

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy St Monica's Catholic Primary School

This policy was written and adopted on November 2009.

The policy is reviewed annually. Last reviewed October 2023

Our vision 'Strive to succeed in the presence of God', our Catholic values and the teaching of the Catholic Church underpin the development of this policy.

Together as a Catholic community, **Everyone** – children, parents, staff and parish,
Achieves in their own unique way and strives to be **More** like Jesus.

Universal Ambitions

Everyone at St Monica's School works towards the following five outcomes for all children: -

Be healthy– physically, mentally, emotionally and sexually healthy.

Make a positive contribution – including developing positive relationships, self confidence and successfully dealing with significant life changes.

Enjoy and achieve – achieve personal and social development and enjoy recreation.

Stay safe – from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation, have security, stability and be cared for

Achieve economic well being – live in decent homes and households.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The governors and staff of St Monica's school fully recognise the contribution they make to safeguarding children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm.
- 1.2 All staff and Governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.
- 1.3 The aims of this policy are:
 - 1.3.1 To support the child's development and emotional well-being in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
 - 1.3.2 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. See Appendix 1A-1E.
 - 1.3.3 To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm.
 - 1.3.4 To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
 - 1.3.5 To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
 - 1.3.6 To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Social Services
 - 1.3.7 To ensure that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability.

2.0 Procedures

- 2.1 Our school procedures for safeguarding children will comply with the Enfield Children's Safeguarding Board (ECSB) procedures. The ECSB have adopted and follow the All London Child Protection Procedures.

We will ensure that:

- 2.1.1 We have designated members of staff who undertake regular training. (The Leadership Team) There will always be a designated member of staff available for contact. In the rare event that all designated staff are off-site, they will be contactable by phone.
 - 2.1.2 The designated safeguarding lead is the Headteacher. The Pastoral Leader and the Inclusion Manager will also be the designated member of staff for the children – attending TAF meetings and liaising with outside agencies. The school will maintain 3 trained designated staff.
 - 2.1.3 All members of staff develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse and refresh their training regularly.
 - 2.1.4 All members of staff know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse.
 - 2.1.5 All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures.
 - 2.1.6 All staff will have read the government guidance 'Keeping children safe in education (September 2023) Part 1 (KCSIE) and the school's own child protection policy.
- 2.2 Our procedures will be regularly reviewed and up dated.
- 2.3 All new members of staff will be given a copy of our Child Protection Policy and the government guidance 'KCSIE Part 1' as part of their induction into the school.

3.0 Responsibilities

- 3.1 The designated teacher is responsible for:
- 3.1.1 Adhering to the ECSB and school procedures with regard to referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse
 - 3.1.2 Keeping written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral
 - 3.1.3 Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records
 - 3.1.4 Ensuring that an indication of further record-keeping is marked on the pupil records
 - 3.1.5 Ensuring that any pupil currently subject of a child protection plan who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to Children's Social Services
- 3.2 All members of staff (paid and unpaid) have the statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

4.0 Supporting Children

- 4.1 We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses' violence may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth. We recognise that a child in these circumstances may feel helpless and humiliated. We recognise that a child may feel self-blame.
- 4.2. We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- 4.3. We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

- 4.4. We recognise that a child may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise the experience as harmful.
- 4.5. Our school will support all pupils by:
 - 4.4.1 Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness whilst being aware of child on child abuse and not condoning aggression or bullying.
Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.
 - 4.4.2 Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
 - 4.4.3 Notifying Children's Social Services as soon as there is a significant concern.
 - 4.4.4 Providing continuing support to a pupil about whom there have been concerns, who leaves the school, by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the pupil's new school.

5.0 Confidentiality

- 5.1 We recognise that all matters relating to Child Protection are confidential.
- 5.2 The Headteacher or Designated Teacher will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a 'need to know' basis only.
- 5.3 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- 5.4 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets.

6.0 Supporting Staff

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the designated teacher and to seek further support as appropriate.

7.0 Allegations against staff

- 7.1 We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff and volunteers.
- 7.2 If such an allegation is made, the member of staff or volunteer receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Headteacher.
- 7.3 The Headteacher on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- 7.4 If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the designated teacher will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult with the LEA's Lead Officer for Safeguarding and Child Protection.

- 7.5 The school will follow the All London Child Protection Procedures for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which is available in the school.

8.0 Whistleblowing

- 8.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- 8.2 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

9.0 Physical Intervention

- 9.1 Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in separate policy (see 'Policy on the Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils') and acknowledges that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.
- 9.2 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.

10.0 Bullying

- 10.1 Our policy on bullying is set out in a separate policy (see Behaviour Policy) and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

11.0 Racist Incidents

- 11.1 Our policy on racist incidents is set out in a separate policy (see Single Equality Policy) and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

12.0 Prevention and Early Help

- 12.1 We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.
- 12.2 The school community will therefore:
- 12.2.1 Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
 - 12.2.2 Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
 - 12.2.3 Include in the curriculum opportunities for PSHCE and RSE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

13 Radicalisation (Appendix 6)

- 13.1 The current threat of radicalisation in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in

support of terrorism. The school is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.

13.2 All pupils and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, free speech is not an unqualified right but is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

13.3 We seek to protect children against the messages of all violent extremism. When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak to the designated teacher.

14 Specific Safeguarding Issues: Child Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking, Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation, Child Crime Exploitation, and Domestic Violence (Appendix 1E)

14.1 The school keeps itself up-to-date with the latest advice and guidance provided to assist in addressing specific vulnerabilities and forms of exploitation.

14.2 Our staff are supported to recognise warning signs and indicators in relation to specific issues, including such issues in an age-appropriate way in their curriculum.

14.3 The school works with and engages our families and communities to talk about such issues.

14.4 Our staff are supported to talk to families about sensitive concerns in relation to their children and to find ways to address them together wherever possible.

14.5 Our designated Child Protection Team will seek and obtain specific advice and guidance as necessary.

14.6 The school will engage experts and uses specialist material to support the safeguarding preventative work we do.

14.7 Our policy through the school's values, ethos and behaviour policies provide the basic platform to ensure children are given the support to respect themselves and others, stand up for themselves and protect each other.

15 Health & Safety

15.1 Our Health & 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

16 Online Safety

16.1 Our Online Safety Policy is a separate document which recognises the need to have strategies to protect children in the digital world

17.0 Use of digital images - photography and video, especially in Early Years

- 17.1 Staff are not allowed to take photographs or videos on their personal equipment. They must not transfer these images onto their equipment at home
- 17.2 We follow the following rules for any external use of digital images:
- If the student is named, we avoid using their photograph.
 - If their photograph is used, we avoid naming the student.
 - Where showcasing examples of students work we only use their first names, rather than their full names.
 - If showcasing digital video work to an external audience, we take care to ensure that students are not referred to by name on the video, and that students' full names aren't given in credits at the end of the film.
 - Only images of students in suitable dress are used.
- 17.3 Examples of how digital photography and video may be used include:
- the child being photographed (by the classroom teacher, teaching assistant or another child) as part of a learning activity; e.g. photographing children at work and then sharing the pictures on the Interactive whiteboard in the classroom allowing the children to see their work and make improvements.
 - the child's image for presentation purposes around the school; e.g. in school wall displays and PowerPoint presentations to capture images around the school or in the local area as part of a project or lesson.
 - the child's image being used in a presentation about the school and its work in order to share its good practice and celebrate its achievements, which is shown to other parents, schools or educators; e.g. within a CDROM / DVD or a document sharing good practice; in our school prospectus or on our school website. In rare events, the child could appear in the media if a newspaper photographer or television film crew attend an event. *Note: If we wanted the child's image linked to their name, we would contact the parent separately for permission, e.g. if the child won a national competition and wanted to be named in local or government literature.*

APPENDIX 1A

Definitions of child abuse

Definitions of Neglect

The persistent (severe or longstanding) failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological need, which is likely to result in serious impairment of their health or development. Neglect may occur in pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. It is important to watch for patterns over time – accumulative incidents.

Recognising Neglect

Neglect can include:

- failure to provide food and appropriate clothing
- failure to ensure reasonable personal hygiene
- failure to allow access to medical care or treatment
- failure to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger
- failure to respond to a child's emotional needs
- failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of appropriate care givers*
- failure to provide shelter.

* The law does not state an age when a child can be left alone, nor when young people can baby-sit. But parents can be prosecuted for wilful neglect if they leave a child unsupervised "in a manner likely to cause unnecessary suffering or injury to health" The law recognises competency, not age in this case.

Dealing with Neglect

If staff notice an issue that causes concern, they should adopt the following response

1. Using only open questions, ask the child about the issue in a non-threatening, concerned manner, without putting words or suggestions into their mouth. Never promise that it will be a secret between you and them, explain that you may have to talk about this with an appropriate adult.
2. Ask – then listen to what you are told (use TED – Tell... Explain.... Describe....)
3. Consider how the child presents themselves
4. Consider any other concerns about the child or the family
5. Log concerns on the school form and discuss with the designated teacher

Before any other agency will become involved in a case of neglect, there must be evidence that the school has tried to work with the parents in order to improve the situation.

Children not collected from school at the end of the school day could fit into this category. Section 175 – Education Act 2002, the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This should include arrangements for dealing with children not collected at the end of the day. Parents should be made aware of action that may be taken if they fail to collect their child at the end of the day. The action could be:

1. Contact with other named relatives/identified contacts
2. Contact with Police or Children's Services
3. Record kept by the Designated Teacher for CP as a form of monitoring
4. Child Protection procedures might be operated

A time scale of 30 minutes from the end of the school day/activity is suggested before any procedure is followed.

APPENDIX 1B

Definitions of child abuse

Definitions of Physical Abuse

This includes the actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child. This may include deliberate hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, suffocation and otherwise causing physical harm. It also includes fabricated or fictitious illness (when a parent/carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child)

Recognising Physical Abuse

The threshold for physical abuse is when a mark is left on the body – but when should staff be concerned about a bruise?

- The head is by far the commonest site of bruising in child abuse
- Abusive bruises often occur on the soft parts of the body eg. cheeks, abdomen, back, buttocks
- As a result of defending themselves, abused children may have bruising on the forearm, face, ears, hip, upper arm, back of the leg, hands or feet
- Clusters of bruises are the commonest feature in abused children. These are often on the upper arm, outside of the thigh, or on the body.
- Abusive bruises often carry the imprint of the implement used or the hand

Staff must bear in mind that aging a bruise is difficult, and at best is no more than 50% accurate.

Dealing with Physical Abuse

If staff notice an injury that causes concern, they should adopt the following response

1. Using only open questions, ask the child about the injury in a non-threatening, concerned manner, without putting words or suggestions into their mouth. Never promise that it will be a secret between you and them, explain that you may have to talk about this with an appropriate adult. (Tell me... Explain.... Describe...)
2. Ask – then listen to what you are told
3. Consider how the child presents themselves
4. Consider any other concerns about the child or the family
5. Log concerns on the school form and discuss with the designated teacher

APPENDIX 1C

Definitions of child abuse

Definitions of Sexual Abuse

The actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent and/or developmentally immature.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

Sexual abuse can include penetrative and non-penetrative acts. Penetrative acts may include physical contact, including penile penetrative acts. (Rape includes vaginal, anal and oral sex) Non-penetrative acts includes involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material and watching sexual acts.

Recognising Sexual Abuse

Some of the indicators of sexual abuse include:

- Bribing, threatening relationship, imbalance of power
- Play/acting out
- Precocious language (how do they know...?)
- Drawing/writing
- Sexually transmitted diseases or unexplained recurrent urinary tract infections (may make frequent trips to the toilet)
- Self harm/ self mutilation, including anorexia/bulimia
- Damage/soreness to genitalia, anus or mouth (most reported cases of sexual abuse is oral sex)
- Repeated wetting/soiling (bed) (in order to repel offender)

Dealing with Sexual Abuse

If staff notice an injury or a behaviour that causes concern, they should adopt the following response

1. Using only open questions, ask the child about the injury or behaviour in a non-threatening, concerned manner, without putting words or suggestions into their mouth
Never promise that it will be a secret between you and them, explain that you may have to talk about this with an appropriate adult.
2. Ask – then listen to what you are told
3. Consider how the child presents themselves
4. Consider any other concerns about the child or the family
5. Log concerns on the school form and discuss with the designated teacher

APPENDIX 1D

Definitions of child abuse

Definitions of Emotional Abuse

Actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional maltreatment or rejection. Because it is invisible, emotional abuse is the most insidious and under-recognised form of child abuse. It is a pattern of a relationship, rather than an incident of abuse.

All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment. This category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.

Recognising Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is found to have one or some of the following components;

- Rejecting – the adult refuses to acknowledge the child's worth, legitimacy and needs
- Isolating – the adult cuts the child off from normal social experiences and contacts, and prevents the child from making friendships. They make the child believe they are alone in the world
- Terrorising – the adult verbally assaults the child, creates a climate of fear, bullies and frightens the child, makes the child believe the world is a hostile place
- Ignoring – the adult deprives the child of essential stimulation and responsiveness, stifling emotional growth and intellectual development
- Corrupting – the adult mis-socialises the child, it stimulates the child to engage in destructive and antisocial behaviour, reinforces that deviance and makes the child unfit for normal social experiences.

In cases of emotional abuse, the child may feel that they are inadequate, unloved or worthless, or loved only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Parental behaviour may include lack of emotional availability to the child, inappropriate expectations/interactions being placed on the child and overprotection (limitation of exploration and learning). Emotional abuse is caused when parents allow their child to see or hear the ill treatment of another. It is important to consider this in homes where there is domestic violence.

Dealing with Emotional Abuse

If staff notice an issue or behaviour that causes concern, they should adopt the following response

1. Using only open questions, ask the child about the issue or behaviour in a non-threatening, concerned manner, without putting words or suggestions into their mouth. Never promise that it will be a secret between you and them, explain that you may have to talk about this with an appropriate adult.
2. Ask – then listen to what you are told
3. Consider how the child presents themselves
4. Consider any other concerns about the child or the family
5. Log concerns on the school form and discuss with the designated teacher

APPENDIX 1E

Child Sexual Exploitation, Child Criminal Exploitation, Domestic Violence and Female Genital Mutilation

Information from 'Keeping children safe in education: information for all school and college staff' (Department of Education September 2023)

Children who are absent from education All staff should be aware that children being absent from school or college, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of 145 substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. It is important that staff are aware of their school or college's unauthorised absence procedures and children missing education procedures

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops.

Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM.

Girls who are threatened with or who have undergone FGM may withdraw from education restricting their educational and personal development. They may feel unable to go against the wishes of their parents and consequently may suffer emotionally. Staff may become aware of a student because they appear anxious, depressed and emotionally withdrawn. They may be presented with a sudden decline in their performance, aspirations or motivation. There may be occasions when a student comes to school or college but then absents themselves from lessons, possibly spending prolonged periods in the bathroom.

Educational establishments should aim to create an 'open environment' where students feel comfortable and safe to discuss the problems they are facing – an environment where FGM can be discussed openly, and support and counselling are provided routinely. Students need to know that they will be listened to and their concerns taken seriously.

Teachers are required to inform the Police if they believe FGM has or is likely to take place.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE)

CCE is a form of abuse that occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in 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. 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.

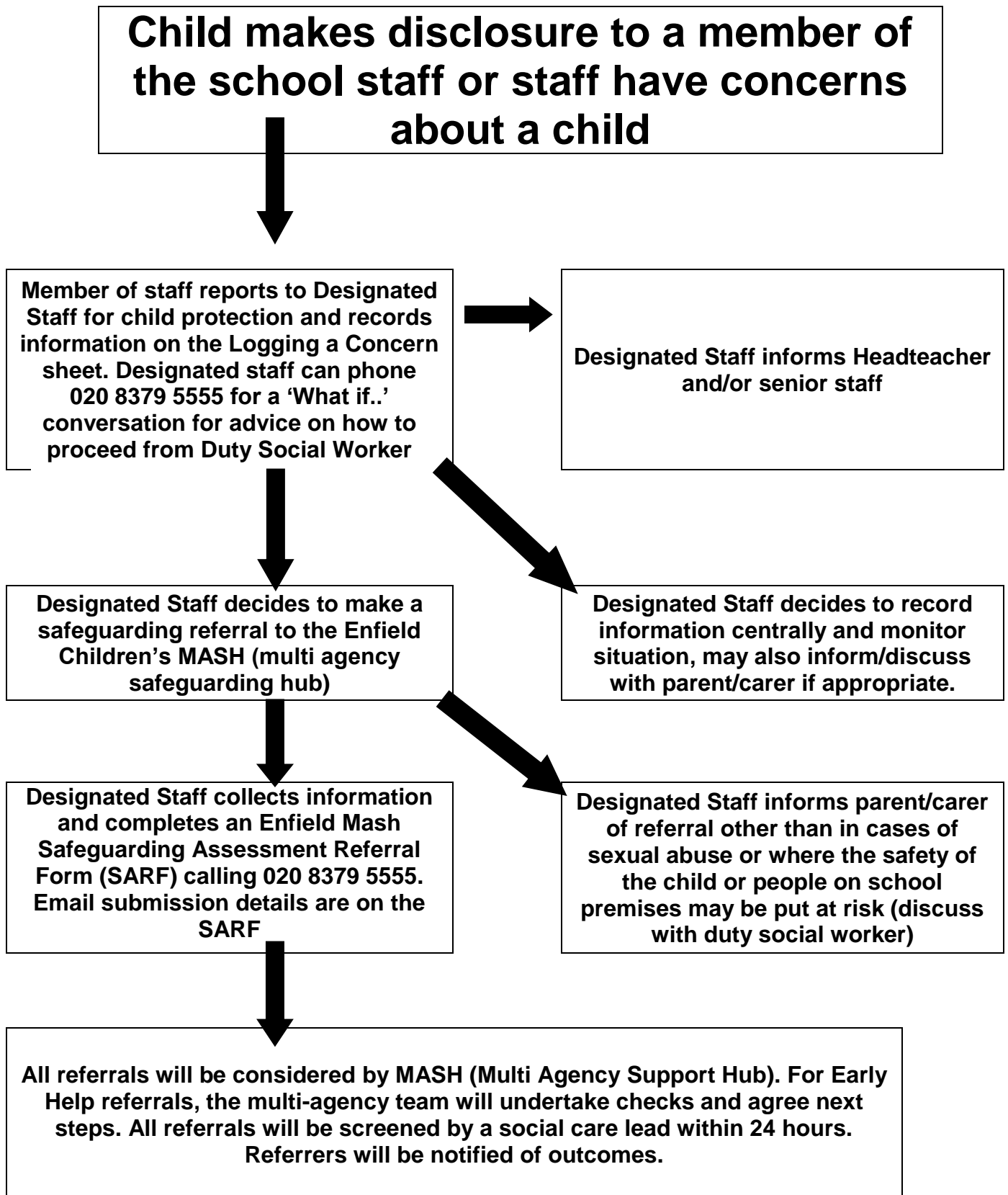
Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Domestic Violence

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

APPENDIX 2

Action on Child Protection Concerns



If concerns raised are not safeguarding in nature but require access to a single agency, the school will refer direct to that agency. A list of agencies can be found through the Local Offer on Enfield's website www.enfield.gov.uk

Appendix 3A

--- LOGGING A CONCERN --- Do not type, must be handwritten

Date:

Time:

Name of child:

Ask yourself why you are recording the incident. Record the following factually:

FACTS

Please indicate where you have interpreted what you have been told. Use direct quotes, if relevant

Who is/has been involved?

What happened?

Where did it take place?

How often/how long ago?

OPINION Please offer your opinion about what you have heard/seen/been told/previous concerns

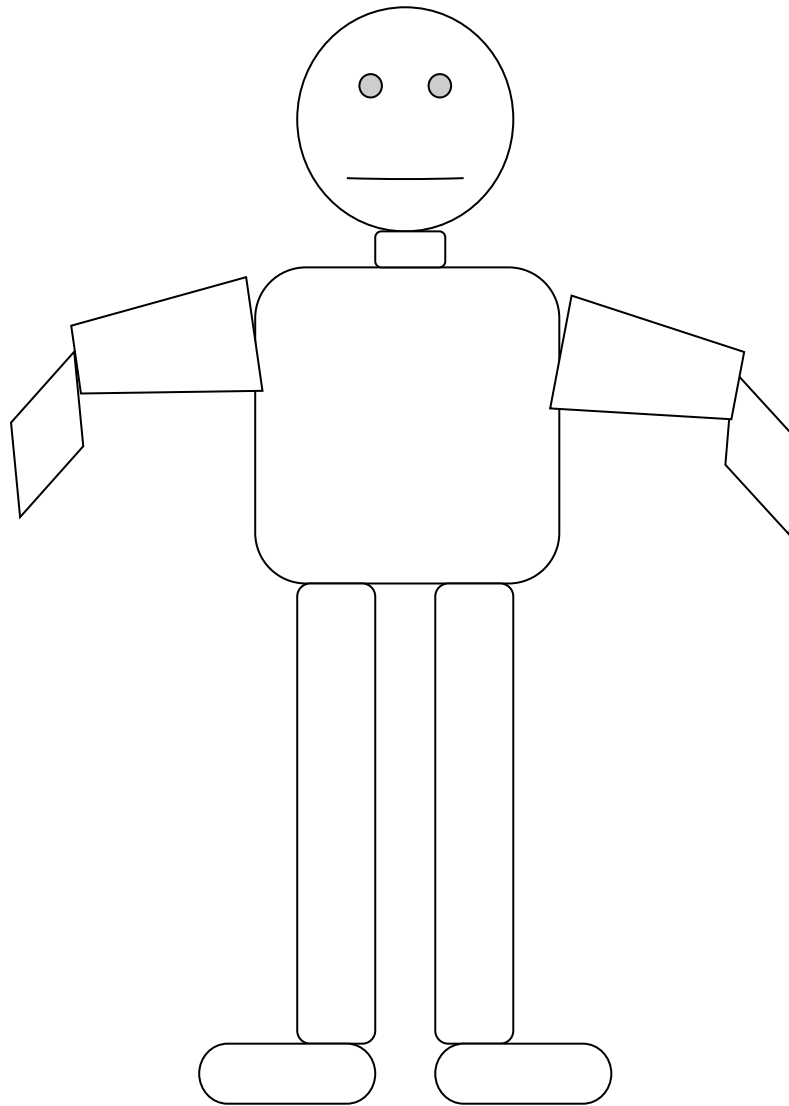
Note any action taken by you:

Name of person to whom this information is being passed:

Your Name:	Your Job Title:
Your Signature:	

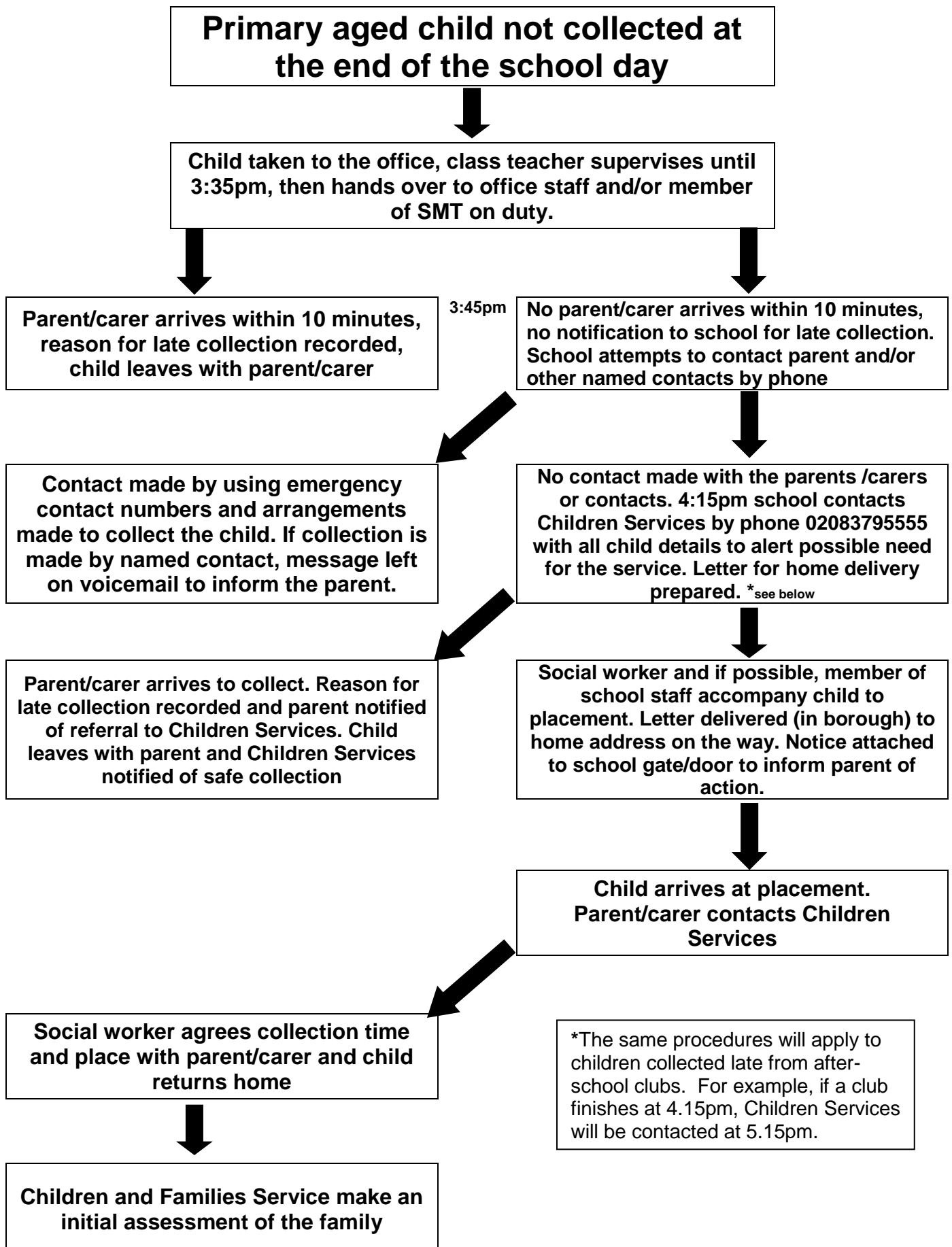
Appendix 3B

If you have seen any marks or bruising on the child, please indicate where on the outline below.



APPENDIX 4A

Action when children are not collected at the end of the school day



APPENDIX 4B

Notice attached to school gate/door to inform parent of action when a child has not been collected and has been taken to a Children Services placement.

Dear Parent/Carer

As you did not collect your child within an acceptable time, and all attempts to contact you were unsuccessful, the procedure laid out in our Child Protection policy has been implemented.

Your child is now in the care of the Children and Families Service of the Social Services Authority.

Please contact immediately on:

020 8379 1000

Ask for the Emergency Duty Team

APPENDIX 4C

Letter to inform parent of action when a child has not been collected and has been taken to a Children Services placement. If parents live in the borough, this letter should be dropped at the child's home on the way to the Children Services placement

ST MONICA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Date

Dear

Your child was uncollected at the end of the school day and we were unable to contact you using the contact numbers you provided.

Following procedures laid out in our Child Protection Policy, and as you have been informed in our school brochure, it is our policy to refer to Children and Families Service in such cases.

**Therefore _____
is now being looked after by the London Borough of Enfield's Children and Families Service. In compliance with section 20 of the Children's Act 1989, your child was determined to have been, either abandoned or the parent/carer was deemed to have been temporarily or permanently at that time unable to provide suitable care and accommodation.**

**PLEASE CONTACT CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE
020 8379 1000**

Ask for the Emergency Duty Team

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Appendix 5**SMT Review of children in need or with known Child Protection Plans*****When recording, do not use child's full name and keep this log in a secure and locked cupboard****(Name of those at the meeting)**(Signature)*

Date & Time		
UPDATES		
<p>Children With CP Plan:</p> <p>Any updates or action needed:</p>		
<p>Children in need:</p> <p>Any updates or action needed:</p>		
<p>Children being monitored:</p> <p>Any updates or action needed:</p>		

Appendix 6

The Prevent duty: what it means for schools and childcare providers

In order for schools and childcare providers to fulfil the Prevent duty, it is essential that staff are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' and childcare providers' wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences.

Schools and childcare providers can also build pupils' resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist¹ views. It is important to emphasise that the Prevent duty is not intended to stop pupils debating controversial issues. On the contrary, schools should provide a safe space in which children, young people and staff can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments. For early year's childcare providers, the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage sets standards for learning, development and care for children from 0-5, thereby assisting their personal, social and emotional development and understanding of the world.

The Prevent duty is entirely consistent with schools' and childcare providers' existing responsibilities and should not be burdensome. Ofsted's revised common inspection framework for education, skills and early years, which came into effect from 1 September 2015, makes specific reference to the need to have safeguarding arrangements to promote pupils' welfare and prevent radicalisation and extremism. The associated handbooks for inspectors set out the expectations for different settings. The common inspection framework and handbooks are available on GOV.UK.

The statutory guidance on the Prevent duty summarises the requirements on schools and childcare providers in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training and IT policies. The statutory guidance makes clear that schools and childcare providers are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them.

The general risks affecting children and young people may vary from area to area, and according to their age. Schools and childcare providers are in an important position to identify risks within a given local context. It is important that schools and childcare providers understand these risks so that they can respond in an appropriate and proportionate way. At the same time schools and childcare providers should be aware of the increased risk of online radicalisation, as terrorist organisations such as ISIL seek to radicalise young people through the use of social media and the internet. The local authority and local police will be able to provide contextual information to help schools and childcare providers understand the risks in their areas.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist ideology. As with managing 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. Children at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or seek to hide their views. School staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately.

Even very young children may be vulnerable to radicalisation by others, whether in the family or outside, and display concerning behaviour. The Prevent duty does not require teachers or childcare providers to carry out unnecessary intrusion into family life but as with any other safeguarding risk, they must take action when they observe behaviour of concern.

Schools and childcare providers should have clear procedures in place for protecting children at risk of radicalisation. These procedures may be set out in existing safeguarding policies. It is not necessary for schools and childcare settings to have distinct policies on implementing the Prevent duty. General safeguarding principles apply to keeping children safe from the risk of radicalisation as set out in the relevant statutory guidance, 'Working together to safeguard children' and 'Keeping children safe in education.'

¹ "Extremism" is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas. Terrorist groups very often draw on extremist ideas developed by extremist organisations.

Useful Websites & Documents

Enfield Safeguarding Children's Board website contains a wide range of information for both professionals and parent/carers.

The website address is: www.enfield.gov.uk/enfieldlscb

All London Child Protection Procedures website has the relevant links to the procedures
<http://www.londoncp.co.uk/>

Keeping children safe in education: for school and college staff (part 1)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/836144/Keeping children safe in education part 1 2019.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/836144/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_part_1_2019.pdf)

Working together to safeguard children

Ref: DFE-00130-2015 PDF, 109 pages

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Regulated activity in relation to children: scope

Ref: DFE-58201-2012 PDF, 10 pages

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

NSPCC

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

Childline

<https://childline.org.uk/>

Prevent Guidance

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf

<http://www.preventforschools.org/>