



CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES FOR STAFF WORKING IN CHILDREN’S, SCHOOL AND FAMILY SETTINGS

These Procedures should be read in conjunction with:

Tower Hamlets LSCB Procedures for Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff working in Children’s, School and Family Settings – see Tower Hamlets LSCB Website:

<http://www.childrenandfamiliestrust.co.uk/the-lscb/>

and

The London Child Protection Procedures – see the London Child Protection Committee Website:

<http://www.londoncp.co.uk/index.html>

INTRODUCTION

Sections 157 and 175 of the Education Act 2002 and the supporting Department for Education (DfE) guidance in “Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges – 5 September 2016” (DfE, Sept 2016) specify the need for all schools and education settings, including non-maintained schools, independent schools, and Academies, Further Education institutions, and Local Authorities exercising education functions to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

The guidance from the DfE (Sept 2016) defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children’s 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

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is emphasised to be **everyone’s** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child. It is recognised that no single professional can have a full picture of a child’s needs and circumstances and that if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time then **everyone** who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

These provisions are extended to other local authority centres/settings/services and to partner agencies by Sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004.

These provisions underpin and reinforce the common law duty of care and sit alongside other statutory responsibilities in this area, such as those for health and safety and dealing with bullying.

These requirements are reinforced in “Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015” (HM Govt, March 2015) which specifies in Chapter 3 (1) that all Local Authority Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) have a statutory role and function in developing local procedures for the reporting, investigation and follow-up of concerns of a child protection nature that comply with the requirements detailed in Chapter 2 (4).

The Children Act 1989 and national guidance such as "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015" and "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015" (DfE, March 2015) clearly specify that those who come into contact with children and families in their everyday work, including practitioners who do not have a specific role in relation to safeguarding children, have a duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of children. This includes having a duty to report concerns of a child protection nature and a duty to cooperate with those agencies empowered to investigate such concerns and support plans to safeguard the welfare of the child(ren).

In addition, 'Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers' (HM Govt, March 2015) emphasises the importance of appropriate information sharing in child protection and safeguarding the wellbeing of children.

Tower Hamlets LSCB formally adopted the revised 5th edition of the London Child Protection Procedures issued by the London Safeguarding Children Board in March 2017. These Tower Hamlets LSCB procedures for staff in schools and education settings should be viewed as supplementary to the All London Child Protection Procedures.

These procedures apply to all staff working in education settings including Teachers, Setting Nurses, Primary Helpers, General Assistants, Learning Mentors, other Support Staff in Schools/Children's Centres/Day Nurseries, Attendance and Welfare Advisors (AWAs), Careers Advisors, Home/School Liaison Workers, Educational Psychologists, Home Tutors, School Development Advisors and Youth Workers.

Only Children's Social Care (Social Services), the NSPCC and the Police can carry out Child Protection Investigations. Staff working in schools and education settings should not attempt to investigate a child protection matter as it may compromise any possible legal proceedings. There is a need only to establish sufficient details and information for a decision to be made about making a referral.

It is vital that any concerns are reported as soon as possible and that unnecessary delay is avoided. In order for the investigative agencies to carry out their statutory duties they will need to access records and collate information. They will have to contact parents/carers and may need to arrange a medical examination. When Child Protection referrals are made late in the day this may delay appropriate action until the following morning, which may be potentially serious. Staff members working in Schools/Centres/Settings have no powers to retain a child or to refuse to release a child to the parent/carer at the end of the School day.

The requirements of "Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges – 5 September 2016" (DfE, Sept 2016) apply to all types of schools/centres/settings and the Governing Body/Management Committee/Proprietor are responsible for ensuring that these requirements are met and fulfilled.

THE ROLES OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD AND THE DESIGNATED GOVERNOR

In Annexe B of “Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges – 5 September 2016” (DfE, Sept 2016) detailed information is given on the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Every School/Children’s Centre/Day Setting in the Borough is required to have a Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection. School/Centre/Setting Governing Bodies and the Headteacher/Manager have responsibility for ensuring that a Designated Safeguarding Lead is appointed. In some cases, particularly in primary schools, the Headteacher will carry this responsibility.

Schools/Centres/Settings may also have Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads if they so choose but they must be appropriately trained and the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and should not be delegated.

The Local Authority Safeguarding Training Coordinator in Children’s Social Care conducts an annual survey at the start of each academic year to collate this information.

Each support service within the Local Authority where staff members work in Schools and/or Children’s Centres or work with children and young people and their families must also have a Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Designated Safeguarding Leads should be familiar with these procedures and must attend the multidisciplinary foundation and post-foundation training courses in child protection provided by the LSCB. Their role is to ensure that these procedures are followed in their respective Schools/Centres/Settings and to liaise with other agencies as required to ensure that advice is sought and referrals made in accordance with the procedures.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead also carries responsibility for maintaining the records of which children within the School/Centre/Setting are subject to a Child Protection Plan and of concerns that have arisen about the wellbeing of children at the School/Centre/Setting. This information is confidential and should only be shared on a strict need to know basis. These records should be safeguarded in a secure place away from the children’s academic records.

It is also required that the Governing Body either appoints a Designated Governor or accepts shared responsibility for Safeguarding/Child Protection with the Chair as named contact. The Designated Governor must be familiar with these procedures and should also attend the multidisciplinary foundation and post-foundation training courses in child protection provided by the LSCB.

The Designated Governor carries a responsibility on behalf of the School/Centre/Setting Governing Body to ensure that the School/Centre/setting complies with these procedures. The Designated Governor should work in liaison with the Designated Safeguarding lead and report to the School/Centre/Setting Governing Body on an annual basis.

Where there are concerns relating to the involvement of members of staff in allegations or incidents of a child protection nature, the Designated Safeguarding Lead must ensure that the Headteacher/Manager is informed and that procedures are followed. In the case of an allegation against or incident involving the Headteacher/Manager, the Designated Governor or LA Officer with responsibility for the Centre/Setting/Service must ensure that procedures are followed.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Governor in collaboration with the Headteacher or Centre/Setting Manager should ensure that the School/Centre/Setting fully complies with DfE requirements in relation to safeguarding training for staff, policies and procedures being in place and should provide an annual report to the Governing Body on safeguarding compliance and issues that have arisen in relation to safeguarding.

The DfE requires that all staff in schools/centres/settings read and understand “Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges – 5 September 2016” (DfE, Sept 2016). At Induction all staff members including temporary staff and volunteers must be made aware of the safeguarding systems in place and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Staff members should be provided with copies of Part one of the DfE guidance and of the school/centre/setting’s safeguarding policies (the Child Protection Policy together with the Staff Behaviour Policy/Code of Conduct and the Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead) and which should amongst other things include staff/pupil relationships and communications including the use of social media.

It is emphasised that all staff members should be aware of:

- the early help process and understand their role in it
- the process for making referrals to children’s social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 that may follow a referral, along with the role that they might be expected to play in such assessments
- what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected

In relation to types of abuse it is highlighted that all school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most case multiple issues will overlap with one another.

In addition, the DfE guidance specifies that the Designated Safeguarding Lead should undergo updated child protection training every two years. This should be supported by all staff members receiving appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated - Tower Hamlets LSCB recommends that all staff members should receive formal safeguarding and child protection training at least every 2 years. It is also stated that all staff members should receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates at least annually to provide them with relevant knowledge and skills to safeguard children effectively.

Staff members and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school/centre/setting's safeguarding regime. Appropriate whistleblowing procedures, should be put in place for such concerns to be raised with the management team. These procedures should be included in staff training and staff behavior policies.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Governor in collaboration with the Headteacher or Centre/Setting Manager should ensure that the School/Centre/Setting fully complies with DfE requirements in relation to safeguarding training for staff and to policies and procedures being in place and should provide an annual report to the Governing Body on safeguarding compliance and issues that have arisen in relation to safeguarding.

RECORDING OF INFORMATION RELATED TO CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD'S WELLBEING AND USE OF THE TOWER HAMLETS COMMON ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK (CAF) FORM

As stated above the Designated Safeguarding Lead carries responsibility for maintaining the records of which children within the School/Centre/Setting are subject to a Child Protection Plan and of concerns that have arisen about the wellbeing of children at the School/Centre/Setting.

This information is confidential and should only be shared on a strict need to know basis. These records should be safeguarded in a secure place away from the children's academic records.

The Tower Hamlets Early Help Assessment (EHA) Form should be used for the purpose of recording information on concerns about the wellbeing of a child. This offers the benefit of the EHA Form being already in process if a decision is subsequently reached that an assessment on the child should be completed on the EHA Form.

It is vital that any concerns are reported as soon as possible and that unnecessary delay is avoided. **If at any time there is concern that a child has suffered from serious harm or is at risk of immediate serious harm to a child then this must be reported immediately – anybody can make a referral under such circumstances.**

In "Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges – 5 September 2016" (DfE, Sept 2016) particular further information is provided by the DfE in Annexe A relating to:

- **Children Missing from Education** and the legal duties on all schools under the Pupil Registration Regulations 2006 (DfE, 2006) and The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations September 2016 (DFE, 2016) to inform the local authority of:

(i) any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more;

- (ii) any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admissions register, and;
 - (iii) of every non-standard joiner and leaver i.e. of any pupils who join or leave the school at any time other than standard transitions within 5 days commencing from 1st September 2016.
- **Child Sexual Exploitation** and sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.
 - **“Honour Based” Violence** including forced circumcision, forced marriage and the mandatory reporting duty introduced under Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) which places a statutory duty upon teachers along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.
 - **Preventing Radicalisation** and the duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (“the CTSA 2015”) to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism” (‘the Prevent duty’) and to ‘have regard to the statutory guidance issued under section 29 of the CTSA 2015’ (‘the Prevent guidance’). Requirements are detailed in terms of risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training and Information Technology policies.

Annexe C of the DfE guidance (May 2016) also draws particular attention to:

- **Online Safety** and how the use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation with technology often providing the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety is seen to be one that empowers a school or college to protect and educate the whole school or college community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate any incident where appropriate.

Schools/Centres/Settings need to be alert to the possible signs and symptoms of all forms of abuse including:

- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Children missing education

- Children missing from home or care
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Domestic Violence
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Forced Marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Hate
- Mental health
- Missing children and adults strategy
- Neglect
- Peer on peer abuse
- Private Fostering
- Preventing radicalisation
- Relationship abuse
- Sexting
- Trafficking

Comprehensive information on the signs and symptoms of abuse can be found at:

Tower Hamlets LSCB Website:

<http://www.childrenandfamiliestrust.co.uk/the-lscb/>

and

London Child Protection Committee Website:

<http://www.londoncp.co.uk/index.html>

GOOD RECORD KEEPING, INFORMATION SHARING AND THE TRANSFER OF INFORMATION WHEN CHILDREN CHANGE SCHOOLS /SETTINGS

Good record keeping, information sharing and the transfer of information when children change schools/settings have a very important role to play in safeguarding the welfare of children. When children change schools it is essential that their full records are transferred so that it can be ensured that they receive appropriate curriculum and teaching support at their new school and so that any concerns about their welfare are known about and monitoring undertaken.

When a child joins the School/Centre/Setting and full records have been requested and not received then the Attendance & Welfare Service (AWS) should be notified. The AWS will support your efforts to obtain the records and will also in turn notify the Specialist Attendance & Welfare Advisor (AWA) for Children Missing Education. Similarly, where a pupil moves to another School/Centre/Setting or Local Authority area and no request for records is received then a referral should be made to the AWS for follow-up.

It is vital that full records of actions taken are kept in relation to cases where pupils change school. The destination of a child These records can be used for reference if any issues subsequently arise in relation to the whereabouts of the child and the steps taken by the school at the time when the child moved.

Records related to concerns about the wellbeing of a child should be sent separately from the academic records in a sealed envelope marked private and confidential to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the receiving school. A full copy of these particular records should always be retained by the sending school and kept locked in a secure location in the event of a query being received at a future date.

THE CHILD PROTECTION ADVICE LINE – 020 7364 3444

The Child Protection Advice Line is a service provided as part of Tower Hamlets Children's Services Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

This service is available to schools and education settings, education support staff, parents/carers and pupils, other agencies and professionals and to voluntary and community organisations in Tower Hamlets. If there is a concern about the welfare of a child or young person and the Designated Safeguarding Lead, parent or pupil would like to talk it through then they can contact the Child Protection Advice Line and speak to the Duty Officer.

The Duty Officer will be able to discuss the concern, assist in deciding whether a formal child protection referral is appropriate and facilitate the reporting of a formal child protection referral in accordance with Tower Hamlets Local Safeguarding Children Board Procedures and to offer advice.

When there is a specific concern of a child protection nature whereby it is thought that a child has been harmed or at risk of being harmed then the LBTH Inter-Agency Referral Form should be completed in the first instance. The Child Protection Advice Line should then be contacted on 0207 364 3444 to discuss the matter and the completed Inter-Agency Referral Form then emailed/faxed through.

In the case of more general/ongoing concerns about the wellbeing of a child and/or family then an assessment on the EHA Form should be completed to give as detailed a picture of the situation as possible. The completed assessment can then be sent to the MASH for advice and consideration for other support.

Emails must not just be sent to report/log concerns about children and/or families without contacting the Child Protection Advice Line/MASH first. This is contrary to statutory guidance and serves to clog up systems whilst such emails are worked through to try to establish why they are being sent. There is also the risk that information may get lost.

The Child Protection Advice Line operates between 9.00am and 5.00pm except at weekends and on public holidays. If the concern arises outside of the hours operated by the Advice Line and it is believed the child may be at immediate risk then the Children's Social Care Emergency Out of Hours Team (020 7364 5006 – choose Option 1) or the Police should be contacted without delay.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN – PHYSICAL INJURY, NEGLECT OR EMOTIONAL ABUSE

These procedures should be followed by any member of staff who has evidence of/ or suspects abuse of a child, or is concerned about the ability of the parents/carers to provide for the child's protection, safety or well-being. It should be noted that this includes concerns about incidents which may have taken place outside the School/Centre but which have been brought to the attention of the member of staff by another child, parent/carer or neighbour etc.

Staff members should be encouraged to report their concerns about possible abuse and be able to raise concerns if they feel inappropriate or insufficient action has been taken. It is particularly important junior staff should not feel intimidated about discussing concerns that do not appear to have been taken up by more senior colleagues. No member of staff should be victimised or suffer adversely for reporting concerns. This also applies where there are concerns that a member of staff may have perpetrated abuse.

Any members of staff noticing an injury, however slight and for which the explanations are unsatisfactory or inconsistent must report this immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Where the Designated Safeguarding Lead decides that there is cause for concern she/he must telephone the Child Protection Advice Line and inform the Duty Officer. If the Designated Safeguarding Lead decides that it is not a child protection matter, a record must still be made of the incident and kept.

Where a member of staff is concerned about the ability of the parent/carer to provide for the child's protection, safety or physical or emotional well-being, this should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider the matter and decide whether to report it to the Duty Officer. If the Designated Safeguarding Lead decides that it is not a child protection matter a record must be made of the concern.

If a child makes a direct allegation of abuse or has a distinct injury and/or is experiencing pain and/or discomfort and for which no reasonable and consistent explanation is available this should not be discussed with parents/carers in the first instance. The concern must be reported to the Duty Officer.

If a less distinct injury is noticed or if the child makes a reference to having been physically punished but no injury is evident and no pain/discomfort is reported, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should raise this with parents/carers where possible. If there is a reasonable explanation and there is no pattern of unexplained injuries or pattern of absences from school before injuries are noticed or other concerns the incident must still be recorded.

When a concern is reported to the Child Protection Advice Line and it is agreed that the matter should be reported to Children's Social Care, the Duty Officer will complete a Record of Concern Contact Record form. The referrer will be asked for information about the child including her/his full name, date of birth, address, telephone number, parents/carers' names, GP, ethnic background and language spoken at home etc. The Duty Officer will also need a brief description of the incident or cause for the concern and details of any explanation from the child and his/her parents/carers

The Duty Officer will liaise with the Team Manager or Duty Manager in the MASH and with the Assessment & Early Intervention Team in Children's Social Care for the area in which the child lives, whether in Tower Hamlets or in another Local Authority, as necessary. Children's Social Care will then in turn consult with other investigative agencies and with the referrer on how and by whom the carer(s) will be informed of the concerns and of what action if any will be taken. A copy of the Record of Concern will be sent to Children's Social Care by the Duty Officer.

The School/Centre/Setting must keep a written record of events. A copy of the Record of Concern Contact Record completed by the Duty Officer will be sent to the Designated Safeguarding Lead by internal post. A copy will also be sent to the Nurse Specialist-Child Protection at the Health Authority. If the child has learning difficulties and/or has a physical/sensory disability and attends a School for children with special educational needs, a copy will be sent to the Children with Disabilities Team Manager.

The referrer will be informed of the outcome of the investigation by Children's Social Care.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN – SEXUAL ABUSE

Any suspicion of sexual abuse or actual disclosure by a child that he or she has been sexually abused must be reported immediately to the Duty Officer, who will complete the Record of Concern form and contact the appropriate investigative agencies.

Parents/carers should not normally be informed at this stage as this may jeopardise the investigation and the safety of the child.

In cases where there is an allegation of or concern about sexual abuse a strategy meeting will be held in order to decide on the most appropriate way to proceed. The referrer will normally be invited to the strategy meeting.

CONCERNS ABOUT SEXUALLY ACTIVE YOUNG PEOPLE UNDER THE AGE OF 18

The London Child Protection Procedures (2016) contain guidance in the form of a Protocol to assist professionals in identifying where children and young people's sexual relationships may be abusive and the children and young people may need the provision of protection or additional services.

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 children under the age of 13 are considered of insufficient age to give consent to sexual activity. For this reason all cases of children under the age of 13 who are believed to be or have been engaged in sexual activity must be referred to the Child Protection Advice Line. Penetrative sexual activity represents a potential case of rape (rape is penetration of any orifice by a male penis).

Whilst sexual activity for young people under the age of 16 remains illegal, 13 –16 year olds are deemed competent to give consent. However, for all young people aged 13 through to their 18th birthday, concerns relating to risk of harm in the form of possible abuse, coercion, exploitation or neglect must be referred to the Child Protection Advice Line.

CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES

If a Child Protection Conference is called following an investigation it is essential that the School/Centre/Setting is represented by someone who has informed knowledge of the child. This would normally be the Designated Safeguarding Lead. It may be appropriate for other staff involved with the child in the School/Centre to attend but this should only be on a need to attend basis. The School/Centre/Setting should also provide a written report to the conference in accordance with the format provided by Children's Social Care.

Parents will usually be invited to attend Child Protection Conferences and will have access to any written report. If a member of staff has information that they feel unable to share with the parents/carers, they should contact the chair of the conference prior to the meeting.

MONITORING CHILDREN WHO ARE THE SUBJECT OF A CHILD PROTECTION PLAN (CPP) AND THE CORE GROUP

If at the Child Protection Conference it is decided that a child is at risk of significant harm then the child will be made the subject of a Child Protection Plan (CPP). The School/Centre/Setting will be officially notified and given the name of the key worker who will be a Social Worker from the Local Authority in which the child lives.

It is also likely that the School/Centre/Setting will be asked to nominate an appropriate member of staff to participate as part of the Core Group that monitors and liaises closely about the progress of the action plan in the CPP and the child's wellbeing.

It is particularly important to keep a careful watch on the attendance and well-being of pupils who are the subject of CPPs. The key worker must be notified as soon as attendance breaks down or if there are other concerns as discussed and agreed at the Child Protection Conference and specified in the Child Protection Plan. There must be close and continuous liaison with the key worker, which may include attendance at Core Group and other meetings.

Even when a child is the subject of a CPP and/or the case is open to an allocated social worker any new or additional concerns about the child's wellbeing must be reported to the Child Protection Advice Line.

STAFF FROM EXTERNAL SUPPORT SERVICES WORKING WITH SCHOOLS/CHILDREN'S CENTRES/SETTINGS

Including After-School Club Staff, Attendance & Welfare Advisors, Careers Advisors, Educational Psychologists, Extended School Social Workers, Home Tutors, Home School Liaison Workers, Play Centre Staff, School Improvement Advisors, Study Support Staff and Youth Workers.

Actual or suspected abuse might be brought to/come to the attention of a member of staff from a support service when she/he is working in a School/Centre/Setting. In such a situation they must ensure that the matter is brought to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the School/Centre/Setting so that the matter can be reported to the Duty Officer.

If the Designated Safeguarding Lead decides not to report the matter to the Duty Officer but the member of staff remains concerned then he/she should consult their own service's Designated Safeguarding Lead or, if this is not possible, telephone the Duty Officer direct.

CONCERNS ARISING DURING HOME VISITS OR OFFICE BASED INTERVIEWS

If a child makes a direct allegation or a member of staff suspects that a child may have been injured or has any concerns about the child's wellbeing they must make a written record of the concern and any explanations given by the child or parents/carers. They should then contact their Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Duty Officer without delay. No attempt should be made to carry out an investigation.

If the concern is after office hours and it is believed the child may be at immediate risk the Children's Social Care Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team or the Police should be contacted without delay.

PARENTS ARRIVING TO COLLECT A CHILD WHEN AFFECTED BY ALCOHOL OR SUBSTANCE MISUSE

If when a parent/carer arrives at a School/Centre/Setting to collect their child it is thought that they are suffering from the adverse effects of misuse of alcohol or other substances, a decision needs to be taken regarding whether the child's safety may be placed at risk by releasing the child to the parent/carer. Parents/carers cannot normally be prevented from taking their own children but if it is believed that the child would be placed at serious risk then Heads/Managers can intervene to ensure the child's safety. The Head/Manager could try to reason with the parent/carer and, for example, could assist the parent/carer in contacting another adult who was in a suitable position to collect and look after the child.

The event should be recorded on an EHA form. If this is a situation that occurs regularly, then Heads/Managers would want to complete a full EHA form with the parent and possibly get help for them from local drug and alcohol services, accessed through your Primary Care Trust.

If a School/Centre/Setting feels the child is at risk of significant harm from the parent/carer then they should immediately telephone the Child Protection Advice Line to get advice (or the Children's Social Care Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team or the Police if after normal office hours).

CHILDREN NOT COLLECTED FROM SCHOOL/CENTRE/SETTING

Where children are uncollected at the end of the school day whether due to the parents/carers being unavoidably delayed for a prolonged period or due to all efforts to contact the parents/carers being unsuccessful and there is serious concern about safeguarding their welfare (as opposed to children where the parents are just late in collecting them) then it is essential that the protection of the welfare of the child is the priority.

Where parents/carers do not collect a child from a School/Centre/Setting on time staff should make a record of this on an EHA form. If the problem is repeated then the parents/carers should be asked to cooperate in the completion of an assessment on the EHA form, so that the School/Centre/Setting can work with the parent/carer to find solutions to the problem.

If the parent/carer has contacted the School/Centre/Setting to explain reasons for lateness then the School/Centre/Setting should make arrangements for the child to be able to safely remain to allow time for the parent/carer to get there or for her/him to arrange for another, known, responsible adult to collect their child.

Should this prove difficult for the School/Centre/setting then there is the option to explore the possibility of taking the child to the nearest designated school offering extended after-school childcare provision – see details of designated schools in Appendix 1.

In the event that there is no contact at all from the parents/carers or there is good reason to believe that the parent/carer would not be in a fit state to look after their child and there is serious concern about safeguarding their welfare (as opposed to children where the parents are just late in collecting them), staff should telephone the Child Protection Advice Line to get advice (or the Children's Social Care Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team or the Police if after normal office hours) as detailed in Appendix. 1.

CONCERNS ABOUT RESPONSES TO REFERRALS/NEED FOR FURTHER ADVICE

Any concern about a lack of response on the Child Protection Advice Line or about the quality of the advice given should be reported to the Duty Manager in the MASH.

When referrals are progressed through to Assessment & Early Intervention (AEI) in Children's Social Care and the referrer is concerned about a lack of response or the type of response then the referrer should discuss this with the appropriate then the appropriate Team Manager/Duty Manager for Assessment & Early Intervention (AEI) in Children's Social Care should be informed.

If this proves difficult or unsatisfactory then the referrer should ask to speak to the Service Manager – Assessment & Early Intervention.

In the event that the situation continues to be unsatisfactory the referrer can ask to speak to the Divisional Director – Children's Social Care.

Where a situation is acute and a practical response from Children's Social Care is not forthcoming then the referrer can contact the Police Child Abuse Investigation Team. The Police Child Abuse Investigation Team will then contact the Advice & Assessment Team in Children's Social Care to discuss the matter and how it should be dealt with.

In case of any difficulty and the referrer is unsure what to do then she/he should call the Duty Officer for further assistance.

Where there is particular concern about how cases are being dealt with despite the steps detailed above having been followed then the Designated Safeguarding Lead can also discuss any ongoing concerns with the Principal Attendance and Welfare Advisor/School Safeguarding Lead Officer or the Service Manager – Child Protection & Reviewing Service.

ESCALATING CONCERNS ABOUT CHILD PROTECTION

If you are worried about the initial response from the Child Protection Advice Line or MASH and feel a different response is needed then please escalate your concerns

Child Protection Advice Line/MASH



Team Manager – MASH or Assessment & Early Intervention



Service Manager – Assessment & Early Intervention (Patrick McCann)



Divisional Director – Children’s Social Care (Nancy Meehan)

Where there is particular concern about the progress of cases involving allegations against members of staff then the Headteacher or Chair of Governors of the School or the Manager or LA Officer with responsibility for the Centre/Service should contact:

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – Verlyn Munro (Interim)

Should the LADO not be available then the following can be contacted:

- Schools and Education Settings and Services - Education Safeguarding Lead (David Hough);
- Non-School Settings and Services - Group Manager, Child Protection and Reviewing Service (Nadira Huda).

For information on Child Protection and Safeguarding training contact:

Safeguarding Training Coordinator – Sheila Leighton

Appendix 1: Uncollected Children

1. Designated schools offering extended after-school childcare provision

The host school should contact their nearest designated school offering extended after-school childcare provision from the list below, explain that they have an uncollected child and establish if there is a place available in the after-school provision for the child:

**St Elizabeth's School, Bonner Rd, London E2 9JY
0208 980 3964 (LAP 1)**

**St Matthias School, Bacon St, London E2 6DY
0207 739 8058 (LAP 1)**

**Hermitage School, Vaughan Way, London E1 9PT
0207 702 1037 (LAP 4)**

**St Mary and St Michael's School, Sutton St, London, E1 0BD
0207 790 4986 (LAP 4)**

**Guardian Angels School, Whitman Road, Bow West, E3 4RB
020 8980 3939 (LAP 5)**

**Chisenhale School, Chisenhale Rd, London E3 5QY
0208 980 2584 (LAP 5)**

**Our Lady and St. Joseph School, Wades Place, London, E14 0DE
020 7987 3066 (LAP 7)**

**St Lukes School, Saundersness Rd, London E14 3EB
0207 987 1753 (LAP 8)**

The host school should then arrange for the child to be safely transported to, and signed into the visitors' book at the after-school provision.

The host school will then contact the Child Protection Advice Line operated by the Local Authority and give the child's details, any needs, and the parents/carer's contact numbers. They should also advise the Duty Social Worker of the childcare provision that the child has been taken to.

When the child arrives at the after-school provision the manager should be told whether the parents/carers have been contacted and are on their way. The contact details of the parent/carer should be given to the manager, together with any advice given by the Child Protection Advice Line.

Where the child's parents/carers have still not been contactable the after-school provision manager should continue trying to contact the parents/carers before 6.00pm. It should be only the parent or designated carer who is permitted to collect the child.

If the child remains uncollected by 6pm, and no contact has been made with any parent/carer, then the after-school provision manager should contact the Children's Social Care Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team.

Please note that the host school is responsible for any costs associated with transporting the child safely to the after-school childcare provision and also for the cost of the provision itself.

2. Contact Information:

Child Protection Advice Line
(9.00am to 5.00pm)

020 7364 3444

Email (Note – information should only be emailed following prior discussion with the Duty Officer.)

CPAL@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Secure:

MASH@towerhamlets.gcsx.gov.uk

Children's Social Care Emergency Out of Hours
Duty Team (5.00pm onwards)

**020 7364 5006 -
choose Option 3**

(Note: The Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team should only be involved if they absolutely have to be and there is no other option.)