

Plaistow Primary School

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy



This policy has been reviewed by Governors

Signed by: Pending

Chair of Governors

Signed by: Dean Benoit

Head Teacher

Date: Autumn 2026

Date of Next Review: Autumn 2027

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR PLAISTOW PRIMARY SCHOOL AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE

The Primary School and Children's Centre safeguarding leads are named below.

School Designated Safeguarding Lead

Dean Benoit, Headteacher

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Donna Occleshaw, Deputy Headteacher

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Priya Pankhania, Assistant Headteacher / SENDCo

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Katy Smith, Assistant Headteacher

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mili Ricon, Safeguarding and Child Protection Officer

Children's Centre Designated Safeguarding Lead

Rukhsana Bibi

Chair of Governors

James Partis

Safeguarding Link Governor

Aishah Mukadam

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1. Introduction

Safeguarding is not a standalone area of school practice. It underpins all aspects of life at Plaistow Primary School and Children's Centre.

Our school is committed to developing and sustaining a strong safeguarding culture which supports us all to safeguard children and creates a positive and respectful learning environment in which everyone can flourish.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. "Children" includes everyone under the age of 18. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play.

Our approach is child-centred. At all times, staff will consider what is in the best interests of the child.

School staff are particularly important because they are able to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.

Staff are expected to exercise professional curiosity and respectfully explore concerns where a child's presentation, behaviour or circumstances suggest that they may need help or protection.

Adults should not rely solely on initial explanations where concerns remain.

The school recognises that effective safeguarding requires an understanding of the child's lived experience. Staff should consider the child's daily experiences, needs, relationships and wellbeing and ensure that safeguarding decisions are informed by the child's voice, wishes, feelings and circumstances.

Safeguarding interventions should focus on improving outcomes for the child and reducing risk rather than solely on parental engagement or professional processes.

This Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy applies to all school and agency staff, governors, volunteers, visitors, parents and carers and the wider school community.

It forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for our school and should be read alongside other relevant school policies, including:

- Safer Recruitment
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Physical Intervention
- Anti-Bullying
- Equality
- Behaviour
- Attendance
- Health and Safety
- Educational Visits
- Online Safety
- Acceptable Use
- Mobile Phone
- Whistleblowing

- Complaints
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
- Emergency Critical Incident
- Business Continuity

This policy should be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

All staff must read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 in full and confirm that they have read and understood it.

The school will ensure that staff have access to, and are familiar with, other statutory and local safeguarding guidance relevant to their role.

Sensitivity to Language

Keeping Children Safe in Education uses terms including “victim” and “perpetrator” or “alleged perpetrator”. The school recognises that these terms may not always be helpful when speaking directly with children.

At Plaistow Primary School, we use children’s names when speaking to them and referring to them.

We use the term “reporting child” rather than “victim”, because a child may not see themselves as a victim.

We use the term “reported child” while concerns or incidents are being investigated, rather than labels such as “bully” or “perpetrator”.

Safeguarding is defined as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether within or outside the home, including online;
- preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

2. Statutory Framework

2.1

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a statutory responsibility on the Governing Body to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

2.2

The school works within the procedures of the Newham Safeguarding Children Partnership and the London Child Protection Procedures.

2.3

The school will act in accordance with all relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance.

2.4

The Governing Body will ensure that children are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including online.

Safeguarding education is embedded within the curriculum and includes Relationships Education, Health Education, RSHE, computing, online safety, assemblies, wider personal development and the school's behaviour and pastoral systems.

Preventative education is most effective when delivered through a whole-school culture which promotes respect, equality and positive relationships and challenges racism, sexism, misogyny, misandry, homophobia, biphobia, sexual harassment, sexual violence and other discriminatory behaviour.

Our curriculum is inclusive and is adapted appropriately to meet the age, developmental stage and additional needs of pupils, including children with SEND.

3. School Roles and Responsibilities

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them and provide an environment in which they are safe to learn and develop.

Everyone at Plaistow Primary School has a responsibility to provide a learning environment in which children feel safe and are able to access education.

All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected. Children may also not recognise their experiences as harmful.

This must not prevent staff from exercising professional curiosity and raising concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

3.1 The Governing Body

The Governing Body will ensure that:

- a strong safeguarding culture is embedded throughout the school;
- safeguarding arrangements reflect statutory and local guidance;
- the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is reviewed at least annually;
- safeguarding is considered regularly through governance arrangements;
- there is an appropriately trained Designated Safeguarding Lead and sufficient trained Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads;
- the DSL has appropriate authority, status, time, resources, training and support to fulfil the role;
- safer recruitment procedures are followed;

- appropriate safeguarding checks are undertaken for staff, volunteers, contractors and other adults;
- governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training;
- all staff receive appropriate safeguarding training at induction and regular updates thereafter;
- children are taught how to keep themselves safe, including online;
- appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place and their effectiveness is reviewed;
- safeguarding arrangements for children with SEND are effective;
- child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment and sexual violence are addressed effectively;
- the school fulfils its Prevent Duty;
- appropriate arrangements are in place for children placed in alternative provision;
- safeguarding considerations are incorporated into attendance, behaviour, exclusions, suspensions, physical intervention and other relevant policies;
- the school works effectively with children's social care, police, health services and other safeguarding partners;
- safeguarding arrangements recognise the needs of children in kinship care and other alternative family arrangements;
- the school maintains an effective culture of reporting concerns about adults;
- allegations and low-level concerns are managed appropriately; and
- safeguarding information and data are used to provide appropriate challenge and assurance.

The Safeguarding Link Governor will meet regularly with the DSL and undertake appropriate monitoring on behalf of the Governing Body.

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- this policy and associated procedures are implemented effectively;
- safeguarding is a priority throughout the organisation;
- staff understand their responsibilities;
- appropriate safeguarding training is provided;
- sufficient staffing and resources are available for safeguarding;
- concerns about children and adults are responded to promptly;
- safer recruitment procedures are followed;
- allegations concerning staff are managed in accordance with statutory guidance;
- low-level concerns are recorded and reviewed;
- appropriate referrals are made to external agencies; and
- a culture exists in which staff feel confident to raise concerns and challenge practice.

3.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.

The DSL will:

- provide advice and support to staff;
- take lead responsibility for child protection concerns;
- ensure concerns are appropriately assessed and responded to;
- make referrals to Newham MASH and other agencies when appropriate;
- work with children's social care and other safeguarding partners;

- support children who are the subject of safeguarding concerns;
- ensure the child's voice and lived experience inform safeguarding decisions;
- maintain oversight of children with social workers;
- maintain oversight of children receiving Family Help;
- understand the additional safeguarding vulnerabilities associated with SEND;
- monitor children whose attendance or circumstances cause concern;
- consider risks associated with homelessness and temporary accommodation;
- oversee safeguarding arrangements for pupils placed in alternative provision;
- liaise with the Virtual School Head where appropriate;
- understand local safeguarding risks and contextual safeguarding issues;
- maintain oversight of online safety, filtering and monitoring;
- remain aware of emerging safeguarding risks associated with artificial intelligence, deepfakes, misinformation and evolving technology;
- ensure safeguarding records are maintained appropriately on CPOMS;
- ensure child protection records are transferred securely when pupils move school;
- support and promote professional curiosity;
- provide safeguarding advice in relation to educational visits and other activities where appropriate;
- ensure safeguarding induction and training are effective;
- provide reports to the Governing Body;
- ensure appropriate safeguarding cover during school operating hours;
- access appropriate supervision and professional support; and
- act as a source of safeguarding expertise within the school.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are trained to the same appropriate standard and may carry out delegated safeguarding activities. Ultimate lead responsibility remains with the DSL.

3.4 All Staff

All staff must:

- understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility;
- know who the DSL and DDSs are;
- know how to report a safeguarding concern;
- know how to make a direct referral where necessary;
- read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- complete required safeguarding training;
- maintain professional curiosity;
- recognise indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- recognise that safeguarding concerns may occur inside or outside the home and online;
- listen to children and take their concerns seriously;
- understand that children may not be ready or able to disclose abuse;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
- record concerns accurately and promptly;
- report concerns about adults;
- challenge unsafe or inappropriate practice;
- understand procedures relating to children absent from education;
- understand online safeguarding risks;
- understand that children with SEND and other vulnerabilities may face additional safeguarding risks;
- and
- act immediately where a child may be at risk of significant harm.

4. Types of Abuse and Specific Safeguarding Issues

All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Children can be at risk of harm inside and outside school, inside and outside the home and online.

Abuse, neglect, exploitation and other safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events. In many cases several issues overlap.

The four main categories of abuse are:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

The school recognises that safeguarding concerns may also include a wide range of specific forms of harm and exploitation.

4.1 Child-on-Child Abuse

The school recognises that children can abuse other children.

Child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the reporting child and the reported child. Appropriate support will be considered for all children involved.

Child-on-child abuse may include:

- bullying, including cyberbullying;
- physical abuse;
- sexual violence;
- sexual harassment;
- harmful sexual behaviour;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images;
- upskirting;
- initiation or hazing-type behaviour;
- abuse within intimate personal relationships between children;
- discriminatory abuse;
- coercion and control; and
- abuse facilitated through digital technology.

The school maintains a zero-tolerance approach to abuse.

This does not mean that all incidents will be treated in exactly the same way. Responses will be proportionate and will consider the age and developmental stage of the children, the nature and context of the behaviour and the needs of all children involved.

Staff must never dismiss abusive behaviour as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or similar.

The absence of reports does not mean that abuse is not occurring.

4.2 Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

The school recognises that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between children of any age and sex.

Sexual harassment can occur online and offline and may include sexual comments, sexual jokes, unwanted sexual attention, sexualised bullying, displaying sexual material or deliberately making another child uncomfortable.

All reports will be taken seriously.

The school will:

- protect and support the reporting child;
- consider the needs and safety of the reported child;
- avoid creating a culture in which children feel blamed for reporting;
- undertake an immediate risk and needs assessment where appropriate;
- consider whether children can safely continue to share classes and spaces;
- involve parents and carers where appropriate;
- consider whether referrals to children's social care or police are required; and
- record decisions and the rationale for them.

4.3 Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Children with SEND may face additional safeguarding challenges.

These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of abuse relate to the child's disability;
- communication difficulties;
- increased isolation;
- increased exposure to bullying;
- dependence on adults for care;
- difficulties recognising abusive behaviour; and
- barriers to reporting concerns.

Staff must maintain professional curiosity and ensure that behaviour or presentation is not automatically attributed to a child's SEND.

The school will make reasonable adjustments and use appropriate communication methods to enable children with SEND to express their wishes and concerns.

4.4 Children with Medical Conditions

Children with medical conditions may have additional vulnerabilities.

Staff must be alert to safeguarding implications where medical needs are not being appropriately met or where concerns exist about a child's care, treatment or wellbeing.

The school's Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy should be followed alongside this policy.

4.5 Children Absent from Education, Children Missing Education and Homelessness

Children being absent from education, particularly repeatedly or for prolonged periods, can be an important safeguarding warning sign.

It may indicate:

- neglect;
- abuse;
- exploitation;
- criminal exploitation;
- sexual exploitation;
- domestic abuse;
- mental health difficulties;
- homelessness;
- travelling to conflict zones;
- forced marriage;
- female genital mutilation; or
- other significant safeguarding concerns.

The school will monitor attendance closely and respond promptly where absence causes concern.

First-day response procedures will be followed.

Where contact cannot be made, the school will consider the known safeguarding risk and determine whether further action, including a welfare visit, contact with other professionals or referral to children's social care or police, is necessary.

The school will follow statutory Children Missing Education procedures where appropriate.

Where homelessness or housing instability is identified, the DSL will consider whether safeguarding or Family Help support is required.

4.6 Children Living in Temporary Accommodation

The school recognises the increasing number of families who may experience temporary accommodation, overcrowding, unsuitable housing or frequent moves.

These circumstances may affect a child's:

- safety;
- attendance;
- emotional wellbeing;
- access to food;
- sleep;
- ability to complete schoolwork;

- stability and relationships; and
- access to health and other services.

Concerns will be considered through a safeguarding lens and appropriate support or referrals will be made.

4.7 Children Educated in Alternative Provision

Where the school commissions alternative provision for a pupil, Plaistow Primary School retains responsibility for safeguarding that child.

Before placement, the school will undertake appropriate safeguarding due diligence.

This will include appropriate checks regarding:

- safeguarding policies and procedures;
- suitability of the environment;
- staff suitability and safer recruitment arrangements;
- attendance procedures;
- arrangements for reporting safeguarding concerns;
- curriculum and supervision;
- health and safety; and
- any other risks relevant to the child.

The school will know where the child is being educated and who is responsible for their day-to-day supervision.

Relevant safeguarding information will be shared with the provider.

The school will monitor the child's attendance, welfare, progress and safeguarding arrangements.

Alternative provision placements will be reviewed at least half-termly and more frequently where risk requires this.

4.8 Contextual Safeguarding and Exploitation

Safeguarding risks may arise outside the family home.

Children may experience harm within:

- peer groups;
- neighbourhoods;
- parks and public spaces;
- transport networks;
- shopping areas;
- social media;
- gaming platforms;
- online communities; and
- other locations.

The school will consider the wider context of a child's experiences when assessing risk.

4.9 Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation are forms of abuse.

Children may be exploited even where activity appears consensual.

Indicators may include:

- unexplained money or possessions;
- changes in friendships;
- older associates;
- unexplained absences;
- going missing;
- changes in behaviour;
- unexplained injuries;
- substance misuse;
- multiple phones;
- deterioration in attendance;
- fearfulness;
- secrecy; and
- changes in appearance.

Children who are exploited must be treated as children in need of protection rather than simply as children who have made poor choices.

4.10 Serious Violence

Staff will be alert to indicators that children may be at risk of involvement in serious violence.

These may include:

- increased absence from school;
- changes in friendship groups;
- relationships with older individuals or groups;
- significant decline in performance;
- signs of self-harm;
- changes in wellbeing;
- signs of assault or unexplained injury; and
- unexplained gifts or possessions.

Any concerns will be reported to the DSL.

4.11 Honour-Based Abuse

Honour-based abuse encompasses crimes or incidents committed to protect or defend the perceived honour of a family or community.

It may include:

- female genital mutilation;
- forced marriage;
- abuse linked to perceived family honour; and
- other forms of physical, emotional or controlling abuse.

All forms of honour-based abuse constitute safeguarding concerns.

4.12 Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation is illegal and a form of child abuse.

Staff must be alert to indicators that FGM may have taken place or may be planned.

Teachers have a mandatory duty to report directly to the police where, in the course of their professional duties, they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.

This duty does not replace normal safeguarding procedures. The DSL should also be informed.

4.13 Forced Marriage

Forced marriage is illegal.

A forced marriage is one in which one or both people do not consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used.

This can include physical, emotional, psychological, financial or sexual pressure.

Concerns must be reported immediately to the DSL.

4.14 Prevention of Radicalisation

The school recognises its responsibilities under the Prevent Duty.

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

Staff will receive appropriate Prevent awareness training and will report concerns to the DSL.

The DSL will consider the appropriate response, which may include consultation with safeguarding partners or a referral through Prevent or Channel arrangements.

The school will build pupils' resilience through a safe curriculum which promotes critical thinking, respect, democratic values and the ability to challenge extremist narratives.

4.15 Mental Health and Wellbeing

Mental health difficulties can in some circumstances be an indicator that a child has experienced or is at risk of experiencing abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff are not expected to diagnose mental health conditions but should recognise changes in behaviour or presentation and report safeguarding concerns.

Where concerns about mental health are also safeguarding concerns, the DSL must be informed.

4.16 Domestic Abuse

The school recognises that domestic abuse can have a significant impact on children.

Children may experience domestic abuse directly or indirectly and are recognised in law as victims of domestic abuse where they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse and are related to either the person experiencing or perpetrating the abuse.

The school participates in Operation Encompass and uses information received to provide appropriate support for children.

Information received through Operation Encompass will be managed confidentially and shared only with staff who need to know in order to support the child.

4.17 Young Carers

The school recognises that some children may have significant caring responsibilities for parents, siblings or other family members.

Staff will remain alert to indicators that a child may be a young carer and will consider appropriate support, referrals and reasonable adjustments.

The school will work collaboratively with families and partner agencies to ensure young carers receive appropriate help.

4.18 Children Who Are Questioning Their Gender

The school recognises that some children may question their gender and that these children may experience additional vulnerabilities including bullying, discrimination, social isolation and emotional distress.

The school will respond to requests for support individually, with safeguarding and the best interests of the child central to decision-making.

The DSL will be involved where there are safeguarding implications.

Parents and carers will normally be involved in discussions and decisions regarding support unless doing so would place the child at risk of significant harm.

The school will act in accordance with safeguarding legislation, equality legislation, human rights legislation and current statutory guidance.

4.19 Prejudice-Based Harm and Discriminatory Abuse

The school recognises that prejudice-based harm can adversely affect children's welfare, wellbeing, mental health, attendance, attainment and sense of safety.

This may include racism, faith-based prejudice, misogyny, misandry, homophobia, biphobia and other discriminatory behaviour.

Prejudice-based incidents may constitute safeguarding concerns and will be considered through safeguarding procedures where appropriate.

The school promotes an inclusive culture in which prejudice and discrimination are challenged.

4.20 Mobile Phones

The school supports the Department for Education expectation that schools should normally be mobile-phone-free environments during the school day.

Pupils' use of mobile phones will be managed in accordance with the school's Behaviour, Online Safety and Acceptable Use policies.

Where an exception is required for an individual pupil, this will be considered appropriately and any safeguarding implications will be risk assessed.

4.21 Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technologies

The school recognises that online safeguarding risks change rapidly.

Staff will remain alert to safeguarding risks associated with generative artificial intelligence and emerging technologies.

These may include:

- AI-generated nude or semi-nude imagery;
- deepfakes and manipulated images;
- misinformation and disinformation;
- online grooming facilitated through AI applications;
- financially motivated sexual extortion;
- scams and phishing;
- financial exploitation;
- gambling;
- impersonation;
- harmful automated content; and
- manipulation or misuse of images of children published online, including photographs on school websites.

Concerns relating to AI or emerging technology will be treated in the same way as other safeguarding concerns.

5. School Procedures

5.1

All staff have a duty to identify and respond to suspected or actual abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor who receives a disclosure, witnesses a concerning incident or suspects that abuse may have occurred must report this immediately to the DSL or, in their absence, a DDSL.

Concerns relating to radicalisation or extremism must also be reported to the DSL.

5.2

Safeguarding action will be taken in accordance with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023;
- Newham Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures;
- London Child Protection Procedures;
- the Prevent Duty; and
- other current statutory and local safeguarding guidance.

5.3

Where a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, a referral will be made to Newham MASH immediately.

Where there is an immediate risk of serious harm, the school will contact emergency services on 999.

Less urgent concerns or requests for additional support may also be referred to MASH or appropriate Family Help services.

Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care if necessary. Staff should not assume that somebody else will take action.

5.4 Police Involvement

Where police involvement is being considered, the DSL and senior staff will consider whether this is a necessary and proportionate response.

The school will cooperate with lawful police activity while ensuring that the child's safeguarding needs and legal rights are protected.

Where legally required, arrangements will be made for an Appropriate Adult.

Parents and carers will normally be informed where police are involved unless doing so would place a child at greater risk or compromise a safeguarding or criminal investigation.

Police involvement will be recorded as part of the child's safeguarding record.

5.5 Disclosures

When a child makes a disclosure, staff should:

- listen carefully;
- remain calm;
- take the child seriously;
- avoid expressing shock or disbelief;
- not promise confidentiality;
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling someone;
- avoid asking leading questions;
- clarify only where necessary;
- explain that the information must be shared with people who can help;
- make a factual record as soon as possible; and
- report immediately to the DSL or DDSL.

Staff must not investigate allegations themselves.

5.6 Reasonable Force

There are circumstances in which staff may use reasonable force to safeguard children.

Any use of force must be necessary, reasonable and proportionate.

The school will consider whether a child's SEND, medical condition, communication needs, trauma or mental health may increase the likelihood that physical intervention is required or affect how intervention should be managed.

Any significant incident involving reasonable force will be recorded and reviewed.

Physical intervention must never be used as punishment.

Seclusion will not be used as a safeguarding or behaviour-management strategy.

5.7 Family Help

Staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from Family Help.

Indicators may include:

- emerging difficulties affecting a child or family;
- poor or deteriorating attendance;
- behaviour or emotional wellbeing concerns;
- parental conflict;
- housing difficulties;
- financial hardship;

- SEND-related pressures;
- young caring responsibilities;
- domestic abuse;
- parental mental ill health;
- substance misuse; and
- other circumstances which may adversely affect a child.

Staff should discuss concerns with the DSL so that appropriate support can be considered.

6. Continuous Professional Development and Training

Safeguarding training is an essential part of the school's safeguarding culture.

All staff will receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction.

Training will be updated regularly and at least annually through safeguarding updates.

The DSL and DDSs will receive appropriate designated safeguarding lead training at least every two years and will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals between formal training.

Training will include, as appropriate:

- indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- child-on-child abuse;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- online safety;
- filtering and monitoring;
- artificial intelligence and emerging technologies;
- child criminal exploitation;
- child sexual exploitation;
- domestic abuse;
- FGM;
- forced marriage;
- Prevent;
- children absent from education;
- SEND vulnerabilities;
- mental health;
- professional curiosity;
- disguised compliance;
- adultification;
- allegations against adults;
- low-level concerns; and
- local safeguarding priorities.

Governors will receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role.

The DSL will maintain records of safeguarding training.

7. Professional Confidentiality

Safeguarding information is confidential and should only be shared with people who need it for the purpose of protecting children.

Confidentiality must never prevent appropriate safeguarding action.

Staff must not promise a child that information will remain secret.

Information will be shared lawfully, proportionately and securely.

Data protection legislation does not prevent the sharing of information where this is necessary to safeguard a child.

Where there is doubt, staff should seek advice from the DSL.

8. Record Keeping and Information Sharing

All safeguarding concerns must be recorded promptly and accurately.

Plaistow Primary School uses CPOMS as its electronic safeguarding recording system.

Records should include:

- the child's name;
- date and time;
- the nature of the concern;
- the child's own words wherever possible;
- relevant observations;
- any injuries or marks;
- a body map where appropriate;
- actions taken;
- people consulted;
- referrals made;
- decisions reached;
- the rationale for decisions; and
- subsequent outcomes.

Records must distinguish fact from professional opinion.

The DSL will quality assure safeguarding records and ensure concerns are followed through appropriately.

Safeguarding information will be shared with relevant professionals where this is necessary to protect or support a child.

When a child moves to another school, their child protection information will be transferred securely and separately from the main pupil file.

Where possible, secure transfer through CPOMS will be used.

The receiving DSL should confirm receipt.

Where appropriate, the school will ensure that the receiving setting understands current risk, support arrangements and relevant safeguarding history.

9. Inter-Agency Working

The school recognises that effective safeguarding depends on strong multi-agency working.

The school will work with:

- Newham Children's Social Care;
- Newham MASH;
- Newham Safeguarding Children Partnership;
- police;
- health professionals;
- Family Help services;
- the Virtual School;
- housing services;
- youth and community services;
- alternative provision providers; and
- other relevant agencies.

Staff will contribute to assessments, strategy discussions, child protection conferences, core groups and other safeguarding meetings where requested.

Relevant information will be shared promptly.

Where the school believes that an external agency response does not adequately protect a child, professional challenge and escalation procedures will be used.

Safeguarding decisions will remain focused on the child's welfare rather than the convenience of individual agencies or professionals.

10. Allegations About Members of the Children's Workforce and Low-Level Concerns

The school promotes an open culture in which concerns about adults are reported promptly.

All staff must maintain appropriate professional boundaries and comply with the Staff Code of Conduct.

Concerns about any adult working or volunteering in the school must be reported to the Headteacher.

Where an allegation concerns the Headteacher, it must be reported directly to the Chair of Governors, James Partis.

10.1 Allegations Meeting the Harm Threshold

An allegation may meet the harm threshold where a person who works with children 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 they may pose a risk of harm to children;
- or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Where the harm threshold may be met, the Local Authority Designated Officer will be contacted as soon as possible and within one working day.

The school will seek LADO advice before undertaking any substantive investigation.

The case manager will follow LADO, HR and statutory guidance.

Suspension will not be an automatic response. Alternatives will be considered where appropriate.

Where an allegation relates to an agency or supply worker, the school will continue to take the lead in safeguarding children while involving the employing agency as appropriate.

The school will make referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service and Teaching Regulation Agency where the statutory criteria are met.

10.2 Low-Level Concerns

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way which:

- is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside work; and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered sufficiently serious for referral to the LADO.

Examples may include:

- being over-friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on a personal device;
- engaging with a child one-to-one in a secluded area or behind a closed door without appropriate reason;
- using inappropriate, sexualised, intimidating or offensive language; or
- otherwise behaving in a way which causes concern.

Low-level concerns must be reported to the Headteacher.

Concerns about the Headteacher must be reported to the Chair of Governors.

Low-level concerns will be recorded centrally and reviewed for patterns of behaviour.

Where there is any doubt about whether the harm threshold has been met, advice will be sought from the LADO.

The purpose of low-level concern procedures is to create a culture of openness, transparency and accountability and to identify concerning patterns before harm occurs.

11. Whistleblowing

All staff have a duty to raise concerns about unsafe, inappropriate or unlawful practice.

The school wants everyone to feel able to report safeguarding concerns and will promote a culture in which staff can raise concerns without fear of inappropriate consequences.

Staff should normally follow the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

Where a member of staff feels unable to raise concerns internally, they may contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line.

Concerns about safeguarding practice may also be raised with the Local Authority Designated Officer or the Education Safeguarding Team where appropriate.

A failure to report a safeguarding concern may itself constitute a serious safeguarding or disciplinary matter.

APPENDIX 1 – STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

The school has regard to current safeguarding legislation and guidance, including:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2002
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Prevent Duty guidance
- Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services
- What to Do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused
- London Child Protection Procedures
- Newham Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures

The school will ensure that the most current version of statutory guidance is followed.

APPENDIX 2 – RECORDING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

Safeguarding concerns must be recorded on CPOMS as soon as possible.

Records should be factual, clear, contemporaneous and sufficiently detailed to allow another professional to understand:

- what happened;
- what was observed;
- what the child said;
- what action was taken;
- who was informed;
- what decisions were made;
- why those decisions were made; and
- what happened next.

Where a child has made a disclosure, their words should be recorded as accurately as possible.

Staff should not alter a child's terminology or attempt to make their account sound more formal.

Opinion and professional judgement should be clearly identified as such.

APPENDIX 3 – BODY MAPS

A body map may be used to record the location and appearance of an injury.

Staff should:

- record what they observe;
- use the child's words where an explanation is provided;
- not ask a child to remove clothing unnecessarily;
- not take photographs of injuries using personal devices;
- not undertake a medical examination;
- not speculate about how an injury was caused; and
- report concerns to the DSL immediately.

A body map forms part of the safeguarding record and must be stored securely.

APPENDIX 4 – PROFESSIONAL CURIOSITY

Professional curiosity is the capacity and communication skill to explore and understand what is happening within a family rather than making assumptions or accepting information at face value.

Staff should:

- notice changes;
- ask appropriate questions;
- listen carefully;
- consider what life is like for the child;
- check whether explanations are consistent with what is known;
- respectfully challenge where something does not appear right;
- seek information from other professionals where appropriate;
- consider patterns over time; and
- maintain focus on the child.

Professional curiosity does not mean investigating abuse independently. Concerns must still be reported to the DSL.

APPENDIX 5 – DISGUISED COMPLIANCE

Disguised compliance describes circumstances in which parents or carers appear to cooperate with professionals in order to reduce professional concern without making meaningful or sustained changes that improve the child's situation.

Possible indicators include:

- repeated missed appointments;
- short-lived improvements immediately before professional visits;
- explanations which repeatedly change;
- apparent agreement without subsequent action;
- selective engagement with professionals;
- focus on professional processes rather than the child's needs; and
- attempts to prevent professionals seeing or speaking with the child.

Staff must avoid making assumptions.

Where there are concerns, the focus should remain on evidence of sustained improvement in the child's lived experience.

APPENDIX 6 – GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH DISCLOSURES

If a child tells you that they have been harmed:

- listen;
- take them seriously;
- remain calm;
- allow them to speak in their own words;
- do not interrogate them;
- do not ask leading questions;
- do not promise secrecy;
- reassure them that they were right to tell;
- explain that you will need to tell someone who can help;
- record what was said;

- report immediately to the DSL or DDSL; and
- do not confront the person who is alleged to have caused harm.

If the child is in immediate danger, emergency action must be taken.

APPENDIX 7 – ADVICE FOR PROTECTING CHILDREN ONLINE

Online safety is an integral part of safeguarding.

Children may be exposed to risks through:

- social media;
- messaging applications;
- online gaming;
- livestreaming;
- video-sharing platforms;
- search engines;
- generative AI;
- chatbots;
- image-generation tools; and
- other digital services.

The school considers online risks within the four broad categories of:

Content – what children may see.

Contact – who children may interact with.

Conduct – how children may behave online.

Commerce – risks including scams, gambling and financial exploitation.

Staff should remain alert to grooming, cyberbullying, sexual harassment, sharing of nude or semi-nude images, harmful content, radicalisation, misinformation, deepfakes, exploitation, financial extortion and inappropriate contact.

The school will maintain appropriate filtering and monitoring systems and will review their effectiveness.

Children will be taught how to report concerns and seek help.

APPENDIX 8 – SAFEGUARDING CULTURE AND GOVERNOR ASSURANCE

An effective safeguarding culture is one in which:

- children know who they can speak to;
- children are listened to;

- staff know how to identify and report concerns;
- adults exercise professional curiosity;
- safeguarding records are detailed and timely;
- referrals are made appropriately;
- professional challenge is encouraged;
- children with additional vulnerabilities are identified;
- online safety is understood;
- staff understand filtering and monitoring responsibilities;
- concerns about adults are reported;
- low-level concerns are recorded;
- safeguarding training is current;
- recruitment procedures are safe;
- pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe;
- safeguarding is considered across all areas of school life; and
- leaders and governors know whether safeguarding arrangements are effective.

Governors should seek assurance that:

- statutory safeguarding requirements are being met;
- the DSL has sufficient capacity and resources;
- safeguarding training is effective;
- safer recruitment arrangements are followed;
- the Single Central Record is maintained appropriately;
- filtering and monitoring arrangements are effective;
- child-on-child abuse is addressed;
- children with SEND receive appropriate safeguarding support;
- pupils placed in alternative provision are safe;
- attendance concerns are considered through a safeguarding lens;
- allegations and low-level concerns are managed appropriately; and
- safeguarding practice is subject to regular quality assurance.

APPENDIX 9 – KEY SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

Plaistow Primary School and Children's Centre

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Dean Benoit, Headteacher

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

Donna Occleshaw, Deputy Headteacher

Priya Pankhania, Assistant Headteacher / SENDCo

Mili Ricon, Safeguarding and Child Protection Officer

Katy Smith, Assistant Headteacher

Children's Centre Designated Safeguarding Lead

Rukhsana Bibi

Chair of Governors

James Partis

Safeguarding Link Governor
Aishah Mukadam

Newham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
020 3373 4600

Newham Emergency Duty Team / Out of Hours
020 8430 2000

Newham Education Safeguarding Team
Education.Safeguarding@newham.gov.uk

Local Authority Designated Officer
Alex Mihu
020 3373 6706

Assistant Local Authority Designated Officer
Evelyn Millyard
020 3373 0751

LADO email
LADO@newham.gov.uk

Police Emergency
999

Police Non-Emergency
101

NSPCC Helpline
0808 800 5000

NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line
0800 028 0285

Childline
0800 1111