



**UNICORN SCHOOL**

# **SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

*This policy applies to all children at Unicorn School, including those in the EYFS.*

*Parents may read this policy on the public section of the website.*

*The Designated Safeguarding Lead for the whole school, including the EYFS is:  
David Gladstone  
Deputy Head-DSL*

*To be updated annually by the Designated Safeguarding Lead in conjunction with the  
Head and the Governors.*

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

Staff Member:

David Gladstone

**Last Reviewed:**

**September 2024**

**Approved by Committee:**

**November 2024**

**Noted by Governors:**

**November 2024**

# UNICORN SCHOOL

## SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN/CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

### KEY FACTS

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|---|--|
| <b>DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL):</b>  | MR DAVID GLADSTONE (DEPUTY HEAD)<br><a href="mailto:David.gladstone@unicornschoo.org.uk">David.gladstone@unicornschoo.org.uk</a><br>020 8948 3926  |
| <b>DEPUTY DSLs:</b>   | MRS POLLY FRALEY (HEADTEACHER)<br><a href="mailto:Polly.fraley@unicornschoo.org.uk">Polly.fraley@unicornschoo.org.uk</a><br>MRS HANNAH LANGDON<br><a href="mailto:Hannah.langdon@unicornschoo.org.uk">Hannah.langdon@unicornschoo.org.uk</a><br>MRS BARBARA YOUNG<br><a href="mailto:Barbara.young@unicornschoo.org.uk">Barbara.young@unicornschoo.org.uk</a><br>020 8948 3926 |
| <b>SCHOOL LISTENER:</b>   | MRS JULIA ZIEGLER<br><a href="mailto:Julia.ziegler@blueyonder.co.uk">Julia.ziegler@blueyonder.co.uk</a><br>020 8948 3926   |
| <b>SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR:</b>   | MR AIDAN MC LAUGHLIN C/O UNICORN SCHOOL 020 8948 3926  |
| <b>CONCERNS ABOUT CHILDREN:</b><br><b>Richmond Social Services SPA (Single Point Access)</b><br><br><b>Hounslow Safeguarding Children Board</b><br><br><b>Wandsworth Initial Point of Contact</b> | 020 8547 5008 from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, or 020 8770 5000 out of hours<br><br>020 8683 6600<br>Out of hours 020 8583 2222<br><br>020 8871 6622<br>Out of hours 020 8871 6000   |
| <b>CONCERNS ABOUT STAFF/VOLUNTEERS:</b><br><br><b>Richmond Local Authority's Designated Officer (LADO):</b>   | Polly Fraley (Headteacher)<br>020 8948 3926<br><br>AFC LADO<br>Tel: 020 8891 7370<br>07774 332 675 or via SPA above<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:LADO@achievingforchildren.org.uk">LADO@achievingforchildren.org.uk</a>  |
| <b>CONCERNS ABOUT THE HEAD:</b><br><b>Chair of Governors:</b>   | Mr Paul Rathbone<br>Tel: 020 8948 3926   |
| <b>ADVICE FOR STAFF AND GOVERNORS (with particular regard to the PREVENT duty):</b><br><br><b>Non-emergency police</b><br><br><b>DFE dedicated helpline and mailbox</b>                           | 101<br><br>020 7340 7264<br><a href="mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk">counter.extremism@education.gov.uk</a>   |

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**Date of last review: September 2024**

***This policy applies to all children at Unicorn School, including those in the EYFS.***

***This policy is available on the school website.***

***This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014 with its associated 2019 guidance.***

***The school operates safeguarding procedures in line with locally-agreed, interagency procedures and is in line with guidance from Richmond's Local Safeguarding Children Board, as well as the following publications:***

**[London Child Protection Procedures and Practice Guidance 2024](#)**

**[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#)**[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#)****

**[Information Sharing for Safeguarding Practitioners \(May 2024 Update\)](#)**

**[Prevent Duty \(Oct 2023 update\)](#)**

**[Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 \(Aug 2018 update\)](#)**

**[What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused 2015](#)**

**[Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education, and Health Education \(Sept 2021 update\)](#)**

**[The Use of Social Media for Online Radicalisation 2015](#)**

[\*\*Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty\*\*](#)

[\*\*Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance\*\*](#)

[\*\*Local Guidance on CME 2024\*\*](#)

[Sharing, Screening and Confiscation Advice for Schools \(2022\)](#)

[\*\*Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: Advice for Education Settings 2020 \(update March 2024\)\*\*](#)

[\*\*Emergency Planning and Response for Education, Childcare and Children's Social Care Settings 2023\*\*](#)

[\*\*Safeguarding and Remote Education\*\*](#)

[\*\*Filtering and Monitoring Standards for Schools 2023 \(Updated May 2024\)\*\*](#)

## **TERMINOLOGY**

**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 or physical health or development;
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- Taking early action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

**Child protection** refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect.

**Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

**Child** includes everyone under the age of 18.

**Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

## **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION**

We at Unicorn School are committed to safeguarding children and young people and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment.

All staff at Unicorn School fully recognise their responsibilities with regards to protecting and supporting children at the school. All staff believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment, which promotes the social, physical and emotional development of the individual child. This policy is designed to provide a comprehensive coverage of the key issues involved: definition, explanation and identification, procedure and support.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

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

Pupils at Unicorn School are taught about safeguarding, including online, through various teaching and learning opportunities (see section 7 for more detail). Children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.

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

## **ADMINISTRATION OF THIS POLICY**

This policy will be up-dated annually (or earlier if appropriate) by the DSL who holds responsibility for Child Protection across the school from EYFS to Year 6 and ensures that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay. The DSL is also responsible for approving amendments to child protection arrangements in the light of changing regulations or recommended best practice.

The Chair of Governors and the Governing Body are responsible for an annual review of this policy and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. To aid in this process an audit of our school's safeguarding procedures (Section 11 audit) will be submitted to the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership annually.

## **TRAINING**

In line with local Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership advice, the DSL and deputy DSLs undertake level 3 training every two years. In addition, the DSL attends the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership termly briefings, in order to keep knowledge up to date, and disseminates information to staff as necessary.

The DSL completed Level 3 Child Protection Processes Training most recently in December 2023. The Head (December 2023), Mrs Hannah Langdon (Deputy DSL, February 2022) and Mrs Barbara Young (Deputy DSL, February 2023) have completed the same Level 3 Child Protection Processes Training. The DSL also undertakes regular Prevent Awareness Training, most recently in June 2023.

All members of staff develop their understanding of the signs and indications of abuse and have training from the Borough Safeguarding Team every two years, with annual refresher training and regular safeguarding updates from the DSL, as recommended by the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership. The Local Authority safeguarding team (Achieving for Children) conducted a Level 2 inset for all staff in September 2024. Any staff who miss this training, or start at the school after the training, are required to do an online safeguarding course or show evidence that they have completed a similar course elsewhere. Since September 2015, training has included Prevent Awareness. Staff have also received training in managing a report of child on child abuse, including when it concerns sexual violence and/or sexual harassment.

All staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, are provided with induction training that includes:

1. The contents of this Child Protection policy;
2. The Staff Code of Conduct including the whistleblowing procedure;
3. The School's Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions policy
4. The School's policies on acceptable use of mobile phones and photography and Internet Safety
5. The School's response to children who go Missing in Education (within this policy)
6. The identity of the DSL and deputy DSLs and their roles (within this policy)
7. For all staff, a copy of Part 1 of KCSIE 2024 (as attached to this policy). This includes staff who do not work directly with children (although we acknowledge the availability of Annex A, a condensed version of Part 1, for this purpose).
8. In addition, for leaders and staff who work directly with children, a copy of Annex B from KCSIE 2024

Governors are trained regularly and last attended training by the DSL in November 2023. In addition, the safeguarding governor, Mr Aidan McLaughlin, is DSL at his own school and has completed Level 3 safeguarding Training.

The aims of this policy are:

- To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence;
- To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse;
- To identify and record any concerns at an early stage
- To promote early help for children and families
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm;
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff and, if appropriate, other relevant professionals;
- To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse;
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, including the Police and Social Services;
- To ensure that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability;
- To promote safe practice and challenge poor and unsafe practice;
- To promote an understanding that child abuse transcends class, ethnicity and culture
- To ensure that the school follows DfE guidance; and

- To ensure that, when concerned about the welfare of a child, the staff always act in the best interests of that child.

## **SECTION 2 TYPES OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

### **DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE**

At Unicorn, child abuse is taken to refer to any child who, through the action, or inaction, of parents, other adults or other child/children, has suffered, or is likely to suffer neglect, or serious physical, sexual or emotional harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly on-line, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. There may also be wider environmental factors in a child's life that may be a threat to their safety and/or welfare (this is known as contextual safeguarding).

All children have the right to be treated as individuals, to have his or her needs met, and to be shown respect for all aspects of his or her identity, including gender, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, sexuality and culture. At Unicorn we are sensitive to the fact that parenting and child rearing styles can vary according to class, age, race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion. We recognize that all parents have the right to raise their children according to their family traditions and we are aware of not passing judgement on or discriminating on the basis of difference.

All members of staff have a responsibility to identify and report suspected abuse (including suspected, actual or reported abuse by other members of staff) and to ensure the safety and well-being of the pupils. Staff should be aware of the signs of the various types of child abuse and the procedures they should follow if they have concerns about a child –. Procedures are detailed in Section 4 of this policy.

The staff are also made aware of the Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding (Mr Aidan McLaughlin) and of her role in monitoring and reviewing safeguarding arrangements.

The four broad categories of abuse are physical, sexual, neglect and emotional. These categories do overlap and an abused child may frequently suffer more than one type of abuse. If staff are unsure about any signs, or have concerns about any child even if they do not fit into these categories, they should consult the DSL.

### **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.

**Possible Signs in the child:** unexplained injuries or burns, any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them or several different explanations provided for an injury eg bruising, bite marks, burns, scars and even fractures. The child may also become aggressive, withdrawn, regressive, fear medical help, refuse to discuss injuries, show a reluctance to change for, or participate in, swimming or PE and exhibit self-destructive tendencies. The parent/carers may be disinterested or undisturbed.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse 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 further detailed below in section 3.

**Possible Signs in the child:** children are frequently too scared to say anything due to guilt and/or fear. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional/behavioural. A child may show excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or may regularly engage in sexual play inappropriate to his/her age group. Physical symptoms may be present and behavioural/emotional difficulties may arise.

### **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.

**Possible Signs in the child:** evidence of neglect is built up over a period of time and can cover different aspects of parenting. The child may be constantly tired, hungry, dirty, small for age or absent from school and/or left alone at home.

### **Emotional Abuse**

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

**Possible Signs in the child:** emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise because the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The manifestations of emotional abuse might also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse. The child may be withdrawn, aggressive, regressive, nervous, neurotic, anxious, over-tired or afraid.

## **CHILDREN WHO MAY BE PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE**

Some children may be at increased risk of neglect and or abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse happens, or who have a high level of tolerance in respect of neglect. Children who may be particularly vulnerable include those who are:

- disabled or have special educational needs
- witnessing domestic abuse
- affected by known parental substance misuse
- asylum seekers
- living away from home
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaged in bullying
- living in temporary accommodation
- living transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic, neglectful and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality
- involved directly or indirectly in prostitution or child trafficking
- do not have English as a first language.

At Unicorn we recognise that when a child has a social worker, it is an indicator that the child is more at risk than most pupils.

This may mean that they are more vulnerable to further harm, as well as facing educational barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and poor mental health. We take these needs into account when making plans to support pupils who have a social worker.

## **MENTAL HEALTH AND SAFEGUARDING**

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

School staff are not expected or trained to diagnose mental health conditions, but may notice behaviours that may be of concern. More information can be found in the DfE guidance [Mental health and behaviour in schools \(2018\)](#)

Where staff have a mental health concern about a child that may also be a safeguarding concern, they should raise the issue by informing the designated safeguarding lead or deputy. (See Section 4 for specific procedures)

## **CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges because:

- there may be 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
- difficulties may arise in overcoming communication barriers.

At Unicorn School we seek to identify pupils who may need more support to be kept safe or to keep themselves safe by a culture of open communication:

- Pastoral issues and individual children are discussed at our weekly staff briefing sessions.
- The safeguarding team meet at least half termly to discuss any children of concern.
- The DSL will identify any children of concern and have conversations with the class teacher as required.

## **SECTION 3: SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES**

**FURTHER INFORMATION ON SPECIFIC ISSUES IS AVAILABLE IN KCSIE2024, ANNEX B  
THIS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 148 OF [KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION 2024](#)**

### **Domestic Abuse**

The definition of Domestic Abuse is:

any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional.

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

### **Child on Child Abuse (also see school Anti-Bullying Policy and Behaviour Policy)**

Children can abuse other children; this is generally referred to as child on child abuse and can take many forms. Child on child abuse may be physical, emotional, sexual, bullying (including cyberbullying), sexting, initiation/hazing type rituals as well as other forms of abusive behaviours. The school recognises the gendered nature of child on child abuse but all child on child abuse will be taken seriously and will never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

Unicorn School seeks to minimise the risk of child on child abuse by implementing a strong pastoral care ethos as detailed in Section 7 of this policy. We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing our pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supported friends and ethos of protection.

The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty

Pupils may be perpetrators of abuse but all children, whether regarded as a perpetrator or a victim, should be regarded as being "at risk".

Depending on the circumstances, a pupil's behaviour may require a response under child protection procedures rather than behaviour or anti-bullying procedures. If a pupil has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm, or the alleged abuse would, if proved, be a criminal offence, a referral to children's services will be made.

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

- it is made against an older pupil and refers to their behaviour towards a younger pupil or a more vulnerable pupil

- it is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
- it raises risk factors for other pupils in the school
- that young people outside the school may be affected by this student

Examples of safeguarding issues against a pupil could include:

- **physical abuse:** violence, particularly pre-planned, forcing others to use drugs or alcohol
- **emotional abuse:** blackmail or extortion, threats and intimidation
- **sexual abuse:** indecent exposure, indecent touching or sexual assaults, forcing others to watch pornography or taking part in sexting
- **sexual exploitation:** encouraging other children to attend inappropriate parties, photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts

In areas where gangs are prevalent, older pupils may attempt to recruit younger pupils using any or all of the above methods. Young people suffering from sexual exploitation themselves may be forced to recruit other young people under threat of violence.

#### **What to do:**

- When an allegation is made by a pupil against another pupil, members of staff should consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. At Unicorn school, the Anti-bullying Officer is Mr Gladstone who is also the DSL so, whatever the level of concern, these allegations should be reported to him.
- The member of staff hearing the allegation should make a written record stating the facts.
- Under no circumstances should he/she attempt to investigate the circumstances before consulting the DSL.
- The DSL will contact children's services to discuss the case. It is possible that children's services are already aware of safeguarding concerns around this young person. The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a children's services referral where appropriate.
- The DSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome on CPOMS.
- If the allegation indicates a potential criminal offence has taken place, the police should be contacted at the earliest opportunity and parents informed (of both the pupil being complained about and the alleged victim). If children's services or the police have been informed the school will follow the relevant agency's guidance about what information may be disclosed and to whom.
- Any required sanctions following child on child abuse will be determined on a case by case basis.
- It may be appropriate to exclude the pupil being complained about for a period of time in accordance with Unicorn's Behaviour, Rewards, and Sanctions Policy
- Appropriate support in school, and from outside agencies if applicable, will also be put in place for any pupils affected. The support offered in these circumstances will be determined on a case by case basis depending on the circumstances.
- 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 disciplinary procedures.

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

### **Sexual Behaviour and Sexual abuse by children**

The boundary between what is abusive and what is part of normal childhood experimentation can be blurred. Decisions around inappropriate or abusive behaviour will relate to concepts of true consent, power imbalance and exploitation. Developmental sexual activity includes those actions that are to be expected from children and young people as they move to an adult understanding of their physical, emotional and behavioural relationships. It is essentially information gathering and experience testing. It is characterised by mutuality and of the seeking of consent.

Abusive sexual activity includes any behaviour involving coercion, threats, aggression together with secrecy, or where one participant relies on an unequal power base.

Sexual abuse 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. 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. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows that girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware that:

- It is important to recognise the signs of inappropriate or unhealthy sexual or sexualised behaviour in children.
- They should make clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- They should never tolerate or dismiss sexual violence or sexual harassment as 'banter' or 'just having a laugh'. They should challenge behaviours (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalizing them.
- The Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 criminalised the act of 'up skirting' and any of these incidents will not be tolerated in school

Procedures in the case of an allegation of sexual violence or harassment between children:

- Issues are likely to be complex and should be dealt with on a case by case basis
- Referral to the DFE publication Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in schools and colleges advice should be made
- Advice should be obtained at an early stage from children's services.
- Normal safeguarding procedures around disclosures, confidentiality and referrals should be followed
- If possible two members of staff should be present at any report
- The DSL should make an immediate risk and needs assessment which considers the victim, the alleged perpetrator and other children and adults

## **Child Criminal Exploitation**

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

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

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

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

## **Child Criminal Exploitation: 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 line”.

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

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

County lines criminal activity is where drug networks or gangs groom and exploit young people or children to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes at school where the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered.

## **Private Fostering**

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child’s parents. Close relatives are defined as step parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts. It applies to children under the age of 16, or under 18 if the child is disabled. Children looked after by the local authority or who are placed in a residential school, children’s home or hospital are not considered to be privately fostered.

Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children may be privately fostered at any age.

Unicorn school recognises that most privately fostered children remain safe and well, but safeguarding concerns have been raised in some cases. Therefore, all staff are alert to possible safeguarding issues, including the possibility that a child has been trafficked into the country.

By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify Children's Social Care as soon as possible. When Unicorn School becomes aware of a private fostering arrangement for a pupil that has not been notified to Children's Social Care, we will encourage parents and private foster carers to notify Children's Social Care themselves in the first instance, but also alert them to our mandatory duty as a school to inform the local authority of children in such arrangements.

### **Children at Risk of Radicalisation**

- The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a Prevent Duty on specified authorities (including independent schools and Early Years Childcare Providers) to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism.'
- The DSL has undertaken Prevent Awareness training
- The DSL includes Prevent Awareness as part of his annual training to staff on safeguarding
- Staff are required to do a short online course on the prevention of radicalisation
- The DSL, in conjunction with the Head and Governor Safeguarding representative, assesses the general risks on a regular basis and reports back to the governing body
- The DSL, in conjunction with other staff, will assess the risk of individual pupils being drawn into terrorist/extremist activity on a regular basis.
- In the event of concerns that a child is at risk of radicalisation, normal referral procedures apply (See Section 4).
- Children can also be referred to the Channel Programme.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-and-prevent-multi-agency-panel-pmap-guidance>
- Further guidance can be obtained from the government website [educateagainsthate.com](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-and-prevent-multi-agency-panel-pmap-guidance)
- Further assistance can be obtained from the non-emergency police number (101), the DfE helpline for staff and governors (0207340 7264) and [counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk)

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

We are committed to ensuring that our pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the school's core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

## **Children Missing from Education or from Home/Care**

### **[Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance](#)**

#### **[Local Guidance on CME 2024](#)**

#### **[Working Together to Improve Attendance DFE 2024](#)**

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of Safeguarding. Missing school can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns about other safeguarding issues including the criminal exploitation of children.

We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay. We will always follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not at school.

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) the school:

- has a separate registration and absences policy, and all children are placed on the admission register and attendance register.
- seeks to have at least two emergency contacts for each child.
- will seek to talk to parents to see how the child's right to education can be supported if there are concerns over the attendance of a child. In particular the DSL will contact parents when a child's attendance falls under 90%, even if absences have been authorised, to open a dialogue over improving that child's attendance. In monitoring absence the school may request doctor's notes to account for prolonged or regular periods of illness.
- inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register, including where the child has been taken out of school by his/her parents to be home educated, has moved away from the school's location and where the child has been permanently excluded
- The local authority is informed if any children join or leave Unicorn School at non-standard points i.e. joining after reception or leaving before Year 6.
- The local authority will be informed of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or who has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of ten school days.
- The School has a separate Missing Child Policy for children who go missing from school.

## **Child Sexual Exploitation**

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

Indicators of child sexual exploitation may include:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation;
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks;

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

Potential vulnerabilities include:

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

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

More information can be found in: [Child Sexual Exploitation Definition and guide for practitioners \(DfE 2017\)](#)

A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point. In the event of concerns about a child, normal referral procedures apply (See Section 4)

As with all forms of child sex abuse, child sexual exploitation:

- does not always involve physical contact and can occur through the use of technology.
- Can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual
- May occur without the child's immediate knowledge – eg. Others copying images or videos on social media

- Is typified by a power imbalance.

### **Honour Based Abuse including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

All forms of honour based violence are abuse (regardless of motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such by talking to DSL and, when appropriate, local safeguarding procedures being activated. In addition:

- FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.
- **From October 2015 it is mandatory for teachers to report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.**
- Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still discuss cases with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.

There is a range of potential indicators that a girl may be at risk of FGM:

- pupil talking about getting ready for a special ceremony
- family taking a long trip abroad
- pupil's family being from one of the 'at risk' communities for FGM (Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leon, Gambia, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesia and Pakistan)
- knowledge that the pupil's sibling has undergone FGM
- pupil talks about going abroad to be 'cut' or to prepare for marriage

## **SECTION 4: CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD**

School staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children and prevent concerns from escalating. All staff have a responsibility for provide a safe environment in which children can learn. Staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the best interests of the child.

### **If a member of staff has ANY concerns about a child**

If staff have **any** concerns, however minor they may seem, or notice **any** indicators of abuse or neglect or signs that a child may be experiencing a safeguarding issue they should contact the DSL (or deputy DSL if the DSL is not available). All concerns should be recorded in writing via the CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System)

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk, but have no 'real' evidence. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical or inconclusive signs may have been noticed. These concerns must also be reported to the DSL.

We at Unicorn school recognise that the signs may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill or an accident has occurred. However, they may also indicate a child is being abused or is in need of safeguarding.

In these circumstances staff will try to give the child the opportunity to talk. It is fine for staff to ask open ended questions to see if the pupil is OK or if they can help in any way. However, staff must not ask leading questions or investigate in any way.

Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff remains concerned they should discuss their concerns with the DSL and put them in writing via CPOMS as quickly as possible.

If the pupil does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below regarding a pupil making a disclosure.

### **Advice to Staff on How to Handle a Disclosure**

We recognise that it takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, guilty or scared, their abuser may have threatened that something will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults or believe that what has happened is their fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.

A child who makes a disclosure may have to tell their story on a number of subsequent occasions to the police and/or social workers. Therefore, it is vital that their first experience of talking to a trusted adult is a positive one.

During their conversation with the pupil staff will:

- listen to what the child has to say and allow them to speak freely
- not promise confidentiality\*
- remain calm and not overact or act shocked or disgusted – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting the listener
- reassure the child that it is not their fault and that they have done the right thing in telling someone

- not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how difficult it is for the pupil and allow them time to talk
- take what the child is disclosing seriously
- ask open questions and do not ask leading questions
- avoid jumping to conclusions, speculation or make accusations
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who is being abused
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing sooner. Saying things such as ‘I do wish you had told me about it when it started’ may be the staff member’s way of being supportive, but may be interpreted by the child to mean they have done something wrong
- tell the child what will happen next
- not investigate, the correct response is to listen and report to the DSL making an accurate record of what has been seen or heard

\*If a pupil talks to any member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing the staff member will let the child know that they will have to pass the information on. Staff are not allowed to keep secrets.

The member of staff should write up their conversation as soon as possible using as much as possible the child’s own words. Staff should make this a matter of priority. The record should be signed and dated, the member of staff’s name should be printed and it should also detail where the disclosure was made and who else was present. If more than one member of staff was present each member of staff should make their own individual record of the conversation for the DSL. The record should be handed to the DSL immediately via CPOMS.

### **Advice to staff on how to deal with a ‘sexting’ incident**

Sexting is defined as the production and/or sharing of sexual photos and videos of and by young people who are under the age of 18 and is illegal. The sharing of sexual photos and videos of under 18 year olds with or by adults is a form of child sexual abuse and must always be referred to the police.

When an incident involving youth produced sexual imagery or inappropriate content comes to the School’s attention (whether this has taken place in or out of school):

Confiscate any device involved and set it to flight mode or, if this is not possible, turn it off.

- Do not view, download, forward or share the imagery yourself or ask a child to share or download – this is illegal
- If you have viewed the imagery by accident report this to the DSL
- Do not delete the imagery or ask the child to delete it
- Do not ask the young person who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery – this is the responsibility of the DSL
- Do not share information about the incident to other members of staff, young people or other parents and carers in the school
- Do not say or do anything to blame the young people involved
- Do explain that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the DSL
- The incident should be referred to the DSL immediately

- The DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff
- There should be subsequent interviews with the young people involved (if appropriate)
- Parents should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm
- At any point in the process if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately

### **ACTION BY DSL WHEN ANY CONCERNS ABOUT PUPILS ARE RAISED**

Once informed of any concerns the DSL will act promptly and action taken will depend on the level of concern raised. The DSL may:

- Monitor the child, reviewing the child after a set time period
- Manage any support internally and via the school's pastoral process, reviewing the child after a set time period
- Seek an Early Help assessment in line with Richmond Borough's 'Signs of Safety' procedures by contacting the single point of access
- Seek advice or make a referral to external services by contacting the Single Point of Access (SPA)
- Contact the police

### **Making a Referral to the Single Point of Access**

Concerns about a pupil or a disclosure should be discussed with the DSL who will help decide whether a referral to the Single Point of Access is appropriate. If a referral is needed then the DSL should make it without delay. However, anyone can make a referral and if for any reason a staff member thinks a referral is appropriate and one hasn't been made they can, and should, consider making a referral themselves. If a member of staff makes a referral they should update the DSL as soon as possible.

The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the pupil.

If after a referral the pupil's situation does not appear to be improving the DSL (or whoever made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed, and most importantly the pupil's situation improves.

If a pupil is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to SPA and/or the police immediately. Anybody can make a referral.

Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible.

**SPA contact number: 020 8547 5008. If the child does not live in the London Borough of Richmond the referral must be made to the local authority where the child resides.**

### **Notifying Parents about safeguarding concerns**

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

However, the school does not require parental consent to make a referral and if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from the Single Point of Access.

Where there are concerns about forced marriage or honour based violence parents should not be informed a referral is being made as to do so may place the child at a significantly increased risk.

### **Support for Staff**

We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSLs and to seek further support as appropriate.

### **Confidentiality**

Unicorn school recognises that in order to effectively meet a child's needs, safeguard their welfare and protect them from harm the school must contribute to inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) and share information between professionals and agencies where there are concerns.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and that the **GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would place a child at risk of harm.**

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a pupil to keep secrets which might compromise the pupil's safety or wellbeing. It is important that staff and volunteers tell the pupil in a manner appropriate to the pupil's age and development that they cannot promise complete confidentiality and that they may need to pass information on to other professionals to help to keep the pupil or other children safe.

However, we also recognise that all matters relating to child protection are personal to children and families. Therefore, in this respect they are confidential and the Headteacher or DSLs will only disclose information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis.

We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to SPA with their parents and carers unless to do so could put the pupil at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with SPA on this point.

### **Record Keeping**

Pupils' safeguarding and child protection records will be stored securely and access to them will be appropriately limited. All records since 2019 are held electronically and access is restricted to the DSL team. Records prior to 2019 are held securely in the office of the DSL. When pupils leave Unicorn, the school will ensure that their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. Parental consent is not required for the transfer of child protection files.

Files will be transferred separately from the main pupil file, to a named person, usually the DSL of the new school. Secure transit will be ensured and a confirmation of receipt will be requested and retained.

When pupils join Unicorn, the DSL will ensure that a request is made for any child protection records from the previous nursery or school.

KCSIE 2023 states:

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

In addition, from paragraph 84: 'This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent...'

For the avoidance of doubt, these procedures also apply to concerns about children at risk of radicalisation.

## **SECTION 5: ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF, VOLUNTEERS OR HEAD TEACHER**

**(this section should be read in conjunction with the ‘whistle blowing’ policy in the staff code of conduct)**

At Unicorn School, we recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children, including governors, volunteers, supply teachers and agency staff. Any concerns about the conduct of other adults in the school should be taken to the headteacher without delay (or where that is not possible, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead); any concerns about the headteacher should go to the Chair of Governors (contact details for all of these are at the beginning of this policy). Where there is a conflict of interest in reporting a matter to the Head, the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) can be contacted directly – see below.

All staff are DBS checked and are advised to follow guidance in the School Code of Conduct on avoiding situations where they may be vulnerable to accusations. Staff are frequently reminded about the importance of ‘neutral reporting’ – reporting and recording on CPOMs any occasions in which they feel they might be vulnerable to accusation.

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

As per the KCSIE 2024 (part 4) ‘harms threshold’, concerns should be reported where a member of staff, including supply teachers and volunteers, has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

If an accusation is made, the Head and/or the Chair of Governors will consult with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer). The ongoing process will be guided by reference to DfE publication ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education Sep 2024 (on Sharepoint under 0 Safeguarding and Governors Section of the website) and Richmond and Kingston Safeguarding Children Partnership.

School will not undertake its own investigation of the allegation without prior consultation with the LADO or, in the most serious cases, the police so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations. The LADO will be contacted within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse. Discussions will be recorded in writing and consider the nature, content and context of the allegation before agreeing a course of action, including how to handle communication with the individual and the parents of the child.

In borderline cases, discussions with the LADO can be held informally and without naming the school or individual. Any need for disciplinary action against the member of staff will be carried out in accordance with contractual disciplinary procedures. The decision about whether or not to investigate further lies with child protection agencies. If there has been a substantiated allegation against a member of staff, the school will work with the LADO to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the school’s procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

**Richmond LADO:**

**42 York Street Twickenham TW1 3BW**

**Tel: 020 8891 7370 or 07774332675 or via SPA 020 8547 5008 from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, or 020 8770 5000 out of hours**

**Email: [LADO@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:LADO@achievingforchildren.org.uk)**

In case of serious harm the police should be informed from the outset.

Due to restrictions on the reporting or publishing of allegations against teachers, the school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity. These restrictions apply up to the point where the accused person is charged with an offence, or the DfE/TRA publish information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case.

In addition, if anyone who is employed, contracted, a volunteer or a member of staff working in the school (even if the work is not defined as regular) is deemed unsuitable to work with children, and thus their services are no longer required, the school will report to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) within one month of that person leaving the school.

Ceasing to use a person's services includes: dismissal; non-renewal of a fixed-term contract; no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency; terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee; no longer using staff employed by contractors; no longer using volunteers; resignation; and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering. 'Compromise Agreements' do not apply in this connection.

Any such report will include evidence about the circumstances as far as possible. The contact address is DBS, PO Box 110, Liverpool, L69 3EF (Tel. 0870 90 90 811).

The school is aware that failure to make a report constitutes an offence, leading to its possible removal from the DfE register of independent schools.

Independent schools are also under a duty to consider making a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate. The reasons such an order would be considered are: "unacceptable professional conduct", "conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute" or a "conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence". Advice about whether an allegation against a teacher is sufficiently serious to refer to the TRA can be found in Teacher misconduct: the prohibition of teachers (2015). Further guidance is published on the TRA website.

### **Support for Staff**

Teachers and other members of school staff and volunteers who have day-to-day contact with children in a variety of situations are vulnerable to accusations of abuse. Their relationships with pupils may in rare instances lead to allegations against them being made by pupils or parents/carers. Those allegations may be false, malicious or misplaced and may be either deliberate or innocent of such intent. Allegations that are found to be malicious will be removed from staff personnel records and any that are not substantiated, are unfounded or malicious will not be referred to in employer references.

### **Low Level concerns**

Unicorn School is committed to embedding a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour as set out in our Code of Conduct are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff. Low level concerns which do not meet the harms threshold above are reported to the same people as set out above at the beginning of this section. Examples might be: being over friendly with children, having favourites, taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language. These concerns are recorded in writing and reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified or responded to. This could mean internal disciplinary procedures or a referral to the LADO if the harms threshold is met. School leadership would also consider if any wider cultural issues in the school enabled the behaviour to occur and if any policy changes or extra training are required.

## **SECTION 6: SAFEGUARDING ADVICE OR ISSUES CONTAINED IN OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES**

### **WHISTLE BLOWING (Whistle Blowing Policy and Staff Code of Conduct)**

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues, about poor or unsafe practice, and about potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime. The first port of call is the DSL, but staff may also approach the Safeguarding Governor, who will assist in mediation and dispute resolution. The school has a culture of valuing staff and of reflective practice, and there should be transparency and accountability in relation to how concerns are received and handled.

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise their concerns internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 from 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday, or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

### **PHYSICAL INTERVENTION (Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy)**

As referred to in our Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times, it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person or to themselves

Children will not be punished within the school by any form of corporal punishment such as hitting, slapping, shaking or other degrading treatments, nor will they be threatened with any such action.

We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

### **EQUAL TREATMENT AND RACIST INCIDENTS (Equal Opportunities Policy)**

Unicorn School is committed to equal treatment for all pupils regardless of an individual's race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or social background

We aim to create a friendly, caring and perceptive environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of our pupils.

Racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY (Health and Safety Policy)**

Our Health and Safety Policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

### **USE OF MOBILE PHONES AND PHOTOGRAPHY (Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras policy/Staff Code of Conduct. These, along with all Unicorn policies, apply in the EYFS)**

Our 'Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras Policy' sets out measures for safeguarding children in the area of photography. There are also guidelines in the Staff Handbook. Key points are:

- Mobile phones are not used in EYFS.

- Staff must not consult their phones when they are responsible for children, both in classroom situations and in the playground.
- Staff should not use their mobiles to take photographs of children – the school cameras should be used for this purpose.
- Parent volunteers may take photographs on their phones on the strict understanding that the images are for personal use and must not be put into the public domain.
- Parental permission must be granted before images are used on the school website or in printed publications. This is sought when the child starts at the Unicorn and parents have the right to alter their consent at any time. Where a photograph is used, the child is not named; if a pupil is named, their photograph is not used.
- Children in Violet (Year Five) and below must not bring mobile phones into school.
- Ultra Violet children (Year Six) who are travelling to / from school on their own may bring a mobile phone but it must be kept in the School Office during the day.

## RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION (See Safer Recruitment Policy)

We have a separate written Safer Recruitment Policy that reflects both national and local guidance. Please refer to this policy. The school operates safe recruitment procedures, including enhanced DBS disclosures and the checks required by current statutory guidance and the Independent School Standards Regulations.

## ONLINE SAFETY AT UNICORN (Internet Safety Policy/Anti-bullying Policy/Staff Code of Conduct)

The Internet Safety Policy at Unicorn takes into account the four main areas of risk identified in KCSiE 2024:

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

A Pupil Acceptable Use Agreement is sent home to be signed and also a Staff Acceptable Use Agreement similarly signed and dated.

Annex B of KCSiE 2024 contains a list of websites for further guidance and support.

Filtering and monitoring:

To limit children's exposure to online risks Unicorn has strong and effective filtering and monitoring systems, following the government's [Meeting Digital and Technology Standards in schools guidance](#). The DSL will ensure that:

- specific staff have assigned roles and responsibilities to manage systems
- staff know about the systems in place and how to escalate concerns

- there are annual reviews of the systems, or more frequently if there is a significant change or issue
- the governors review the systems with the DSL
- the systems are effective for the age range of children and consider children potentially at greater risk of harm
- when online content is blocked, it does not impact on teaching and learning
- filtering works across all devices including mobile phones and smart technology

## **SECTION 7: PASTORAL CARE AT UNICORN**

### **Prevention of harm**

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing our pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supported friends and ethos of protection.

The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to
- Ensure that children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty

Events and initiatives held in school for children around pastoral care:

- NSPCC assemblies and workshops. These will be repeated on a three yearly schedule.
- Internet Safety workshops delivered by Childnet involving the whole school, staff and parents (Sep 2022)
- Teachers refer to the NSPCC 'Pants' campaign in circle time.
- Year 6 visit Holly Lodge Junior Citizenship and the Sutton Life Centre where topics such as bullying and online safety are covered.
- Termly assemblies on online safety for KS2 children
- Anti-bullying week is observed annually, including whole school assemblies and class led activities.
- Safer Internet Day is observed at school.
- There is a communication box with the 'School Listener' which children can access.
- Staff complete a 'what I wish my teacher knew' exercise with their children periodically
- All Junior children complete an annual Wellbeing survey (PASS) which can illuminate individual negative thinking. Individual children are flagged up to teachers.
- Year 6 (UV) had a course of mindfulness lessons in the Autumn term run by the Mindfulness in Schools Project.
- Mindfulness is offered as a Junior club. Childline posters are displayed in all the toilet areas
- School council are involved in creating a poster campaign for raising awareness of child protection matters in a 'child friendly' format
- The Relationship and Sex Education curriculum covers healthy relationships and what is not acceptable behaviour.
- Two members of staff are trained in the Emotional Health support 'Drawing and Talking'.
- Headteacher attended 'Mental Health First Aid' March 2019

## **SECTION 8: SCHOOL SECURITY AT UNICORN**

### **Entrance to the School**

The front door is manned by a staff member when it is open.

The front door is open from 8:20-8:30, 12 – 12.10 and from 3:25 – 3:45. These times are subject to change depending on special arrangements.

Parents and staff are regularly reminded that the front door to the school should never be left on the latch and to be aware of others gaining entry by ‘tailgating’.

Outside of drop off and pick up times the front door is on a video entry system operated by the office staff.

### **Signing in**

All parents and visitors must sign in at the office except for dropping off children at the beginning of the day or picking up from Red class at lunch time.

**Any adult in school after 8:45 should have signed in at the School Office and should be wearing a lanyard.**

BLUE            member of staff

GREEN        visitor with a DBS

RED            a visitor without a DBS (and therefore should not be alone with children)

All Visitors must sign in in accordance with the Visiting Speakers Policy.

## **SECTION 9: RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DSL, THE GOVERNING BODY AND THE HEAD TEACHER**

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead** has the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection at Unicorn School. In the event of his absence the Deputy DSLs have the training and experience to carry out any of the duties below.

### **Record Keeping**

- Ensure written records of concerns are correctly maintained including recording decision making linked to those concerns (this is maintained using the CPOMS system)
- Ensure records are stored securely
- Ensure all staff are able to access CPOMS
- Ensure records are received from previous schools and that records are transferred promptly and securely when a child leaves.
- Be aware of pupils who have a social worker

### **Manage referrals:**

- Refer cases (and support staff who make referrals) of suspected abuse to the local authority via the SPA (Single Point of Access)
- Refer cases (and support staff who make referrals) to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the DBS as required
- Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required

### **Work with others**

- Liaise with the head teacher and deputy DSLs around safeguarding issues
- As required, liaise with the case manager and the designated officers at the local authority for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member
- Liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff

### **Raise awareness:**

- Ensure the school's child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately
- Ensure the school's child protection policy is reviewed and updated annually and work with governors regarding this
- Ensure the child protection 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 the local LSCB for training and local policies regarding safeguarding
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues with teachers and school leadership.
- Encourage a culture among all staff of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.

#### Filtering and Monitoring:

- Has the lead responsibility for online safety, including ensuring that the school's systems for filtering and monitoring online use are effective.

#### Training and ongoing CPD:

The DSL and deputies undergo training (level 3 inter-agency working) to provide them with knowledge and skills for their role which is updated every two years, with regular updates;

The DSL has undertaken Prevent Awareness training;

The DSL attends a termly borough meeting facilitated by the Richmond and Kingston Safeguarding Children Partnership which cover a variety of safeguarding topics, best practice, learnings from serious case reviews and reminders;

The DSL receives weekly email updates from a leading safeguarding expert, Andrew Hall, which highlight certain aspects of safeguarding each week. He also has access to 'Safeguarding Extra' a paid for Andrew Hall resource which provides valuable information around safeguarding policies and procedures.

Training and access to briefings and ongoing CPD enables the DSL to:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct child protection case conferences, be able to attend and contribute effectively
- Ensure each member has access to and understands Unicorn's child protection policy and procedures
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with SEN and young carers
- Keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of concern and referrals
- Understand and support staff on protecting children from risk of radicalization and the requirements of the Prevent duty
- Be aware of the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident they have relevant knowledge required to keep children safe whilst at school

The **Governing Board** of Unicorn School understands and fulfils its responsibilities, namely to ensure that:

- there is a Child Protection and Safeguarding policy together with a Staff Behaviour policy (Code of Conduct)
- child protection, safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations policies and procedures, including the staff behaviour policy (code of conduct), are consistent with Kingston's and Richmond's Safeguarding Children's Board and statutory requirements. They are reviewed annually. The safeguarding and child protection policy is publicly available on the school website
- all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers read and understand Unicorn's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and Code of Conduct policy
- all staff working with children have read and understood Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) part 1 and Annex B and that mechanisms are in place to assist staff in understanding and discharging their roles and responsibilities as set out in the guidance

- staff not working with children have at least read Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) part 1 or Annex A, the condensed version of KCSiE 2024 Part 1.
- the school operates a safer recruitment procedure that includes statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children) and by ensuring that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel who has completed safer recruitment training
- Unicorn School has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff (including the Head Teacher), volunteers and against other children and that a referral is made to the DBS if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have had they not resigned
- the Governing Board has a nominated governor responsible for safeguarding who has undertaken appropriate training for the role. All governors undergo Safeguarding Training. The chair of governors is responsible in the event of an allegation of abuse made against the Head Teacher
- an annual audit of Unicorn School's safeguarding policies, procedures and practices is undertaken with the Headteacher and designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and that this is submitted to the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership
- a member of the senior leadership team has been appointed as the designated safeguarding lead and they will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, as well as online safety; the role is explicit in the role holder's job description
- DSL and deputies undertake multi-agency (Level 3) safeguarding training which is updated every two years
- there is a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of children looked after who are on the school roll
- all other staff have safeguarding training updated as appropriate
- at least one member of the Governing Board has completed safer recruitment training to be repeated every five years
- children are taught about safeguarding (including online safety) as part of a broad and balanced curriculum covering relevant issues through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and through relationship and sex education (RSE)
- appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for 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
- appropriate online filtering and monitoring systems are in place
- enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks (without barred list checks, unless the governor is also a volunteer at the school) are in place for all governors

The **Head Teacher** will ensure that:

- the safeguarding and child protection policy and related policies and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- sufficient time, training, support, resources, including cover arrangements where necessary, is allocated to the DSL and deputy(ies) to carry out their roles effectively
- systems are in place for children to express their views and give feedback which operate with the best interest of the child at heart

- all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle-blowing procedures
- pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online
- they liaise with the local authority designated officer (LADO) within 24 hours, before taking any action and then on an ongoing basis, where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer

Updated September 2024 DG

Updated September 2023 DG

Updated June 2023, DG

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Updated Sept 19 PF approved by Risk Committee Nov 19 & Governors Nov 19

Updated Sept 2018 PF, Oct 18: approved by Risk Committee, Nov 18: approved by Governors' Meeting

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Updated March 2012 DG

Approved by Chair of Governors – VH, July 2011

Updated June 2011 DG/KE

Approved by Governor in charge of regulations March 2011

Updated by RL, December 2010,