

<b>Safeguarding Children Statement</b>	Early Start Education Ltd Early Start Group Ltd
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<b>Company Lead DSL Deputy Lead DSL's</b>	Justin Elder, Managing Director Pippa Alabaster, Director Sharon Cox, Director
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<b>Service Area Designated Safeguarding Leads:</b>	<p><b>Nursery:</b> Martina Kempster, Nursery Manager Sabina Choudhury, Nursery Manager</p> <p><b>BSiL:</b> Georgia Leech, Snr Nutritionist Dominic Beattie, IT and Systems Manager</p> <p><b>FCC:</b> Roweida Adam, FCC Manager Nadia Walker, Deputy Manager Davina Harvey, Senior Supervisor Doreen Paters, Senior Supervisor Leigh Jarratt, Senior Supervisor</p>
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<b>Subject to review, monitoring and revision by</b>	Justin Elder
<b>Reviewed every</b>	Year
<b>Date approved by Board of Directors</b>	May 2024
<b>Signed on behalf of Early Start</b>	J A Elder

Children have the right to be treated with respect, be helped to thrive and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form. The authorities will be notified if it is suspected that a child is either suffering from or at risk of suffering significant harm.

At Early Start we work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to protect children from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children's health and development. Safeguarding children is everybody's responsibility and all staff, students, families and visitors are made aware of and must adhere to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

**What to do if you're worried a child is being abused?**

- Report your concerns / incident to a Designated Safeguarding Lead for your service area
- The DSL gathers information and will usually discuss concerns with the child's parents unless this is likely to place the child at greater risk
- Before making a decision whether to refer to Children' Services, the DSL may discuss the issues with the MASH Team or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). This is in order to determine whether there is a case for no

further action and to monitor or need to make a referral to another agency and / or to make a request to Children's Service for support or protection

- Newham Children's Services MASH Team – telephone number is 0203 373 4600 (outside of office hours/weekends) 020 8430 2000 or email [MASH@newham.gov.uk](mailto:MASH@newham.gov.uk)
- Early Start staff record any safeguarding concerns or incident on a Safeguarding Concern Form which is saved on the child's confidential file
- Referrals made to the MASH Team are initially made by phone and followed-up by a written referral submitted within 24 hours via [www.newham.gov.uk/mash](http://www.newham.gov.uk/mash)
- If a child is in immediate danger of significant harm the DSL will consider contacting the police first and then following-up with a phone call and referral to the MASH Team.
- The DSL continues to liaise with the Newham MASH Team until the referral is allocated and the outcome of a referral is known.

### Important Contacts

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|---|-----------------|
| Newham Children's Services MASH Team                                      | ☎ 0203 373 4600 |
| <b>02084302000 (out of hours)</b>   |                 |
| Newham Prevent Team   | ☎ 0203 373 2634 |
| Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)                                 | ☎ 0203 373 3803 |
| Ofsted <a href="mailto:enquires@ofsted.gov.uk">enquires@ofsted.gov.uk</a> | ☎ 0300 123 1231 |
| Non-emergency police  | ☎ 101           |
| <b>Emergency</b>  | ☎ 999           |
- Government helpline for extremism concerns ☎ 020 7340 7264  
(Monday to Friday 9 to 5, excluding bank holidays)
  - [Help@NSPCC.ORG.UK](mailto:Help@NSPCC.ORG.UK) or ☎ 0808 800 5000  
(Monday to Friday, 8 to 10, weekends 9 to 6)
  - Local Early Help services at [earlyhelppartnershipteam@newham.gov.uk](mailto:earlyhelppartnershipteam@newham.gov.uk)
  - Newham Safeguarding Partnership <https://www.newhamscp.org.uk/>
  - Child exploitation and Online protection command (CEOP)  
<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>
  - Free 24 hour Refuge National Domestic Abuse Helpline ☎ 0808 2000 247
  - Governments Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) ☎ 020 7008 0151  
(Out of hours ☎ 020 7008 5000)
  - Free 24 hour Modern Slavery Helpline ☎ 08000 121 700
  - Crimestoppers ☎ 0800 555 111

## **Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Policy**

At Early Start we work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Children have the right to be treated with respect, be helped to thrive and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

Safeguarding children is everybody's responsibility. All staff, students, families and visitors are made aware of and must adhere to the policy. This policy should be used in conjunction with all our other policies and procedures.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, in relation to this policy is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing the impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

### **Legal Framework**

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Childcare Act 2006 (amended 2018)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- Data Protection Act 2018
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Early years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework 2024
- Ofsted EIF inspections and the Early Years 2024
- Prevent Duty 2015
- Sexual Offences Act 2003.

### **Policy Intent**

Our practitioners have a duty to protect and promote the welfare of children; our staff may often be the first people to identify that there may be a problem. They may well be the first people in whom children confide information that may suggest abuse or to spot changes in a child's behaviour which may indicate abuse.

Our primary responsibility is the welfare and well-being of each child in our care and our staff will work with other agencies in the best interest of the child, including as part of a multi-agency team, where needed.

### **Early Start aims to:**

- Provide a safe and secure environment where children in our care are protected and supported.
- Keep the children at the centre of all we do, providing sensitive interactions that develop and build children's well-being, confidence and resilience. We will

support children to develop an awareness of how to keep themselves safe, healthy and have positive relationships.

- Ensure service provision enables children to develop a positive self-image, promotes tolerance and acceptance of different beliefs, cultures and communities and challenge inequality and discrimination.
- Actively listen to children.
- Create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency
- Ensure staff are trained from induction to understand the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, are alert to identify possible signs of abuse (including the signs known as softer signs of abuse), understand what is meant by child protection and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed, including by other children (peer on peer) through bullying or discriminatory behaviour.
- Be aware of the increased vulnerability of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), isolated families and vulnerabilities in families; including the impact of toxic trio on children and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's).
- Ensure that all staff feel confident and supported to act in the best interest of the child; maintaining professional curiosity around welfare of children and share information, and seek the help that the child may need at the earliest opportunity.
- Ensure that all staff are familiar and updated regularly with child protection training and procedures and kept informed of changes to local/national procedures, including thorough annual safeguarding newsletters and updates
- Make any child protection referrals in a timely way, sharing relevant information as necessary in line with procedures set out by the London Borough of Newham.
- Ensure that information is shared only with those people who need to know in order to protect the child and act in their best interest.
- Keep children safe online using appropriate filters, checks and safeguards, monitoring access at all times and maintaining safeguards around the use of technology by staff, parents and visitors.
- Promote an open and transparent culture in which concerns about any adults behaviour with children can be raised with a senior member of staff including self-referral to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early to minimise the risk of abuse.
- Ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the company are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries and in accordance with the ethos and values of Early Start
- Identify changes in staff behaviour and act on these as per the Staff Behaviour Policy
- Take any appropriate action relating to allegations of serious harm or abuse against any person working with children or working on Early Start premises including reporting such allegations to Ofsted and other relevant authorities.
- Take any appropriate action relating to low-level concerns.
- Ensure parents and carers are fully aware of child protection policies and procedures when they register with / are referred to Early Start and are kept informed of all updates when they occur.

- Regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents / carers where appropriate and make sure it complies with legal requirements.

### Local Arrangements

- All managers and directors in Early Start are trained DSL's.
- There will always be a manager in the Early Start building you are in / at as well as a director who can be contacted by phone within our business hours, who is a trained DSL.
- The overall lead DSL for the company is Justin Elder ☎ **0203 373 0283** Managing Director.
- If you are worried about a child call Newham Children's Social Care (MASH team) ☎ **0203 373 4600** between 9am – 5:15pm or ☎ **020 8430 2000** out of hours. If it is an emergency ☎ **999**
- If your concerns are about a member of staff you can contact the Local Authority Designated Duty Officer (LADO) ☎ **0203 373 3803**
- For information on Newham's Pathways to help and Support Children and Families, refer to, [Newham-Pathways-to-help-and-support-guidance-2022-v3-1.pdf](http://Newham-Pathways-to-help-and-support-guidance-2022-v3-1.pdf) ([newhamscp.org.uk](http://newhamscp.org.uk))

### Types of Abuse and Procedure to be followed

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a family, institution or community setting by those known to them or more rarely, a stranger. This could be an adult or adults, another child or children.

The signs and indicators listed below may not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, but will help us to recognise that something may be wrong, especially if a child shows a number of these signs/indicators or any of them to a marked degree.

### Indicators of Child Abuse

- Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones
- Fearful or withdrawn tendencies
- Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents or staff
- Repeated injuries
- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries
- Significant changes to behaviour patterns.

Softer signs of abuse as defined by National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) include:

Emotional States	Behaviour	Interpersonal Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fearful</li> <li>• Withdrawn</li> <li>• Low self-esteem.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aggressive</li> <li>• Oppositional habitual body rocking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indiscriminate contact or affection seeking</li> <li>• Over-friendliness to strangers including healthcare professionals</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excessive clinginess, persistently resorting to gaining attention</li> <li>• Demonstrating excessively 'good' behaviour to prevent parental or carer disapproval</li> <li>• Failing to seek or accept appropriate comfort or affection from an appropriate person when significantly distressed</li> <li>• Coercive controlling behaviour</li> <li>• Lack of ability to understand and recognise emotions, appropriate to age/stage of development</li> <li>• Very young children showing excessive comforting behaviours when witnessing parental or carer distress.</li> </ul>
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### **Peer-on-peer Abuse**

We are aware that peer-on-peer abuse can take place in the form of bullying, physically hurting another child, emotional abuse or sexual abuse. We will take action to protect the children in our charge, take advice from the appropriate bodies including to support both the victim and the perpetrator and ensure any abuse is reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

### **Physical Abuse**

Action needs to be taken if there is reason to believe that there has been a physical abuse to a child such as hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. These symptoms may include bruising or injuries in an area that is not usual for a child, i.e. fleshy parts of the arms and legs, back, wrists, ankles, trunk and face.

Many children will have cuts and grazes from normal childhood injuries. When children enter Early Start with an existing injury we will record the details of the injury. Any injuries that are a cause of concern will be followed up with the designated safeguarding lead.

### **Fabricated Illness**

Physical harm may be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. The parent or carer may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation. They may exaggerate a real illness and symptoms or deliberately induce an illness through poisoning with medication or other substances or they may interfere with medical treatments. Fabricated illness is a form of physical abuse and any concerns will be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

## **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

FGM is a procedure where the female genitalia are injured or changed and there is no medical reason for this. Some ethnic groups practise this form of physical abuse as a cultural ritual. When the procedure happens is dependent on the community and it may occur shortly after birth, during childhood, during adolescence, just before marriage or during a woman's first pregnancy. The practice can cause severe pain, mental and physical health problems such as urinary infection, septicaemia, incontinence, difficulties in childbirth and/or death.

If you have concerns about a child or family you should contact the children's social care team in the same way as other types of physical abuse. We have a mandatory duty to report to police any case where an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.

## **Breast Ironing**

Breast ironing also known as "breast flattening" is the process where young girls' breasts are strapped, ironed, massaged, and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely. It can be believed that by carrying out this act young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction and early forced marriage; this is a form of abuse and we will remain vigilant for the signs and symptoms in any children and families using our services and follow-up concerns following our safeguarding procedures.

## **Sexual Abuse**

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

Action must be taken if you have reason to suspect a child has/is being sexually abused. Indicators may include sexual activity expressed through words, play, drawing, and or excessive preoccupation with sexual matters that are inappropriate to age/stage of the child. Inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour or language again that is uncommon for their age/stage of development. Behaviour may include acting out sexual activity on dolls/toys, in role-play or with peers. The physical symptoms of sexual abuse may include genital trauma, discharge and bruises between the legs or signs of a sexually transmitted disease (STD). Emotional symptoms could include a distinct change in a child's behaviour like withdrawal or overly extroverted and outgoing. They may withdraw away from a particular adult and become distressed if they reach out for them, but they may also be particularly clingy so all symptoms and signs should be looked at together and in context and assessed.

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

Working Together to Safeguard Children defines CSE as “a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.” We will be aware of the possibility of CSE and the signs and symptoms this may manifest as. If we have concerns, we will follow the same procedures as for other concerns and we will record and refer as appropriate.

## **Emotional Abuse**

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

Signs that children are being emotionally abused may include shying away from an adult who is abusing them, becoming withdrawn, aggressive or clingy in order to receive their love and attention, not having a close bond with their parent/carer, seeming unconfident or anxious, or being aggressive towards others.

Action should be taken if the staff member has reason to believe that there is a severe, adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child, caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection. Children may also experience emotional abuse through witnessing domestic abuse and alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them.

## **Neglect**

Working Together to Safeguard Children defines Neglect as the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- a. Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- b. Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger



- c. Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- d. Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Signs may include a child who is persistently unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small (especially shoes that may restrict the child's growth or hurt them), arriving in the same nappy they went home in. A child having an illness or identified special educational need or disability that is not being addressed by the parent/carer. A child may be persistently hungry if a parent/carer is withholding food or not providing enough for a child's needs. Neglect may also be shown through emotional signs such as a child may not be receiving the attention they need at home and may crave love and support. Action should be taken if the staff member has reason to believe that there has been any type of neglect of a child in line with our safeguarding procedures.

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

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) can be described as when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology.

### **County Lines**

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs from cities into smaller towns, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line.' Customers will live in a different area to where the dealers and networks are based usually so drug runners are needed to transport the drugs and collect payment. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move the drugs and money and will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

Signs that a child may be involved in county lines could be a change in behaviour, suddenly having more money or possessions, changes in friendship group, withdrawing from family life, sudden change in appearance, unexplained physical injuries, staying out late or a lack of interest in school and previous positive activities.

### **Cuckooing**

Cuckooing is a form of county lines crime in which drug dealers take over the home of a vulnerable person in order to criminally exploit as a base for drug dealing. Signs may be an increase in people entering or leaving the property, an increase in cars or bikes outside the home, windows covered or curtains closed for long periods, family not being seen for extended periods, signs of drug use or an increase in anti-social behaviour at the home. If we recognise any of these signs, we will report our concerns as per our reporting procedures.

### **Contextual safeguarding**

Contextual safeguarding expands the objectives of the child protection system beyond focusing on families in recognition that children and young people can be vulnerable to abuse in a range of social contexts such as in their neighbourhoods,

schools and online which can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers can have little influence over these contexts and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships. As part of our safeguarding procedures we will work in partnership with parents/carers and other agencies to work together to safeguard children and provide the support around contextual safeguarding concerns.

### **Adultification**

As defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children, the term 'child' refers to anyone under the age of 18. Adultification is a type of bias which skews the perception of certain children, leading to others – including professionals – viewing them as more 'grown up' or, 'adult'. This can then lead to lapses in appropriate safeguarding.

### **Domestic Abuse**

The official definition of domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. Domestic abuse is the abuse of power and control over one person by another and can take many different forms, including physical, sexual, emotional, verbal and financial abuse.

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone regardless of gender, age, social background, religion, sexuality or ethnicity and can happen at any stage in a relationship. If we are concerned that domestic violence is happening within a home and a child is at risk we will follow our safeguarding policy and reporting procedures.

The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004) extended provisions to help stop domestic abuse including creating a new offence of causing or allowing the death of a child or vulnerable adult. This Act was amended in 2012 (Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (Amendment) Act 2012) to include causing or allowing serious physical harm (equivalent to grievous bodily harm) to a child or vulnerable adult.

Where incidents of domestic violence are shared by an employee or parent/carers, we will respect confidentiality at all times and not share information without permission. However, we will share this information, without permission, in cases of child protection or where we believe there is an immediate risk of serious harm to the person(s) involved.

The signs and symptoms of domestic violence may include:

- Changes in behaviour: for example, becoming very quiet, anxious, frightened, tearful, aggressive, distracted, depressed etc.
- Visible bruising or single, or repeated, injury with unlikely explanations
- Change in the manner of dress: for example, clothes that do not suit the climate which may be used to hide injuries
- Partner or ex-partner stalking employee/parent in or around the workplace; this may include excessive phone calls or messages
- Partner or ex-partner exerting an unusual amount of control or demands over work schedule

- Frequent lateness or absence from work.

### **Honour Based Violence**

Honour based violence (HBV) can be described as a collection of practices which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour; such as being held against their will, sexual or psychological abuse, threats of violence, assault or forced marriage. Such violence can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. It is a violation of human rights and may be a form of domestic and/or sexual violence. There is no honour or justification for abusing the human rights of others.

The signs and symptoms of HBV may include:

- Changes in how they dress or act, they may stop wearing 'western' clothing or make-up
- Visible injuries, or repeated injury, with unlikely explanations.
- Signs of depression, anxiety or self-harm
- Frequent absences
- Restrictions on friends or attending events.

Where incidents of HBV are shared by an employee or parent/carer, we will respect confidentiality at all times and not share information without permission. However, we will share this information, without permission, in cases of child protection or where we believe there is an immediate risk of serious harm to the person(s) involved.

### **Forced Marriage**

A forced marriage is defined as a marriage in which one, or both spouses, do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. In the cases of some vulnerable adults who lack the capacity to consent, coercion is not required for a marriage to be forced.

If we suspect or receive information about a forced marriage being planned then we will follow our safeguarding reporting procedures. If the person concerned is under the age of 18 years then we will report the incident to the children's social care team.

If we believe a person is in immediate danger of being forced into a marriage we may contact the Police and the Governments Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) on ☎ **020 7008 0151**, out of hours ☎ 020 7008 5000

### **Extremism and the Prevent Duty**

We have a duty to **prevent** people being drawn into terrorism / radicalisation and refer any concerns to the police/local authority. Safeguarding concerns relating to the prevent duty may include a change in behaviour of a child or family member, comments causing concern or actions that lead staff to be worried about the safety of a child. Staff and volunteers should be alert to any early signs in children and families, who may be at risk and follow the procedures for reporting and recording concerns if they are worried about a child. Speak to a DSL and to refer any concerns of extremism to the local authority via Newham Children's Services MASH. Newham also has a Prevent Lead, Ghaffar Hussain ☎ **0203 373 2634**. The Government

helpline for extremism concerns ☎ 020 7340 7264 can also be contacted for guidance or the police should be contacted in an emergency ☎ 999.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) states that extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable – including the young – by seeking to sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society.

Extremism is defined in the Counter Extremism Strategy (2015) as the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist.

The NSPCC states that signs of radicalisation may be:

- Isolation including from family and friends
- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- Unwillingness or inability to discuss views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use.

At Early Start, we will tackle radicalisation by:

- Training all staff to understand what is meant by the Prevent Duty and radicalisation
- Ensuring staff understand how to recognise early indicators of potential radicalisation and terrorism threats and act on them appropriately in line with national and local procedures
- Make any referrals relating to extremism to the Prevent Lead, Police or the Government helpline in a timely way, sharing relevant information as appropriate
- Ensure our nursery is an inclusive environment where inequalities and negative points of view are tackled and where we teach children about tolerance through British Values.
- Using the Government document Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales<sup>1</sup>

## **Bullying and Discrimination**

Behaviour and language, which condemns or ridicules people because of a perceived or actual protected characteristic is completely unacceptable to Early Start. The Equality Act 2010 defines protected characteristics to include age, disability, gender reassignment (transgender), marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity and paternity, race, religion or belief (including no belief), sex (Gender Identity), sexual orientation or through association with someone of a particular sexual orientation.

Bullying is defined by the DfE as *'behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.'* Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. If this is the case, the reporting procedures must be followed.

Bullying affects self-esteem, self-confidence and identity in children and adults and in severe cases can lead to mental health problems and potential self-harm and suicide. Existing evidence suggests that homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying can have a disproportionate impact on LGBTQ+ young people.

- **Types of Bullying, Harassment, Victimisation, Discrimination, Being treated unfairly for other reasons include**
  - **Physical** - hitting, kicking, tripping or the destruction of a person's property. Physical bullying not only affects the bully and the victim, but also may have an impact on innocent bystanders.
  - **Verbal** - insults, teasing, name calling, sexual harassment or racist language, including threats.
  - **Covert** - attempted behind the victim's back, often to damage the victim's reputation and can include creating rumours, mimicking, and humiliation. This is the most frequently used form of bullying.
  - **Cyber** - can occur through text messages or over the internet, making it difficult to control. This may include impersonating a victim, spreading gossip, or excluding the victim online.
  - **Alienation:** encouragement of peers to alienate the victim, treating the victim like an outcast, the victim will have difficulty forming relationships and may be prone to isolation later in life. This so-called "pack mentality" is most frequently seen in senior schools but can be evident at any age.

The signs and symptoms may include:

- Bruises
  - Broken or missing possessions
  - Changes in habits or behaviour
  - Complaining of headaches or stomach aches
  - Pattern of absences
  - Sudden change in attainment or engagement.
- Everyone should be able to live their lives safely and to feel safe at home, in our centres and online. Children and families should feel welcomed and safe in our centres so that they can reach their full potential. We want children and young people and families to feel our services are relevant to their identity and to be able to fully participate without fear of Bullying, Harassment, Victimisation, Discrimination, Being treated unfairly for other reasons. We also want to support staff and volunteers to be role models for all children and young people.

At Early Start, we will tackle bullying and discrimination by:

- Creating an anti-bullying, anti-oppressive culture and promoting British Values – Rule of Law, Democracy, Individual Liberty, Mutual Respect and Tolerance
- Reinforcing that Bullying, Harassment, Victimisation, Discrimination, Being treated unfairly for other reasons is not acceptable, through observation, open and challenging discussions and reporting
- Listening not only to words but also non-verbal communication and presentation of children, young people and adults
- Addressing any witnessed bullying swiftly
- Recording concerns and monitoring including any likelihood of ‘significant harm’ which will be addressed through safeguarding procedures.

### **Online Safety**

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) categorises online safety into three areas:

- i. Content - being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material
- ii. Contact - being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
- iii. Conduct - personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm.

At Early Start we aim to keep children, families and staff and safe online by:

- Ensuring we have appropriate antivirus and anti-spyware software on all devices and update them regularly
- Ensure content blockers and filters are on all our devices, i.e. computers, laptops, tablets and any mobile devices
- Ensuring all devices are password protected. Passwords should be kept safe and secure, changed regularly and are not written down
- Monitoring all internet usage
- Ensuring controls and monitoring is in place for any social media or messaging apps used by our services installed on company devices
- Reviewing all apps or games downloaded onto devices available to children / families ensuring they are age and content appropriate
- Using only approved company devices to record/photograph children / families
- Reporting emails with inappropriate content to Data and Systems Manager who may refer on to the internet watch foundation ([www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk))
- Teaching children / families how to stay safe online and report any concerns
- Ensuring children are supervised when using internet connected devices
- Using tracking software to monitor suitability of internet usage
- Not permitting staff or visitors to access to the company Wi-Fi
- Talking to children about ‘stranger danger’ and deciding who is a stranger and who is not; comparing people in real life situations to online ‘friends’
- Only using approved video conferencing software with password protection, closed room systems in place and discussing with the children and young people what they would do if someone they did not know tried to contact them
- Providing training for staff, at least annually, in online safety and understanding how to keep children safe online.
- In our nurseries we encourage staff and families to complete an online safety briefing, which can be found at <https://moodle.ndna.org.uk> (0 to 5 years) and

across our services we signpost parents to <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/parental-controls/>

- Ensuring all staff abide by an acceptable use policy; instructing staff to use the work IT equipment for matters relating to the children and families education and care only.
- Managing our digital reputation, including the appropriateness of information and content that we post online, both professionally and personally.
- All electronic communications between staff and parents/carers should be professional and take place via the official communication channels.

If any concerns arise relating to online safety then we will follow our safeguarding policy and report all online safety concerns to a DSL.

The DSL will make sure that:

- All staff know how to report a problem and when to escalate a concern, including the process for external referral
- All concerns are logged, assessed and actioned in accordance with the safeguarding procedures
- Parents/families are supported to develop their knowledge of online safety issues concerning their children
- Staff have access to information and guidance for supporting online safety
- Under no circumstances should any member of staff, either at work or in any other place, make, deliberately download, possess, or distribute material they know to be illegal, for example child sexual abuse material.

### **Mobile Phone and Electronic Device Use Policy**

Staff are not permitted to take any photographs or recordings of a child on their own information storage devices i.e. cameras, mobiles, tablets or smartwatches and may only use those provided by the nursery.

Parents, and children, are not permitted to use any recording device or camera (including those on mobile phones or smartwatches) on the premises without the prior consent of the manager.

All managers/directors are issued with a phone for work use only. If staff are working in the community or taking children on an approved visit/outing, the visit co-ordinator, as a minimum, will also be issued with a work phone. Photographs or videos recorded on mobile devices will be transferred to the correct storage device as soon as possible to ensure no images are left on mobile devices.

To ensure the safety and well-being of children and families we do not allow staff to use personal mobile phones and or electronic devices during working hours outside of staff only break rooms / offices. Smartwatches that receive calls and have digital recording/imaging capabilities are prohibited in contact rooms and classrooms.

Parents and visitors will be asked to refrain from using their mobile phones/devices in our premise or when dropping off / collecting children.

Parents/Carers are requested not to allow their child to wear or bring in devices that

may take photographs or record videos or voices. This includes smart watches with these capabilities, such as Vtech. This ensures all children are safeguarded.

The acceptable IT use policies should be read in conjunction with the information in this policy.

### **Photographs and Videos**

We ensure that any photographs or recordings (including CCTV) taken of children is done with the knowledge of parents/guardians and social worker and only share photos in a secure manner. We will obtain permission/consents when a child is registered / referred and update it on a regular basis to ensure that this permission is still valid.

### **Human Trafficking and Slavery**

Child trafficking and modern slavery is becoming a more frequent form of child abuse. Children are recruited, moved, transported and then exploited, forced to work or are sold on. The Modern Slavery Act (2015) defines slavery is a term that covers:

- Slavery
- Servitude and forced or compulsory labour
- Human trafficking.

For an adult or child to have been a victim of human trafficking there must have been:

- **Action** - recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation
- **Means** - threat or use of force, coercion, abduction, abuse of power or vulnerability. There does not need to be “means” for children as they are not able to give informed consent
- **Purpose** - sexual exploitation, forced labour or domestic servitude, slavery, financial exploitation, illegal adoption, removal of organs.

Victims of trafficking and modern slavery are likely to be subjected to other types of abuse such as physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Action should be taken if an adult or child appear to have some of these possible signs including under the control of someone else and reluctant to interact with others, the victim has few personal belongings and wears the same clothes every day or wear unsuitable clothes. The victim is not able to move around freely and is reluctant to talk to strangers or the authorities including appearing frightened, withdrawn, or shows signs of physical or psychological abuse.

When a concern is raised about trafficking or modern slavery we follow our safeguarding procedures and if the child (or adult) is at risk of immediate harm then the police will be called.

### **Up-skirting**

Up skirting involves taking a picture of someone’s genitals or buttocks under their clothing without them knowing, either for sexual gratification or in order to humiliate, or distress, the individual. This is a criminal offence and any such action would be reported following our reporting procedures.



## **Child Abuse linked to Faith or Belief (CALFB)**

Child abuse linked to faith or belief (CALFB) can happen in families when there is a concept of belief in:

- Witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil acting through children or leading them astray (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs)
- The evil eye or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in the Hindu context)
- Ritual or multi murders where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits, or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies
- Use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children to make them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation.

This is not an exhaustive list and there will be other examples where children have been harmed, when adults think that their actions have brought bad fortune.

## **Safeguarding Reporting Procedures**

All staff have a responsibility to report safeguarding concerns and suspicions of abuse:

- Report concerns / incident to a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately
- The DSL gathers information and will usually discuss concerns with the child's parents unless this is likely to place the child at greater risk
- Before making a decision whether to refer to Children's Services the DSL may discuss the issues with the MASH Team. This is in order to determine whether there is a case for no further action and to monitor or need to make a referral to another agencies and or to make a request to Children's Service for support or protection
- Newham Children's Services MASH Team – telephone number is ☎ **0203 373 4600** or email [MASH@newham.gov.uk](mailto:MASH@newham.gov.uk)
- Early Start staff record any safeguarding concerns or incident on a Safeguarding Concern Form which is saved on the child's confidential file
- Referrals made to the MASH Team are initially made by phone and followed-up by a written referral submitted within 24 hours via [www.newham.gov.uk/mash](http://www.newham.gov.uk/mash) or directly [Login \(newham.gov.uk\)](http://Login(newham.gov.uk))
- If a child is in immediate danger of significant harm the DSL will consider contacting the police first and then following-up with a phone call and referral to the MASH Team.
- The DSL continues to liaise with the Newham MASH Team until the referral is allocated and the outcome of a referral is known.

For children who arrive with an existing injury, a form will be completed along with the parent's/carers explanation as to how the injury happened. Staff will have professional curiosity around any explanations given and any concerns around existing injuries will be reported to the DSL. Any signs of marks/injuries to a child or information a child has given will be recorded and stored securely. If there are queries/concerns regarding the injury/information given then the DSL will:

- Contact the Local Authority children's social care team to report concerns and seek advice immediately or as soon as it is practical to do so. **If it is believed that, a child is in immediate danger we will contact the police.**
- Newham MASH Team Tel: 0203 373 4600; Email [MASH@newham.gov.uk](mailto:MASH@newham.gov.uk)
- All information and action taken relating to the concern raised and actions to be taken is recorded
- Speak to the parents unless advised not to do so by LA children's social care team.

If the safeguarding concern relates to an allegation against an adult working then the reporting procedure for allegations against adults working or volunteering with children should be followed – see below.

Keeping children safe is our highest priority and if, for whatever reason, staff do not feel able to report concerns to the DSL they should call the Local Authority children's social care team, the Police or the NSPCC and report their concerns anonymously. These contact numbers are included within this policy document and on display in Early Start.

### **Responding to a spontaneous disclosure from a child**

If a child starts to talk openly to a member of staff about abuse (including historical abuse) they may be experiencing then staff will:

- Give full attention to the child or young person
- Keep body language open
- Recognise their body language
- Take time and slow down: we will respect pauses and will not interrupt the child – let them go at their own pace
- Show understanding and reflect back - including to check your understanding of what has been said - using their language
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you. Make sure they know that abuse is never their fault
- Never talk to the alleged perpetrator about the child's disclosure.

(Information taken from NSPCC)

Any disclosure will be reported to the DSL on duty will be referred to the local authority children's social care team immediately, following our reporting procedures.

### **Recording Suspicions of Abuse and Disclosures**

Staff should make an objective record of any observation or disclosure, supported by the DSL. This record should include:

- Child's name
- Child's address
- Age of the child, ethnicity and date of birth
- Date and time of the observation or the disclosure, location
- Exact words spoken by the child (word for word) and any non-verbal communication that was observed
- Exact position and type of any injuries or marks seen, recorded in words and shown on the body map within the injuries form

- Exact observation of any incident including any concern was reported, with date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time
- Any discussion held with the parent(s) (where deemed appropriate).

These records should be signed by the person reporting this and the DSL, dated and kept in a separate confidential file.

If a child starts to talk to an adult about potential abuse it is important not to promise the child complete confidentiality. This promise cannot be kept. It is vital that the child is allowed to talk openly and disclosure is not forced or words put into the child's mouth. As soon as possible after the disclosure details must be logged accurately. It is not Early Start's role to investigate, it is the role of statutory services to complete this.

Staff involved in a safeguarding case may be asked to supply details of any information/concerns they have with regard to a child. Early Start expects all members of staff to co-operate with the local authority children's social care, police, and Ofsted in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the children. Staff must not make any comments either publicly or in private about the supposed or actual behaviour of a parent, child or member of staff.

### **Informing Parents**

Parents are normally the first point of contact. If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, **except where the guidance of the local authority children's social care team/police does not allow this to happen**. This will usually be the case where the parent or family member is the likely abuser or where a child may be endangered by this disclosure. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

### **Confidentiality**

All suspicions, enquiries and external investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared in line with guidance from the local authority. All staff, students and volunteers are bound by confidentiality and any information will not be discussed out of work, or this will become a disciplinary matter.

Early Start has due regard to the data protection principles as in the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR). These do not prohibit the collection and sharing of personal information, even without consent if this would put the child at further risk. We will follow the principles around data collection and information sharing and ensure any information is recorded and shared in an appropriate way.

### **Support to families**

Early Start aim to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff, and volunteers; to provide early help and/or referral on children and families who might need additional support and/or protection. Parents/carers and families will be treated with respect in a non-bias and objective manner in general and including whilst the subject of any external investigations and/or proceedings related to child protection and/or safeguarding.

## **Record Keeping**

Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child, **only if appropriate and in line with guidance of the local authority with the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount.** We will do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

Early Start keeps appropriate records to support the early identification of children and families that would benefit from support. Factual records are maintained in a chronological order with parental discussions. Records are reviewed regularly by the DSL to look holistically at identifying children's needs.

## **Early Help**

Sometimes concerns about a child may not be of a safeguarding nature and relate more to their individual family circumstances. When a child and/or family would benefit from support but do not meet the threshold for Local Authority Social Care Team, a discussion will take place with the family around early help services. Early help provides support as soon as a concern/area of need emerges, helping to improve outcomes and prevent escalation onto local authority services. Early Start will work in partnership with parents/carers to identify any early help services that would benefit your child or your individual circumstances, with your consent, this may include family support, foodbank support, counselling or parenting services.

Where indicated we will complete an Early Help Record (EHR), working together with the family and different professionals and agencies to prevent complex needs escalating and/or to inform a later referral to the social care team if needs do escalate and meet statutory thresholds. Additional information can be found at <https://www.newhamscp.org.uk/early-help/> or email [earlyhelppartnershipteam@newham.gov.uk](mailto:earlyhelppartnershipteam@newham.gov.uk)

## **Allegations against Adults Working or Volunteering with Children**

There is a responsibility to hold a consultation / make a referral to the LADO if you become aware of an allegation that any person who works with children, in connection with their employment or voluntary activity, 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.
- Has behaved in a way in their personal life that raises safeguarding concerns. These concerns do not have to directly relate to a child but could, for example, include arrest for possession of a weapon;
- As a parent or carer, has a child that has become subject to child protection procedures;
- Is closely associated with someone in their personal lives (i.e. partner, member of the family or other household member) who may present a risk of harm to child/ren for whom the member of staff is responsible in their employment/volunteering.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, student or volunteer or any other person who works for Early Start, regardless of whether the allegation relates to Early Start premises or elsewhere, we will follow the procedure below:

- Report the allegation to a director. If this person is the subject of the allegation then this should be reported to another director.
- The director/MD will **consult with the Newham LADO Service ☎ 0203 3733803 and or email [lado@newham.gov.uk](mailto:lado@newham.gov.uk)**
- The LADO will provide advice and guidance on whether the allegation sits within the scope of the procedures including duty to notify Ofsted
- If the allegation does fall within the scope of the procedures, the LADO will ask for a written referral to be submitted and oversee the management of the allegation; co-ordinate meetings, information-sharing and monitor and track any investigations with the aim to resolve it as quickly as possible. Early Start will be responsible for informing Ofsted.
- Support will be provided to all those involved in an allegation throughout the external investigation in line with local authority's support and advice.
- Early Start reserves the right to suspend any member of staff during an investigation.
- All enquiries/external investigations/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked file for access by the relevant authorities.
- Founded allegations will be passed on to the relevant authorities/organisations where an offence is believed to have been committed, the police will also be informed.
- Founded allegations will be dealt with as gross misconduct in accordance with our disciplinary procedures and may result in the termination of employment. Ofsted will be notified immediately of this decision along with notifying the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to ensure their records are updated.
- All safeguarding records will be kept until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 21 years and 3 months if that is longer. This will ensure accurate information is available for references and future DBS checks and avoids any unnecessary reinvestigation.
- Early Start retains the right to dismiss any member of staff in connection with founded allegations following an inquiry
- Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being reinstated.
- A return to work plan will be put in place for any member of staff returning to work after an allegation has been deemed unfounded. Individual support will be offered to meet the needs of the individual staff member and the nature of the incident; this may include more frequent supervisions, coaching and mentoring and external support.

### **Low-level Concerns**

A low-level concern is a concern that an adult working in or on behalf of the company may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct and values of the company, including inappropriate conduct outside of work.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but is not limited to, being over friendly with children, having favourites, collusion, engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or humiliating children/families. Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum from the inadvertent or thoughtless,

behaviour that may look to be inappropriate but might not be when the specific circumstances are understood, and through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources such as suspicion, complaint, or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation, self-referral or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

It is crucial that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly with line managers, including during supervision, are recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively will also protect those working with children from becoming the subject of potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings.

### **Sharing Low-Level Concerns Procedure**

- Line managers will ensure starting from induction that their staff are issued with the employee code of conduct and are clear about what appropriate behaviour is and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour in themselves and others.
- Through supervision staff will be asked to share any safeguarding concerns and identify any unprofessional behaviour – the intent is to support the individual concerned to discuss and correct any unprofessional conduct at an early stage, prevent harm to children, and promote best practice
- Supervision should be an environment where staff can speak about concerns openly and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards
- All low-level concerns should be recorded in writing. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible.
- Once written up the line manager/DSL must send the record to the MD.
- All records are to be kept, securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).
- Records should be reviewed termly by the MD or nominated Deputy Lead so that potential patterns of concerning, inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour can be identified.
- Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, the MD/Deputy Lead will decide on a course of action in consultation with the LADO and HR as appropriate. This could be managed through the disciplinary procedures and where a pattern of behaviour moves from a low-level concern to meeting the harm threshold the case will be referred to the LADO following the steps set out above.
- Information about low-level concerns will be held on file for the term of employment.
- All staff can share concerns confidentially with any service area DSL, company lead or deputy.

- Line managers must inform the Lead or Deputy of all the low-level concerns and in a timely manner according to the nature of each particular low-level concern.
- The company Lead or nominated deputy in their absence should be the ultimate decision maker in respect of all low-level concerns, although it is recognised that the preferable method is a collaborative decision making approach.
- Low-level concerns which are shared about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.
- If in any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, the company lead should consult with the LADO.
- If the concern has been raised via a third party, the company lead or nominated deputy should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously, and to the individual involved and any witnesses. The information collected will help them to categorise the type of behaviour and determine what further action may need to be taken. This information needs to be recorded in writing along with the rationale for their decisions and action taken.

### **References**

Low-level concerns which relates exclusively to safeguarding (and not to misconduct or poor performance) should not be referred to in a reference. However, where a low-level concern (or group of concerns) meets the harm threshold for referral to the LADO and found to be substantiated, it should be referred to in a reference.

### **Monitoring Attendance**

We are required to monitor attendance patterns to ensure they are consistent and there is no cause for concern. Customers and clients should be asked to inform us of any planned or other absences including incidents of sickness absence on the same day so we able to account for plan for service delivery and monitor children's welfare through attendance information.

At all our premises if a child has not arrived within one hour of the expected time, the parents/guardians will be called to ensure the child is safe and healthy. If the parents are not contactable then the emergency contact numbers listed will be used to ensure all parties are safe. Staff will work their way down the emergency contact list until contact is established and we are made aware that all is well with the child and family.

Where a child is part of a child protection plan, or during a referral process, any absences will immediately be reported to the local authority children's social care team to ensure the child remains safe and well.

### **Injury on Arrival:**

- All signs of marks/injuries to a child, when they come into an Early Start will be recorded as soon as noticed by a staff member using an Injury on Arrival Report Form and brought to the attention of the DSL
- The incident will be discussed with the parent at the earliest opportunity, if appropriate
- Such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to such records, if appropriate
- If there are queries regarding the injury, Newham Children's Services MASH team will be notified in line with Safeguarding procedures.

### **Looked After Children**

As part of safeguarding we will ensure our staff are aware of how to keep looked after children safe. In order to do this we ask that we are informed of:

- The legal status of the child (i.e. whether the child is being looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order)
- Contact arrangements for the biological parents (or those with parental responsibility)
- The child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her
- The details of the child's social worker and any other support agencies involved
- Any child protection plan or care plan in place for the child in question.

### **Staffing and Volunteering**

Our policy is to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. We follow safer recruitment practices including obtaining references. All staff employed to work with children will have enhanced criminal record checks from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before being able to carry out intimate care routines or be left unsupervised with children. We will obtain enhanced criminal records checks (DBS) for volunteers in the setting. Volunteers and visitors will never have unsupervised access to children.

All staff will attend child protection/safeguarding training and receive initial basic child protection training during their induction period. This will include the procedures for spotting signs and behaviours of abuse and abusers/potential abusers, recording and reporting concerns and creating a safe and secure environment for the children in Early Start. During induction staff will be given a copy of the policies and procedures with the contact details for the local authority children's social care team's, the local safeguarding children partnership and Ofsted to enable them to report any safeguarding concerns, independently, if they feel it necessary to do so.

Ongoing suitability of staff is monitored through:

- regular supervisions
- peer observations
- annual childcare disqualification disclosure / declaration
- safeguarding competencies
- regular review of DBS using the online update service.



## **Safeguarding Adults**

Adults can be abused in many different ways. Some groups, such as the elderly and the frail, are at particular risk of abuse and harm. Safeguarding adults is about protecting those at risk of harm (vulnerable adults) from suffering abuse or neglect.

Abuse of adults can happen anywhere. It can happen at home, in a residential or nursing home, in a hospital, at work or in the street. There are different types of abuse, which include:

- **Physical** - being hurt or harmed either deliberately or through rough, careless or thoughtless behaviour.
- **Emotional abuse or bullying** - being humiliated or put down or made to feel anxious or frightened.
- **Financial abuse or theft** - someone using your money or possessions in a way that you don't want.
- **Neglect** - not being given the things you need to feel safe and comfortable or not making sure you get the care or treatment you need.
- **Sexual abuse** - being made to do something that you don't want to do.
- **Discrimination** - including racist, sexist or abuse about a person's disability.
- **Domestic abuse** - examples include psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse or 'honour'-based violence.
- **Modern slavery** - includes slavery, human trafficking and forced labour.
- **Organisational abuse** - includes neglect and poor care within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home.
- **Self-neglect** - includes not caring for personal cleanliness, health or surroundings, and displaying behaviour such as hoarding.

## **Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)**

We have named persons within Early Start who take lead responsibility for safeguarding and co-ordinate child protection and welfare issues. The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead is to ensure that the Safeguarding policy and procedures are reviewed and developed in line with current guidance and to develop staff understanding of the policies and procedures including through training. All managers and directors at Early Start are trained DSL's and there is always at least one DSL on duty during the opening hours of the centres. The designated persons will receive comprehensive training at least every two years and update their knowledge on an ongoing basis, but at least once a year.

Early Start DSL's liaise with the local authority children's social care team, undertake specific training including a child protection training course and receives regular updates to developments within this field. They in turn support the ongoing development and knowledge of the staff team with regular safeguarding updates.

### **DSL's:**

- Take the lead on responding to information from the staff team relating to child protection concerns
- Provide advice, support and guidance on an on-going basis to staff, students and volunteers
- Identify children who may need early help or who are at risk of abuse

- Help staff to ensure the right support is provided to families
- Liaise with the local authority and other agencies with regard to child protection concerns
- Ensure the Nursery settings are meeting the requirements of the EYFS Safeguarding requirements
- Ensure policies are in line with the local safeguarding procedures and details
- Disseminate updates to legislation to ensure all staff are kept up to date with safeguarding practices
- Manage and monitor accidents, incidents and existing injuries; ensuring accurate and appropriate records are kept
- Attend meetings, with the child's key person where possible
- Attend case conferences and external safeguarding meetings, as requested, by external agencies.

### **Early Start Safeguards Children and Staff by:**

- Providing adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of all children
- Informing applicants for posts within Early Start that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Candidates are informed of the need to carry out checks before posts can be confirmed. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information
- Giving staff members, volunteers and students regular opportunities during supervisions and having an open door policy to declare changes that may affect their suitability to care for the children. This includes information about their health, medication or about changes in their home life such as child protection plans for their own children.
- We use the DBS update service (with staff consent) to re-check staff's criminal history and suitability to work with children at regular intervals
- Abiding by the requirements of the EYFS and any Ofsted guidance in respect to obtaining references and suitability checks for staff, students and volunteers, to ensure that all staff, students and volunteers working in the setting are suitable to do so
- Ensuring we receive at least two written references before a new member of staff commences employment with us
- Ensuring all students will have enhanced DBS checks completed before their placement starts
- Volunteers, including students, do not carry out any intimate care routines and are never left to work unsupervised with children
- Abiding by the requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Childcare Act 2006 (amended 2018) in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern will be reported to the Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS)
- Having procedures for recording the details of visitors to Early Start and take security steps to ensure that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children
- Ensuring all visitors/contractors are supervised whilst on the premises, especially when in the areas the children use

- Staying vigilant to safeguard the whole nursery environment and be aware of potential dangers on Early Start boundaries such as drones or strangers lingering. We will ensure the children remain safe at all times
- Having a Staff Behaviour policy, which sits alongside this policy to enable us to monitor changes in behaviours that may cause concern. All staff sign up to this policy to ensure any changes are reported to management so we are able to support the individual staff member and ensure the safety and care of the children is not compromised
- Ensuring that staff are aware not to contact parents/carers and children through social media on their own personal social media accounts and they will report any such incidents to the management team to deal with
- Ensuring that all staff have access to, and comply with, the whistleblowing policy, which provides information on how they can share any concerns that may arise about their colleagues in an appropriate manner.
- We encourage a culture of openness and transparency, and all concerns are taken seriously
- Ensuring all staff are aware of the signs to look for of inappropriate staff behaviour, this may include inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images. This is not an exhaustive list, any changes in behaviour must be reported and acted upon immediately
- Ensuring all staff will receive regular supervision meetings where opportunities will be made available to discuss any issues relating to individual children, child protection training, safeguarding concerns and any needs for further support or training
- Having peer on peer and manager observations in the setting to ensure that the care we provide for children is at the highest level and any areas for staff development are identified promptly. Peer observations allow us to share constructive feedback, develop practice and build trust so that staff are able to share any concerns they may have. Concerns are raised with the designated lead and dealt with in an appropriate and timely manner
- Ensuring the deployment of staff within Early Start allows for constant supervision and support. Where children need to spend time away from the rest of the group we will be put into action other measures to ensure the safety of the child and the adult such as clear lines of sight between spaces, vision panels, leaving doors ajar and CCTV.
- Operating a Phones and Other Electronic Devices, Social Media and Online Safety policies which state how we will keep children safe whilst at nursery.

Early Start has a clear commitment to protecting children and promoting welfare. Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld it is their duty to report the matter to the attention of Justin Elder, Managing Director, or Deputy Lead, at the earliest opportunity.