.

At Read Academy, staff are made aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk. **Staff are also aware of the importance of:**

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing

- up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts and up skirting

The initial response to a report from a child is important. We have systems in place that are easily understood and accessible for children to confidently report abuse. All victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim must never be given the impression that they are creating a problem. Nor must a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. This will be the case regardless of where the abuse took place, whether this is in school, outside school or online. If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, they should follow the school’s safeguarding referral process.

Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and may involve a number of

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agencies, including the police. However, it is important to note that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them. The Department of Education has published detailed advice to support schools which can be found on their website ‘Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges 2021’. We will use this guidance along with **section 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024** to support our response and to make informed decisions.

## **Up skirting**

The Voyeurism Offences act, commonly known as the up skirting act came into force in April 2019. Up skirting refers to the action of placing equipment e.g. camera or mobile device beneath a person’s clothing (not necessarily a skirt) to take a voyeuristic photograph without their permission and or knowledge with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence and anyone of any gender can be a victim.

## **Children and the court system**

At Read Academy we are aware that children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children 5-11-year-olds and 12–17-year-olds entitled ‘Going to court’ which are available on the government website. These guides explain each step of the process and support and special measures that are available. Parents will be signposted to these guides as well as being offered support in school.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be also useful for some parents and carers.

## **Children with family members in prison**

Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year and at Read Academy, we are aware that this is an issue that may affect some of our families. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. Our school will ensure support is offered to the children to not only promote and maintain their educational achievement, but also emotional support will be offered. The family will also be offered support if required by our Family Support Officer.

NICCO (National Information Centre on Children of Offenders) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children. This can be accessed on their website [www.nicco.org.uk](http://www.nicco.org.uk)

Children who have suffered Adverse Childhood experiences (ACES)

Adverse childhood experiences are traumatic events occurring before the age of 18. ACES include all types of abuse and neglect as well as parental mental illness, substance use, divorce, incarceration and domestic violence. ACES can impact brain development which in turn impacts functions such as decision making, self regulation, fear processing, memory and stress management.

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, learning, behaviour and mental health.

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## **12. Private Fostering Arrangements**

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of the local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18 if disabled) who is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a 'close relative' in their own home, with the intention it should last 28 days or more. Close relatives are defined as step parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts, (whether of full blood, half blood, or marriage/ affinity.)

School staff will notify the designated safeguarding lead when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The designated safeguarding lead will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. Our school is aware that we have a legal duty to report any private fostering arrangements that we become aware of to the Local Authority.

On admission to the school, we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered.

## **13. What staff should do if they have concerns about a child**

At all times, staff should maintain an attitude of 'It could happen here' when it comes to safeguarding children and ALWAYS ACT IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD.

If staff have any concerns about a child, they can speak to the DSL or a member of the safeguarding team for advice; however, all concerns MUST also be put in writing either by use of our electronic system 'My Concerns' or by completion of the safeguarding concern forms.

If staff have any urgent concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately (see flow chart Appendix 1) and speak to the DSL or a member of the safeguarding team, who should always be available. However, if in exceptional circumstances, they are not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of SLT and/or take advice from Sandwell Children's Trust (number available on displays around school or start of this policy). In these circumstances any action taken should be shared with the safeguarding team as soon as is practically possible.

## **14. Advice - What to do if a child Discloses**

All staff at Read Academy are able to refer to 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' DfE March 2015 and displays around school containing relevant information. Training and advice is also included

in the annual level 1 safeguarding training for all staff.

If a child discloses;

## DO

- Keep an open mind;
- Reassure;
- Listen carefully;
- Recognise that a child is likely to disclose to someone they trust – this could be anyone on the staff –and doing so puts you in a position of trust
- Be supportive and respectful of the child
- Work at the child's pace;
- Ask only open questions in a non-leading way – clarifying the facts, don't interrogate;

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- Explain your actions;
- Record accurately and quickly using child's words/action (best practice is to wait until the end of the disclosure);
- Pass all the information on to the DSL, or the safeguarding team immediately/as soon as possible or the same day;
- At all times, keep children and young people safe;
- Treat everyone with respect;
- Follow the school's procedures for reporting safeguarding and welfare concerns; • Follow the school's procedures for reporting all allegations against staff, carers and volunteers; and
- Look after yourself – ask for support.

## DON'T

- Promise confidentiality;
- Interrupt/Interrogate/Investigate;
- Assume e.g. this child tells lies/good imagination;
- Make suggestions about what is being said;
- Speculate or accuse anyone;
- Show anger, shock etc;
- Tell the child to go and speak to someone else;
- Discuss with parent/carers without speaking to the DSL, or a member of the safeguarding team; • Discuss with any other staff; Leave any related written information lying around; • Jump to conclusions about people's behaviour without knowing the facts;
- Investigate an allegation of child protection concern yourself;
- Make suggestive (what could be seen as suggestive) remarks or gestures, tell jokes of a sexual nature or engage in inappropriate verbal banter with or in front of children and/or young people; • Believe that safeguarding matters are someone else's business and responsibility – it is... but it's also yours.

## 15. Recording and reporting concerns and disclosures

**If the concern is urgent, staff must speak immediately to a member of the safeguarding team,** before following up with a written report. The DSL or a member of the safeguarding team should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If, in exceptional circumstances, they are not available this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team or taking advice themselves from the local Children's Trust (numbers are available in this document and on displays around school).

Best practice is to wait until the end of the child's disclosure, then immediately write a thorough summary. It may be appropriate to make notes. However, staff should be conscious of the need to remain engaged with the child and not appear distracted by the note taking.

The written report should be via our reporting system 'My Concerns'.

Where the report includes an online element, be aware of searching, screening and confiscation advice and UKCCIS sexting advice. The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child. The advice contains more detailed guidance on what to do if viewing an image is unavoidable.

### **The written report should include:**

- Details of the child's name, class etc;
- All details of the concerns/behaviour/incident/disclosure;

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- Use child's own words;
- Ensure all information recorded is factual and accurate;
- Date and time of recording;
- Who the incident/disclosure was made to;
- Note any other witnesses;
- Use full names of all involved, where possible;
- Do not use abbreviations;
- Chronology of actions – date, place, who and what;
- Include body map, if appropriate
- Signature and date of person recording the incident (if written)

Be aware that any notes/written report could become part of a statutory assessment by Children's social care and/or part of a criminal investigation.

Time frame – In cases where there has been a disclosure, the form/report MUST be handed in to a member of the safeguarding team as soon as possible but definitely by the end of the school day. In cases where there is no immediate concern, an electronic concern should be raised or a school reporting form should be placed in the concerns box and passed onto a member of the safeguarding team.

Flow charts are displayed around school to assist staff to follow the correct procedure when reporting concerns about a child.

Remember your responsibility:  
Recognise Respond Report Record

## **16. Making a referral to social care**

Anybody can make a referral, although, at school, consultation should take place with the DSL or designated deputy, who will often be the most appropriate person to initiate any referral. A written record of the initial concerns will have been made via our internal recording form. This will then be used to aid in the decision making process if a referral is needed to Children's Trust.

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. A MARF (Multi Agency referral) will need to be completed following this contact.

If the child is in no immediate danger but we still have child protection concerns, we will complete a

MARF as soon as possible and within a maximum of 24 hours.

If there are concerns about a child or young person's emotional or physical safety and/or we believe they have disclosed physical/emotional/sexual abuse, and the risk is not immediate, then the DSL or a member of the safeguarding team will phone 0121 569 3100 (available outside normal office hours) and speak to the Children's Trust Single Point of Contact. Any action will again need to be followed up with a written confirmation on the MARF (Multi Agency Referral form) within 24 hours. You may complete and submit a LBR Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF) Template to [CPAT.referrals@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:CPAT.referrals@redbridge.gov.uk) or MARF form template from the borough the child resides in.

An alternative contact is the NSPCC helpline 0808 800 5000.

For immediate help ring the police on 999. **["National Police Chief's Council \(NPCC\) – When to call the police"](#)**

## **17. Response to a concern or disclosure – safeguarding team, including Section 17/47**

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Upon receipt of a concern, whether electronically or written, the DSL or designated deputy will make a decision in liaison with LBR and, where necessary, seek advice to determine whether the concern/disclosure meets the threshold for support.

The DSL or deputy will consider whether this is a child with unmet needs where health, development or achievement may be affected and whether this need can be met with the completion of an Early Help Assessment (EHA).

Best practice is that Parents/Carers are informed of any referral unless doing so puts the child at risk of significant harm.

If this is a child with additional needs that can be managed under the Early Help process, the DSL or deputy will discuss the issues with the child's parents/carers. The DSL will obtain parental consent for an Early Help Assessment to be completed.

If it cannot be managed under the Early Help process, we will consider - is this a child in need? **Section 17**

of the **Children Act 1989** says a child in need is defined as:

*a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have opportunity to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development; the child's health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired without the provision of such services; the child has a disability.*

Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

We will also consider - Is this a Child Protection matter?

**Section 47** of the Children Act 1989 states that Child Protection may be needed for:

*children at risk or who are suffering significant harm; children suffering the effects of significant harm; children with serious health problems.*

If the threshold for the above are met, then the DSL or deputy will make a referral using the correct channels,

usually with a telephone call and a MARF referral to the local authority. However, it is important to recognise that anybody can make a referral where they believe a child to be in imminent danger or at risk of harm and in the event that a member of staff wishes to make a referral themselves, they can contact the local authority on 0121 569-3100. Contact numbers are also on the safeguarding display in the staff room.

Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquires under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Such enquiries enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment, including all forms of abuse and neglect, female genital mutilation or other so-called honour-based violence, and extra familial threats like radicalisation and sexual exploitation.

Where a case reaches the 'significant harm' threshold that justifies statutory intervention into family life a professional making a child protection referral under Section 47 must therefore provide information which clearly outlines that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

It is not possible to rely on one absolute criterion when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the extent of the harm suffered, the context within which it occurred and its duration. Significant harm may also arise from a combination of

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significant events which are both acute and long standing and which impair the child's physical, psychological and social development. In order to both understand and establish significant harm, it is necessary to consider the family context, together with the child's development within their wider social and cultural environment. It is also necessary to consider any special needs, e.g. medical condition, communication difficulties or disability that may affect the child's development and care within the family. The nature of harm, in terms of ill-treatment or failure to provide adequate care also needs consideration alongside the impact on the child's health and development and the adequacy of care provided.

## **18. Voice of the Child**

A system will be in place and well promoted for children to confidently report abuse to any member of staff knowing their concerns will be treated seriously. **In addition, the school have appointed Pupil Safeguarding Ambassadors**, who have been trained in how to deal with children's concerns/worries, should children feel more comfortable talking to their peers.

At Read Academy, we have an active school council who act on behalf of their peers and whose views are regularly sought and acted upon. We also have a E-Safety Warrior council who consider online safety from a child's perspective.

Children's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect individual children through ensuring there are systems in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Staff members do not promise confidentiality and always act in the best interests of the child.

## **19. Record Keeping**

At Read Academy, most records of concerns and safeguarding/child protection files are stored electronically on the safeguarding recording system. Where this is not possible, for whatever reason, or for historical cases, the records are kept in a file separately from the child's school file. These are locked in a secure location.

If a child moves school, a member of the safeguarding team will contact the new school to advise them of



the need to transfer our records. Our school will then transfer the files either electronically or in person **within 5 days**. If it is not possible to transfer by either of these methods, an alternative secure method of transport will be used. When transferring records electronically the system will indicate a successful transfer. In cases where hard copies of the records are transferred in person, our school will obtain a receipt from the receiving school.

## **20. Children in care and the Virtual School**

Our Children in care lead is **Gulam Abbas Hussain**.

Our CIC lead will undertake any relevant training to update their skills, understanding and knowledge enable them to keep our looked after children safe and will promote the educational, physical, social and emotional welfare of children who are looked after.

### **Our CIC Lead will ensure:**

- they are aware of the legal status (interim care order, full care order, voluntary arrangements) of any looked after child at Read Academy;
  - they obtain information regarding, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with

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- parental responsibility;
- they obtain information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him or her;
- they obtain the name of the child's social worker;
- they obtain the name and contact details of the virtual head in the local authority that looks after the child;
- they liaise with the virtual school headteacher to discuss how the funding for that child can be best used to support the child's need outlined in the personal education plan;
- that appropriate induction procedures are in place and
- they promote the educational achievement of our looked after children.

We also recognise that a child that has previously been in care continues to remain potentially vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep them safe. It is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

The Virtual Headteacher in LB Redbridge is Acting Head - Sholah Steele  
Sholah.Steele@redbridge.gov.uk

## **21. Children with special educational needs and disabilities**

At Read Academy, we are aware that children with special educational needs and disabilities may face additional safeguarding challenges. Barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect 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 disability without further exploration;
- children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs; and

- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

We identify pupils who might need more support to be kept safe or to keep themselves safe and ensure we have appropriate mechanisms in place to assist these children.

#### **Examples of these mechanisms:**

- Suitably qualified professionals (SENCO/ individual staff)
- Suitable training
- Referrals to specialist agencies
- Use of communication packages
- Use of signs and symbols
- One to one support for communication
- Appropriate IT aides

There may also be occasions when it is necessary to use reasonable force in response to risks presented by children with SEN, disabilities or medical conditions and to safeguard these children. At Read Academy, we recognise the additional vulnerability and so, in addition to our physical **intervention policy**, we aim to identify those children most at risk and offer positive, pro-active behaviour support. We do this by the use of individual behaviour plans which detail positive strategies to be used with the child with the aim of reducing the occurrence of challenging behaviour. These plans are drawn up with staff, children and

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parents/carers and reviewed regularly.

## **22. Induction**

All staff members will undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction. The training will be regularly updated and in line with advice from the local authority and the requirements of **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025**.

Upon appointment and starting a new post new staff, students, volunteers and long-term supply (short term supply will be given separate advice) will be issued with an induction pack, Safeguarding/Child Protection policy, **Keeping Children Safe in Education -Part 1 or annex A, code of conduct**, behaviour policy and other relevant safeguarding information. They will sign to say that they have received it, read and understood it. A meeting will be arranged on appointment to clarify and check understanding and to respond to any questions.

## **23. Training**

Designated Safeguarding Lead and safeguarding team

Our designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) will undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training will be updated at least every two years.

Our designated safeguarding lead and deputy will undertake Prevent awareness training.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills will be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

## Staff Training

All staff members will receive regular safeguarding and child protection training and updates to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. This will consist of annual level 1 training and updates each term via emails, staff meetings and bulletins. All staff should be aware of the Early Help process and their role in it.

### Governor Training

All governors are invited and encouraged to attend safeguarding training. Safer

## Recruitment Training

Our school will ensure that at least one member of any recruitment panel has received safer recruitment training.

## 24. Safer working practices including the use of reasonable force

Our school has a code of conduct and all staff and volunteers are issued with this at induction.

All staff should seek to keep personal contact with children under review and seek to minimise the risk of any situation arising in which misunderstandings can occur. **The following sensible precautions should be taken when working alone with children:**

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- work in a room where there is a glass panel in the door or leave the door open;
- make sure that other adults visit the room occasionally;
- avoid working in isolation with children unless thought has been given to safeguards;
- do not give out personal mobile phone numbers or private e-mail addresses;
- do not give pupils lifts home in own cars;
- do not arrange to meet them outside of school hours; and
- do not chat to pupils on social websites.

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is a criminal offence for anyone working in an education setting to have a sexual relationship with a pupil even when the pupil is over the age of consent.

### Physical Intervention/ The use of reasonable force

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom.

The adoption of a 'no contact' policy at a school can leave staff unable to fully support and protect their pupils and so at Read Academy we have a physical intervention policy, which is shared with staff and available on our shared area. We also use individual behaviour plans for vulnerable pupils which we have identified as being at risk. These plans are discussed with parents/carers and provide positive behaviour strategies to try and reduce the occurrence of physical intervention being necessary.

Any use of physical force or restraint of pupils will be carried out and documented in accordance with the physical intervention policy. If it is necessary to use physical action to prevent a child from injury to themselves or others parents will be informed. Physical intervention or restraint will never be used as a punishment.

Government advice for 'Use of Reasonable Force in Schools' is available from the DfE. The governing body and school leaders have a separate policy which has taken account of advice for schools in [Use of Reasonable Force in Schools](#).

## 25. Safer recruitment

In order to create a safe environment for our children our school will adopt the safer recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children, outlined in [part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#).

Our school adheres to statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children, making decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required; and ensuring volunteers are appropriately supervised.

Our school understands that it is a criminal offence to allow any individual who is barred to carry out any form of regulated activity. Our school will comply with the legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult; where the harm test is satisfied in respect of that individual; where the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or if there is reason to believe that individual has committed a listed relevant offence; and that individual has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left.

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Our school makes decisions about the suitability of any prospective employees based on checks and evidence including; criminal record checks (DBS), barred list checks and prohibition checks together with references and interview information.



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Shortlisted candidates should be informed during the process that online searches may be done as part of due diligence checks.

- Copies of documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity, right to work with children and required qualifications should be kept in their personnel file, EYFS Managers must hold at least a level 3 qualification, and a certain proportion of staff must have approved qualifications appropriate for the children. Level 3 practitioners will no longer be required to hold a level 2 maths qualification to count within staff: child ratios (Section 3, Staff: child ratios)

Consideration is given to the regulated activity prospective employees will be engaged in.

### Regulated activity includes:

a) teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children if the person is unsupervised or providing advice or guidance on physical, emotional or education well-being, or driving a vehicle only for children

b) work for a limited range of establishments with the opportunity for contact with children, but not including work done by supervised volunteers.

- work under a) or b) is regulated activity only if done regularly.

Some activities are always regulated activities regardless of frequency or whether they are supervised or not. **This includes:**

- relevant intimate or personal care which includes helping a child with eating and drinking for reasons of illness or disability or in connection with toileting, washing, bathing and dressing for reasons of age, illness or disability.
- any overnight activity.


For all other staff who have opportunity for regular contact with children who are not engaging in regulated activity, the school requires an enhanced DBS certificate, which does not include a barred list check.

School will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to confirm that individuals employed to work in Reception classes or in wraparound care for children up to the Age of 8 are not disqualified from working in these settings under the 2018 childcare disqualification regulations.

Our school keeps a Single Central Record that complies with all the requirements. It is monitored by the Headteacher, Deputy Head and/or Safeguarding SDL Governor **termly**. The Single Central Record covers all staff (including supply) who work at the school, volunteers, governors, **regular external visitors**, agency and third-party staff.

**The following information will be recorded on the Single Central Record:**

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- An identity checks; a barred list check; an enhanced DBS check/certificate; a prohibition from teaching check; further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK; a check of professional qualifications; a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.  4.A

- **All applicants MUST show their current original DBS certificate to the school as soon as they take up post. Our schools do not have to keep copies of DBS certificates.**

Our school required that a DBS is renewed every three years and staff are notified when they need to do this. It is then their responsibility to ensure the appropriate documentation is available and that they have completed the necessary paperwork for this process to take place.

## **26. Management of Allegations including low level concerns**

Read Academy, we recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children. Any concerns about the conduct of any staff or adults (including supply staff and volunteers) in the school should be taken to the headteacher without delay (or where that is not possible to the Designated safeguarding team)' any concerns about the headteacher should go the Chair of SDL Governors who can be contact via the school office.

All allegations of abuse of children carried out by any adult in school will be taken seriously. If an allegation, that may meet the harms test, is made regarding a member of staff, supply staff or volunteer, **the following will be considered:**

**Has the adult:**

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child?

- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child?
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children?
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children?

If an allegation is made against a member of staff or adult in school, the headteacher must be informed immediately or as soon as possible within 1 working day. The school will then follow the guidelines set out in Redbridge local authority's 'Management of Allegations' document and Keeping **Children Safe in Education 2024**. The headteacher must contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) immediately to discuss the allegation to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action. (Where a Head Teacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school it is mandatory to report to the LADO).



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If an allegation is made against the headteacher or principal, the chair of SDL governors must contact the Local Authority Designated Officer immediately or as soon as possible within 1 working day to discuss the allegation to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action.

If the safeguarding concern relates to the proprietor of the setting, then the concern must be made directly to the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) Team who will decide on any action required.

If an allegation relating to an incident that made against an outside individual or organisation which is using our school premises for the purposes of running activities for children, as with any safeguarding allegation,

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we follow our safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO

We remind all staff to maintain the view that 'it could happen here' and to immediately report any concern, no matter how small, to the DSL or Headteacher.

Any staff or volunteers from outside our setting will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of the risks and know what they need to do if they are concerned.

## Redbridge LADO

Helen Curtis, - 020 8708 5350 - [lado@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:lado@redbridge.gov.uk)

The school whistle blowing policy is available and a paper copy can be requested from the school office.

Our procedures and approach to dealing with allegations will be applied with sensitivity and common sense. Our school will exercise its duty of care to employees, we will act appropriately to manage and minimise the stress inherent in the allegation process. Our school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

At Read Academy we understand that there is a legal requirement for employers to make a referral to the

DBS where we think that an individual has engaged in conduct that harmed (or is likely to harm) a child; or if a person otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child. If the accused person resigns, or ceases to provide their services, this will not prevent an allegation being followed up and a referral to the DBS *must* be made, if the criteria are met.

We understand that in some cases, concerns will not meet the threshold. These will be known as low level concerns **and will be investigated**. These concerns may still be significant as they possibly indicate that an adult may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with our staff code of conduct including inappropriate conduct outside of work.

## **27. Whistleblowing**

All staff, volunteers and parents at Read Academy should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in our safeguarding regime and such concerns will be taken seriously by our headteacher, SDL governing body and senior leadership team. Our school follows the local authority Whistleblowing code. Appropriate whistleblowing procedures, which are suitably reflected in staff training and staff code of conduct policies are in place for such concerns to be raised with our headteacher, SDL governing body or senior leadership team.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with our headteacher, SDL governing body or senior leadership team or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them, for example:

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0808 800 5000 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

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There is also a government website [www.gov.uk/whistleblowing](http://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing)

## **28. Curriculum**

At Read Academy, pupils are taught about safeguarding as part of a broad and balanced curriculum through lessons including PSHE and RSE, Computing and Online-Safety, and British values. We also have assemblies and workshops throughout the year.

We use a variety of resources and approaches to teach the children how to keep themselves safe, build their resilience, recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.

The Jigsaw curriculum includes an emphasis on relationships (relationships and sex education), building confidence and resilience in pupils and in developing preventative strategies to ensure their own protection and that of others. Opportunities are provided for pupils to develop the skills and strategies they need to stay safe from abuse, including age appropriate discussions about healthy relationships, their bodies and being able to say no to requests that they do not want to carry out. Clear advice and guidance is built into the curriculum to ensure that pupils understand that there is a range of contacts they can turn to for advice and support and that they know where and how to report abuse.

**Our school also teaches the children how to keep themselves safe through;**

- Cycling Proficiency
- Swimming lessons
- Educational Visits

- PCSO delivering tailor-made class presentations as requested
- Talks on Bullying, Cyber-bullying, Stranger Danger, Firework and Park Safety
- People Who Help Us Topics
- Jigsaw Assemblies
- British Values
- NSPCC assembly/ workshops
- Forest School activities
- External agency assemblies

Through the school's curriculum the children have the opportunity to go on school trips and residential visits to enhance their learning. All off site visits are recorded. Permission slips and medical forms are collected and kept with the visit leader. Risk assessments are completed and filed within the 'Visits Folders.' We follow LEA guidance when arranging offsite/out of hours visits.

## **29. Online-Safety including curriculum and computing, use of mobile technology, remote learning**

The Online-Safety lead is **Gulam Abbas Hussain.**

We acknowledge that our children live in a digital world and in order to promote positive use of the internet, social media and gaming, we have a E-Safety Warrior council which reflects the child's voice and supports their online safety.

The growth of different electronic media in everyday life and an ever-developing variety of devices including PC's, laptops, mobile phones, webcams etc. place an additional risk on our children. Internet chat rooms, discussion forums, social networks **and gaming sites** can all be used as a means of contacting children and young people with a view of grooming them for inappropriate or abusive relationships. The anonymity of the internet allows adults, often pretending to be children, to have conversations with children and in some cases arrange to meet them.

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This use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues including, amongst others, child exploitation, radicalisation and sexual predation. It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material.

Access to abusive images is not a 'victimless' act as it has already involved the abuse of children. The internet has become a significant tool in the distribution of indecent photographs of children and should be a concern to all those working with pupils at this school.

Pupils can engage in or be a target of Cyber-bullying using a range of methods including text, sexting and instant messaging to reach their target. Mobile phones are also used to capture violent assaults or other children for circulation (happy slapping).

In school, we have an online safety policy, as well as an agreement upon pupil joining the school which require a signature regarding safe usage of ICT. This covers the four areas of risk which are content, contact, conduct and commerce.

Effective approaches to online safety will help us to protect our children whilst educating the whole school in their use of technology and establishing mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate concerns where appropriate.

In school we will make pupils aware of the dangers through curriculum teaching particularly computing and IT lessons, PSHE and SRE.



## At Read Academy:

- Software (filters, firewalls and monitoring) are in place to minimise access and to highlight any person or child accessing inappropriate sites or information;
- Pupils will be encouraged to discuss openly their use of technology and anything which makes them feel uncomfortable (if this results in child protection concerns the school's DSL will be informed immediately);
- Pupils are taught not give out personal details, phone numbers, schools, home address, computer passwords etc; and
- Pupils should adhere to the school policy on mobile phones.
- Pupils will be encouraged to recognise positive, healthy and respectful online relationships. • Pupils will be taught how to identify online risks and how/when to seek support. • Staff should be mindful when teaching online safety that there may be a child present who is/has been affected. This may lead to a disclosure from the child regarding an online incident. Where this happens, staff will need to follow our guidelines for referrals.
- Where a child reports they have seen inappropriate online content, staff must never ask to see such content but should immediately isolate the device.

The police will be involved and advice will be sought from CEOP if required if there is any criminal element to misuse of the internet, phones or any other form of electronic media.

As schools increasingly work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material.

**UKCIS** provides detailed advice about sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and videos.

**IWF** provides up to date information on web safety

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## Remote learning

Where children are being asked to learn online at home, parents and children will be given advice on how to do so, safely following guidance from 'safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and other-providers' and 'safeguarding-and-remote-education'.

## Use of mobile phones, cameras and other devices

Unauthorised or secret use of a mobile phone, **watches linked to phones** or other electronic device, to record voice, pictures or video is forbidden. Unauthorised publishing of such materials on a website which causes distress to the person(s) concerned will be considered a breach of school discipline, whether intentional or unintentional. The person responsible for the material will be expected to remove this immediately upon request and appropriate procedures will be followed. Where any crime may have been committed the police will be informed.

We recognize that many aspects of the curriculum can be enhanced by the use of multi-media and that there are now a wide and growing range of devices on which this can be accomplished. Digital images, video and sound recording are only taken with the permission of participants; images and video are of appropriate activities and are only taken of children wearing appropriate dress. Full names of participants are not used either within the resource itself, within the file-name or in accompanying text online.

All parents and visitors are asked not to use mobile phones when visiting our school and to take any calls or

texts outside of the building. At the start of assemblies/productions where parents and visitors are in attendance and may wish to take photos of their children, a reminder is made informing them that they must only take photographs of their own children and that these must not be distributed on social media. All staff must be vigilant in enforcing this and remind any parents /visitors who forget. In the event of anyone breaking this rule, they are asked to delete any images before leaving the premises.

We ask all parents/carers to sign an agreement about taking and publishing photographs and video of their children and this list is checked whenever an activity is being photographed or filmed.

For their own protection staff never use a personal device (mobile phone, digital camera or digital video recorder) to take photographs of pupils.

School mobile phones or similar devices with communications facilities used for curriculum activities are set up appropriately for the activity. Pupils are taught to use them responsibly.

Secondary pupils are allowed to bring their own mobile devices into school but these must be handed into the reception at the start of the day. They will then be locked away securely and given back to the pupil at the end of the day. Pupils are not allowed to use their mobile devices in school.

### **30. Covid-19**

The effects of the Covid 19 pandemic have had far reaching consequences, especially on the way that schools function. At all times, the school will follow Government Statutory Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>

We are aware that pupils may still be experiencing a variety of emotions in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, such as anxiety, stress or low mood. This may particularly be the case for vulnerable children, including those with a social worker and young carers. All staff will be vigilant about the possible impacts of the pandemic on pupils' mental wellbeing and act immediately on any safeguarding concerns, including new concerns where children are returning, and share their concerns with designated and deputy designated safeguarding leads. We will put in place appropriate support systems for pupils and

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parents/carers, including working with and/or referral to relevant outside agencies. We note the Government's *COVID 19: guidance on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing*. We are aware of the continued importance for our staff to work with and support children's social workers, the local authority virtual school head for looked-after and previously looked-after children and any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners during this period.

### **31. Monitoring policy and practice**

Our Safeguarding policy and procedures will be reviewed annually or sooner if required. All staff and stakeholders may contribute to the development of our policies and procedures.

Our policy will be published on our website and paper copies are available upon request.



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### **32. Cyber Security Standards**

Cybersecurity in Read Academy is the process which everyone implements to protect devices, and confidential information from unauthorized or unintended access or illegal use.

In Read Academy we understand that the internet has enabled pupils at different ages to learn, share and create, however it has also become a space for cybercriminals which may cause issues and stealing data by others. We always advise our pupils to strictly consider the following points: -

- Never share personal information online.
- Don't respond to emails, texts, or messages from strangers.
- Don't post or share photos online.
- Don't click links, open attachments, or accept gifts from someone you don't know.
- Never agree to meet someone you met online.

All Read Academy staff and pupils are advised to always use strong passwords for any application that they use and never share these passwords with anyone else under any circumstances. Also to exercise extreme caution with Suspicious Messages and phishing attempts, and not to click on links or download attachments from unknown sources and use only Read Academy Wi-Fi as long as they are surfing on the net on its premises.

In case any suspicious activity is spotted, school acts quickly, effectively, and efficiently because it is well known that seconds can mean the difference between a minor and some major consequences.

Also Read Academy encourages its employees to use cyber security software on their devices to protect Read Academy data while they work on.



## APPENDIX 2: RECORD OF CONCERN

### Summary of Procedures for the DSL

Following a report from a member of staff, volunteer or visitor, the designated safeguarding lead will consider the level of need by applying the local thresholds for referral which Redbridge Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) has agreed for use by all agencies and professionals who are worried or concerned about a child's safety or welfare.

### Children's Services Barking and Dagenham

MASH team from 9am to 4:45pm, Monday to Friday

020 8227 3811

Out of hours' duty team from 4:45pm to 9am, Monday to Friday, weekends and bank holidays 020 8594 8356

Online MARF Referral: <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/form/child-protection-referral-form>

### Children's **Services Newham**

020 3373 4600 during office hours (Monday to Thursday, 9am to 5.15pm or Friday 9am to 5.00pm)  
020 8430 2000 at any other time.

### Children's **Services Havering**

Triage Telephone Number: 01708 433 222  
Fax Number: 01708 433 375 (MARF's)  
Email Address: [TriageMASHandAssessment@haverling.gov.uk](mailto:TriageMASHandAssessment@haverling.gov.uk)

### Children's **Services Waltham Forest**

Tel: 020 8496 2310 (Mon-Thurs 9am-5.15pm, Fri 9am-5pm), (out of hours 020 8496 3000)

Email: [MASHrequests@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:MASHrequests@walthamforest.gov.uk)  
Fax: 020 8496 2313

### Children's **Services Tower Hamlets**

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MASH Advice Line for professionals: Tel: 020 7364 3444  
MASH: Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm Tel: 020 7364 5601 Out of hours Tel: 020 7364 5006

Using the levels of need described in the Redbridge LSCB document [Are You Worried about a Child](#), they will decide whether the child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, in which case a referral must be made, **immediately**, to children's social care and the police, not waiting until the end of the school day:

Redbridge CPAT (Child Protection and Assessment Team)

**0208 708 3885**

[CPAT.referrals@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:CPAT.referrals@redbridge.gov.uk). Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team

**020 8708 5897** Weekdays from 17:00 onwards and weekends  
making a clear statement of the known facts, any suspicions or allegations, whether or not there has been any contact with the child's family.

The designated safeguarding lead or deputy should confirm any referrals in writing via a multi-agency referral form (MARF). The child protection and assessment team will clarify with the police or children's social care whether the parents should be told about the referral and when and by whom.

[LBR Multi Agency Referral Form \(MARF\) Template](#)

If early help is appropriate the designated safeguarding lead should support the relevant member of staff in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment. If early help, or other support is

appropriate, the case will be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care if the child's situation does not appear to be improving.

Child's Name:			
Child's DOB:			
Male/Female:	Ethnic origin:	Disability Y/N:	Religion:
Date and time of concern:			
Your account of the concern: (what was said, observed, reported and by whom)			

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Additional Information: (context of concern/disclosure)	
Your response: (what did you do/say following the concern)	
Your name:	Your signature:

Your position in school:	Date and time of this recording:
Action and response of designated safeguarding lead / headteacher	
Feedback given to member of staff reporting concern:	Information shared with any other staff? If so, what information was shared and what was the rationale for this?
Name:..... Date:.....	

**Checklist for DSL (to be printed on back of record of concern form)**

- ✓ Child clearly identified?
- ✓ Name, designation and signature of the person completing the record populated?
- ✓ Date and time of any incidents or when a concern was observed?
- ✓ Date and time of written record?
- ✓ Distinguish between fact, opinion and hearsay?

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- ✓ Concern described in sufficient detail, i.e. no further clarification necessary? ✓ Child's own words used? (Swear words, insults, or intimate vocabulary should be written down verbatim.)
- ✓ Record free of jargon?
- ✓ Written in a professional manner without stereotyping or discrimination?
- ✓ The record includes an attached completed body map (if relevant) to show any visible injuries?

**APPENDIX 3: REDBRIDGE LSCB MULTI-AGENCY THRESHOLD GUIDANCE**

[Are you worried about a child in Redbridge](#)

[Neglect Toolkit for assisting the identification of child neglect \(Redbridge LSCB September \(2014\)\)](#)

[Child Neglect Toolkit Checklist \(Redbridge LSCB\)](#)

## RESPONSIBILITIES: THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

### Early Help

All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.

Any staff member who has a concern about a child's welfare should follow the school's referral processes. Staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.

All staff should be aware of the local early help process and understand their role in it. Any child may benefit from early help, but all **staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:**

- is disabled and has specific additional needs.
- has special educational needs (whether they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan).
- is a young carer.
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups.

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- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home.
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation.
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse.
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.
- has returned home to their family from care.
- is a privately fostered child.

If early liaising with other agencies and setting up inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services, if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

### Children in Need

A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child disabled. Local authorities are required to



provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

### **Children Suffering or Likely to Suffer Significant Harm**

Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Such enquiries enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment, including all forms of abuse and neglect, female genital mutilation or other so-called honour based violence, and extra familial threats like radicalisation and sexual exploitation.

### **What Will LB Redbridge Social Care Do?**

Within one working day of a referral being made, a local authority social worker should acknowledge receipt to the referrer and make a decision about the next steps and the type of response that is required.

**This will include determining whether:**

- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required;
- whether the child is in need, and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989;
- there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989;
- any services are required by the child and family and what type of services;
- further specialist assessments are required to help the local authority to decide what further action to take;
- to see the child as soon as possible if the decision is taken that the referral requires further assessment.

The referrer should follow up if this information is not forthcoming.

If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, staff should do everything they can to

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support that assessment (supported by the designated safeguarding lead or deputy as required).

If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the referrer should consider following local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

## **APPENDIX 4: CONTACTS AND LINKS**

### **CAF**

**0208 708 2071**

[CAF Duty@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:CAF Duty@redbridge.gov.uk)

[CAF Admin@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:CAF Admin@redbridge.gov.uk)

### **Child Protection & Assessment Team**

**020 8708 3885**

[CPAT.Referrals@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:CPAT.Referrals@redbridge.gov.uk)

### **Children Missing from Education**

**020 8708 6047 / 86029**

[cme@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:cme@redbridge.gov.uk)

**Children with Disabilities Team**

**020 8708 6092**

[Admin.CWDT@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:Admin.CWDT@redbridge.gov.uk)

**Children's Services Complaints**

**0208 8708 5174**

[ChildrensComplaints@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:ChildrensComplaints@redbridge.gov.uk)

**Families Together Hub**

**0208 708 2071**

[Early.Intervention@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:Early.Intervention@redbridge.gov.uk)

**Emergency Duty Team EDT**

**(Out of hours: after 5pm & weekends)**

**020 8708 5897**

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**Local Authority Designated Officer**

**020 8708 5350**

[lado@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:lado@redbridge.gov.uk)

**Local Safeguarding Children Board**

**020 8708 5282**

[LSCB@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:LSCB@redbridge.gov.uk)

**Weblinks:**

**Ofsted** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-safeguarding-in-early-years-education-and-skills-from-september-2015/inspecting-safeguarding-in-early-years-education-and-skills-settings>

**Redbridge LSCB**

Worried about a Child? [https://www.redbridgescp.org.uk/wp](https://www.redbridgescp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Redbridge-SCP- Multi-Agency-Thresholds-Document-September 2018-Final.pdf)

[content/uploads/2015/09/Redbridge-SCP- Multi-Agency-Thresholds-Document-September 2018-Final.pdf](https://www.redbridgescp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Redbridge-SCP- Multi-Agency-Thresholds-Document-September 2018-Final.pdf)

<https://www.redbridgescp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Redbridge-SCP-Multi Agency Thresholds- Document-September-2018-Final.pdf>

**Escalation and Resolution Policy,**

<https://www.redbridgescp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Redbridge-LSCB-Escalation-and-Resolution-Policy-3rd-Edition May-2019-Final.pdf>

**Department for Education**

[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Advice for practitioners \(March 2015\)](#)

**Working together to safeguard children 2023**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65803fe31c0c2a000d18cf40/Working\\_together\\_to\\_safeguard\\_children\\_2023.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65803fe31c0c2a000d18cf40/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023.pdf)

[eguard children 2023 - statutory guidance.pdf](#)

**Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024**

**[Keeping children safe in education 2024](#)**