


The Harmony Project Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy March 2026

“If you see something, say something”

Lead	The Harmony Project Leadership Team
Policy prepared by	Catherine Smith, Head of Schools and Outreach, Clare Long, Events & Project Coordinator and Peter Hammond, HR Consultant
Policy approved by the Director	Richard Dunne
Signed by the Director	
Operational from	1 September 2024
Due for review	July 2027
Reviewed by and on	Catherine Smith and Lubna Khan, March 2026

Key contacts for safeguarding and child protection

	Name	Phone Number	Email Address
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) / Director	Richard Dunne	07872959334	richard@theharmonyproject.org.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Catherine Smith	07920460056	catherine@theharmonyproject.org.uk
Chair of Trustees	Jamie Agombar	07738 883 451	jamie.agombar@sos-uk.org
Nominated Trustee for Safeguarding	Lubna Khan	07834 195 007	khanl@hotmail.com
Well-being Lead	Julia Jones	07710 197187	julia@theharmonyproject.org.uk
Named person with designated responsibility for allegations against staff	Catherine Smith	07920 460056	catherine@theharmonyproject.org.uk
Local Authority Designated Lead (LADO)	The LADO would be the LADO specific to the site in question, and can be identified using individual county council websites.		https://national-lado-network.co.uk

Local Authority Safeguarding Team / MASH	C-SPA	0300 470 9100 (Mon-Fri 9am – 5pm)	cspa@surreycc.gov.uk
Local Authority Out of Hours	Emergency Duty Team	01483 517898	cspa@surreycc.gov.uk
Prevent Contact		020 7340 7264	Counter.extremism@education.gov.uk

The policy can be accessed via our staff shared folders:

(SharePoint – Operations – Policies – Safeguarding – Policy and forms)

Safeguarding Commitment

The Harmony Project believes that no child or young person should experience abuse or harm and is committed to the protection of children and young people.

This policy is intended to protect children and young people and to provide guidance and overarching principles to those who represent us as staff, volunteers and trustees.

It is essential that everybody working in The Harmony Project understands their safeguarding responsibilities. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's responsibility**. In accordance with all relevant legislation and guidance, this policy details our procedures for safeguarding and child protection and is applicable to the whole organisation.

This policy considers three main elements:

- Prevention through the whole-institution approach; culture, teaching and pastoral support offered to children and young people
- Procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse – because of our contact with children our staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse
- Support to learners who may have been abused. Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in education settings and trustees.

In this policy, a 'child' refers to all children under 18 years of age.

In order to fulfil our responsibilities, alongside our annual safeguarding training and safeguarding induction procedures, all members of staff must read the safeguarding statement and policy and sign to say they have read and understood the content and will abide by the safeguarding principles of this organisation, acting immediately on concerns about a child's welfare. This will enable our organisation to fulfil our legal responsibilities to identify children who may be in need of early help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Roles and Responsibilities
3. Definitions
4. Legislation and Guidance
5. Categories of Abuse
6. Key Areas of Safeguarding
7. Child Protection Procedures
8. Allegations Against Professionals
9. Safer Recruitment
10. Whistleblowing
11. Review

Annex A: Categories of Abuse: included in this policy document

Annex B: [Glossary of Terms](#)

Annex C: [Summary of Legislation and Guidance](#)

Annex D: [The Harmony Project Safeguarding Incident Record](#)

Appendix E: [The Harmony Project Self-Disclosure Form](#)

Annex B, C, D & E can be found in:

SharePoint > Operations > Policies > Safeguarding > Policy and forms

1. Introduction

The Harmony Project is committed to safeguarding all those who work for the organisation and those we interact with when carrying out our work, particularly when planning and delivering educational activities with children and young people.

This policy is mandatory for all staff and its aim is to:

- Protect children, young people and adults taking part in any Harmony Project related activities
- Raise awareness amongst all staff, so that they know what to do if they have any safeguarding concerns regarding a child, young person or adult
- Protect staff by providing practical, common sense guidelines to avoid placing themselves in situations where they may put themselves or others at risk
- Protect the organisation by showing that we have taken 'all reasonable steps' to provide a safe environment for everyone

All staff, including those who do not have a specific role in working with children and young people, have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk.

Prevention:

The Harmony Project team will:

- Establish and maintain a culture where the children and young people that we work with feel protected; encouraged to talk and are listened to
- Develop a whole-institution approach to safeguarding and wellbeing
- Work closely with partner schools to ensure that all local safeguarding policies and procedures are followed during school visits so that support and intervention is initiated before risks escalate
- Promote an understanding of the importance of challenging inappropriate and abusive behaviours between children and young people, and not allowing them to become normalised

- Ensure that there are well-developed strategies in place to address risks associated with technology and that there is evidence that staff understand these risks
- Design a curriculum which covers activities/lessons for children and young people to learn skills to keep safe
- Ensure that thorough and effective risk assessments underpin all activities involving children and young people
- Promote good safer recruitment practice
- Establish and monitor a clear child protection training programme for all staff, volunteers and trustees
- Ensure that effective whistleblowing procedures are in place

Procedures:

The Harmony Project team will:

- Follow the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance ([Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)) (KCSiE)
- Ensure that there is a fully trained DSL and deputies in place, empowered to play their role effectively. All DSLs will be fully supported to attend regular training, given appropriate time to perform the role, resources and support
- Ensure that schools and associated parents/carers have sight of the policy so that they are aware of The Harmony Project's safeguarding and child protection responsibilities, via our website and communication with schools
- Promote cooperation and liaison with parents and carers including consent sought in accordance with local procedures
- Maintain high standards of record keeping: ensuring that records are made in an appropriate and timely way and that records are held and retained securely complying with the DPA
- Liaise with schools to ensure that the safeguarding and child protection procedures of individual schools are understood and adhered to
- Monitor and review the policy, in liaison with the safeguarding linked trustee (Lubna Khan)
- Ensure that **all staff** know and understand the following:
 - The name of the DSL and deputies and how to contact them

- The name of the designated trustee for safeguarding
- How to locate a local authority point of contact
- How to recognise the signs and indicators of abuse, neglect, and exploitation
- How to respond if a child discloses abuse, neglect, or exploitation
- Their individual responsibility to report concerns about a child or an adult:
- Timeliness of information sharing and agreed actions following a concern
- How we provide and monitor safeguarding and child protection training for all staff
- How positive behaviour is promoted consistently across our organization and within the schools that we work with

Reporting Concerns about a Safeguarding Issue – Procedures

Any disclosures or concerns within a school setting should be reported to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead

Any disclosures or concerns within The Harmony Project team should be reported to The Harmony Project's Designated Safeguarding Lead (Richard Dunne)

Any disclosures or concerns relating to The Harmony Project's Designated Safeguarding Lead should be reported to the nominated trustee for safeguarding (Lubna Khan)

To log the incident, please use The Harmony Project Safeguarding Incident Record, Annex D: saved in [SharePoint>Operations>Policies](#)

Supporting children and young people at risk:

The Harmony Project team will:

- Recognise that children and young people who have been abused may present with challenging behaviour or may be withdrawn. We will support children via our commitment to adhere to individual school policies and guidance on visits to contribute to a positive, supportive, and secure environment where all learners feel valued

- Design a curriculum which nurtures and encourages an understanding of safety and positive behaviours

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The Harmony Project recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of:

- All current staff enrolled on PAYE
- Freelance staff and other paid collaborators
- External organisations/individuals with whom we engage, including:
 - Members of the public at our events
 - Staff and students at schools and universities

Where The Harmony Project has a duty of care, all individuals, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sex, and sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

In implementing its safeguarding duties, **The Harmony Project will:**

- Address legal requirements
- Provide staff, trustees and volunteers with guidance on procedures that must be adopted and set out what is expected in the event that an individual may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm
- Value the needs, views and best interests of those considered to be at risk
- Devise and implement safeguarding procedures and guidelines for all members of staff
- Recruit staff and volunteers safely by ensuring all appropriate checks and references are in place
- Share information about safeguarding good practice with staff and volunteers and provide effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- Share personal information about concerns with internal and external individuals appropriately and within the information sharing protocols

- Ensure the charity's compliance with legislation, regulation, relevant guidance and the protection of the charity's reputation

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will:

- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place within the organisation)
- Develop, review, update and disseminate over-arching policy and procedures
- Receive and manage all reports of incidents, allegations or suspicions of abuse or poor practice
- Provide advice, guidance and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters
- Ensure that they, or their deputies, will always be available, via phone or email, for staff within the organisation to discuss any safeguarding concerns
- Manage referrals - The Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to refer cases:
 - where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required, and
 - where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required [NPCC - When to call the police](#) can be used to consider calling the police and what to expect when working with the police
- Work with others - The Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to:
 - act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff
 - keep updated and advise the charity on changes in legislation, regulation and guidance from appropriate external agencies
 - act as a point of contact with the DSLs of individual schools and safeguarding partners
 - liaise with the Director to inform them of any issues or concerns
 - liaise with external agencies where individual cases require this
 - as required, liaise with the "case manager" and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member

- liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety)
- liaise with the well-being lead, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health
- Ensure that information is kept confidential and is stored securely while ensuring that information is shared as necessary to safeguard individuals
- Records should include:
 - a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
 - details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
 - a note of any action taken, decisions reached, rationale and the outcome
- Raise awareness – The Designated Safeguarding Lead should:
 - ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff
 - ensure the safeguarding and child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with trustees regarding this
 - ensure the safeguarding and child protection policy is available publicly
 - link with the safeguarding partner arrangements: Tes Develop – an online training platform ([Tes Safeguarding & Duty of Care](#)) to ensure that all staff engage in training and are up to date with the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements
 - ensure that at least one member of staff is responsible for safeguarding arrangements at all activities and events – raising awareness of the policy and guidance among other staff, external staff, parents, children and adults at risk

Whilst the activities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, as set out above, remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will:

- Be trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Ensure that they, or the DSL, will always be available, via phone or email, for staff within the organisation to discuss any safeguarding concerns
- Fulfil all expectations of the DSL, as and when appropriate, with the exception of the lead responsibility

All staff will:

- Read and understand their safeguarding responsibilities, familiarising themselves with the policy and supporting procedures
- Read at least Part 1 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) (KCSiE)
- Understand their responsibility to report all concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputies
- Accurately record details of all incidents or concerns
- Inform the setting's DSL if an incident or concern involves an external educational setting, and provide them with an identical record of factual evidence, for the setting to follow their own policy relating to record keeping
- Only share details of an incident or concern with those who need to know, such as the DSL or Deputy DSL
- Be vigilant and aware of signs of abuse (see [Annex A](#)) **"If you see something, say something"**

All staff, trustees and volunteers, including those who do not have a specific role working with children and young people, have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk.

Safeguarding training

- All staff will undergo safeguarding and child protection training at the appropriate level, including online safety and prevent awareness, depending on their role
- Staff will have appropriate knowledge of Part Five [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) (KCSiE) child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment

- Trustees will ensure all staff receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (including online safety) as required, and at least annually
- Deputy DSLs will be trained to the same standard as the DSL
- The DSL and deputies will undergo updated training every two years
- Induction: All staff will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction. Copies of policies and Part 1/[Annex A](#) of KCSiE to be provided to all staff at induction

3. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy:

Safeguarding is defined as

- Protecting children and young people from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child Protection is defined in the Children Act 1989 (s.47) as when a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. Under statutory guidance and legislation action must be taken to safeguard and promote the child’s welfare.

Additional information can be found in [Annex B: Glossary of terms](#).

4. Legislation and Guidance

The principle legislation and guidance covering the application of the policy is shown in [Annex C](#). Legislation includes The Children Act 1989 and 2004 (as amended), The Education Act 2002, The Equality Act 2010, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) (KCSiE).

The Harmony Project creates a culture which embraces and values diversity and equality and recognises its contribution in helping staff and the students who access our curriculum and support, to reach their full potential beyond any prejudice. As an inclusive establishment, The Harmony Project fosters a safe place for each team member to challenge, discuss, explore, and form their own values and opinions.

Safeguarding is the golden thread that runs through all other policies such as, for example:

- The Harmony Project Social Media Policy
- The Harmony Project Online Safety Policy
- The Harmony Project Code of Conduct
- The Harmony Project Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures

5. Categories of Abuse

It is not easy to recognise where abuse may or has already taken place. It is acknowledged that The Harmony Project staff members are not experts and it is not our responsibility to decide whether or not an incident has taken place. It is our responsibility to raise any concerns or allegations that have been made. It is the responsibility of the Police/Social Services to undertake investigations.

Identifying Signs of Possible Abuse

Most children will receive cuts, grazes and bruises from time-to-time and their behaviour may give reason for concern. There may be other reasons for these factors, but any concern should be immediately shared with a school-based Designated Safeguarding Lead to assess the situation.

There are a number of ways in which abuse becomes apparent:

- A child or young person discloses abuse
- Someone else discloses that they believe somebody has been or is being abused
- A child or young person at risk may show signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no satisfactory explanation
- A child or young person at risk's behaviour may indicate that it is likely that he/she is being abused
- Unexplained bruising, cuts or burns on the child, or young person at risk particularly if these are parts of the body not normally injured in accidents
- An injury which a parent or carer tries to hide, or for which they might have given different explanations
- Changes in behaviour such as the child or young person at risk suddenly becoming quiet, tearful, withdrawn or aggressive
- Loss of weight without a medical explanation
- An inappropriately dressed or ill-kept child or young person at risk who may also be unclean
- Sexually explicit behaviour, for instance playing games and showing awareness which is inappropriate for the child or young person's age
- A lack of trust in adults, particularly those who would normally be close to the child or young person at risk
- A member of staff's behaviour or in the way in which he/she relates to a child or young person at risk, causes concern

The above signs do not necessarily mean that a child or young person has been abused. However, if you are concerned about the welfare of a child or young person at risk, you must act. **Do not** assume that another person will.

Please see [Annex A](#) for the categories and indicators of abuse and neglect.

6. Key Areas of Safeguarding

Through our commitment to safeguarding induction procedures and a regular programme of safeguarding CPD, we ensure that all staff have an awareness of specific safeguarding issues that can put children and young people at risk of harm, so that they are able to identify cases of children who may need help or protection. Further guidance on key areas of safeguarding is detailed in [Annex C](#).

7. Child Protection Procedures

The Harmony Project recognises that safeguarding and child protection are the highest priority when visiting schools and running events for children and staff. All team members who work directly with schools are DBS checked.

When working directly with schools, The Harmony Project team member will confirm to the school that they will follow the individual school's safeguarding policies and procedures and will request these and the name of the school's DSL, via email, in advance of the visit.

During school visits, The Harmony Project team member will be accompanied by a school staff member at all times when in direct contact with pupils.

All team members will:

- Maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'
- Ensure that they are familiar with The Harmony Project's processes and procedures for documenting and reporting concerns
- Be provided with guidance on when staff should consider calling the police.
See **NPCC Guidance: When to call the police.**

Dealing with disclosures:

- All staff will follow the individual school's safeguarding policies and procedures for disclosures
- If a child or young person discloses that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, all staff should be able to reassure them that they are being taken seriously and are being listened to. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report
- When responding to a disclosure, all staff will
 - Remain calm
 - Listen but not probe (TED strategies – tell, explain, describe)
 - Allow time for the person to talk

- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing in telling someone and explain that only those that need to know will be informed (Staff will not promise to keep secrets or assure the person that everything will be ok)
- Act immediately in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy

The welfare of children and young people at risk is paramount and abuse; apparent, actual or suspected must be reported. Even if the truth of the disclosure is uncertain, an appropriate response has to be made. It is not the responsibility of any member of staff to decide whether or not abuse or poor practice is actually taking place. Staff should never try to deal with a suspicion, allegation or actual incident of abuse themselves. The incident should be reported immediately to the school-based Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Lead (for school based activities) or to the THP Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Lead for concerns within the team.

Reporting and Recording Concerns:

Following a disclosure or concern, all staff will:

- Have a personal responsibility to act and to share information, however small, and not assume another professional will take action
- Record in writing, as near to verbatim as is possible, what was said as soon as possible
- Report the disclosure or concern to the DSL or deputy DSLs
- Complete the Incident Report Form ([Annex D](#)) including further updates and the rationale behind decisions made
- Ensure that all recording is factual and does not include personal opinions or interpretations

Confidentiality and information sharing:

- The Harmony Project recognises its duty to ensure that records are kept confidential and stored in secure folders
- All staff recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies

- Records are only shared with those who need to know about suspicions, allegations or actual incidents of abuse:
 - The Designated Safeguarding Lead
 - The person making the allegation
 - Social Care/Police
- A record of all those to whom disclosures or disclosure information has been revealed should be kept. It is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it
- Files for employees convicted of abuse will be retained and stored securely and separately when archiving
- The Harmony Project is fully committed to protecting the rights and privacy of individuals in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

Information sharing within The Harmony Project concerning an individual will be limited to the minimum required, and will take place:

- Where professional requirements relating to Fitness to Practice or Professional Suitability become an issue
- Where a safeguarding issue is, or becomes, relevant in relation to events, workshops, employment, volunteering or other activity directly affecting the work of The Harmony Project

There will be sharing of relevant information concerning safeguarding of individuals with external agencies where lawful, and through the processes authorised by the Director of The Harmony Project and the Board of Trustees, as appropriate.

Retention of records

Type of Record	Retention
Safeguarding concerns that The Harmony Project refers on to social care or the police. Including concerns about physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect, disclosures or	The referral should be acknowledged in writing by Social Care and The Harmony Project keeps this on file. Records should be kept indefinitely in a secure place.

information from a third party which suggests somebody is being abused.	
Welfare concerns that The Harmony Project decide, after consultation, do not necessitate a referral to children’s social care or the police. In such rare circumstances the organisation should make a record of the concern, the rationale behind the decision and the outcome.	Personnel files and training records should be kept for 7 years after employment ceases.
Concerns where a member of staff has breached the code of conduct, a record of the behaviour, the action taken and outcome should be recorded.	Personnel files and training records should be kept for 7 years after employment ceases.
Disclosure and Barring Service	The actual disclosure form must be destroyed after 6 months. However, it is advisable that organisations keep a record of the date of the check, the reference number, the decision about vetting and the outcome.

Local Children’s Services:

- The Harmony Project will follow all local policies and procedures in place in individual settings
- Referrals will follow the local authority referral process

8. Allegations Against Professionals

The Harmony Project will follow all local policies and procedures in place in individual settings and will refer concerns about individual members of staff from that setting to the setting’s DSL. The welfare of the child making the allegation will be paramount and will be supported through local procedures.

Concerns and/or allegations against those working in or on behalf of The Harmony Project, in a paid or unpaid capacity, align to local authority safeguarding procedures and practice and should be reported to the DSL.

Allegations that meet the harms threshold

An allegation is deemed to meet the harms threshold where a member of The Harmony Project team, who represents the organisation in a paid or unpaid capacity, has:

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

This includes behaviour outside of the organisation that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children (transferable risk).

Staff should report concerns to the **Case Manager, Richard Dunne**. In the event of an allegation against the named Case Manager, staff should report concerns to the **Chair of Trustees, Jamie Agombar**.

Allegation/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold (low-level concerns)

- As part of The Harmony Project's whole-institution approach to safeguarding, we encourage creating an open and transparent culture to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early and minimise risk of abuse
- Low-level concerns are concerns that do not meet the harms threshold
- The Harmony Project's Staff Code of Conduct outlines expectations of behaviour from all staff
- Staff are encouraged to self-refer, to the DSL, if they feel that their behaviour would fall within the definition of a low level concern
- Low-level concerns are recorded and stored securely within THP SharePoint Secure Area

- The Director will identify patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour and/or wider cultural issues by reviewing records and will ensure that appropriate action is taken
 - Concerns or allegations relating to the Director will be recorded and stored securely by the Chair of the Trustees
 - Low Level Concern Forms/Records and follow-up information such as records of meetings, action plans, will be marked as confidential and stored securely within the organisation's safeguarding systems with due regard for Data Protection, with access only by the Director, or Chair of Trustees and HR
 - The staff member(s) reporting the concern must keep the information confidential and not share the concern with others apart from the relevant personnel (Director, Chair of Trustees)
 - Staff will be informed of their right to make a Subject Access Request and of any entries made in this log which relate to them unless sharing information compromises the safeguarding of others or threatens the anonymity of the person who shared the concern
 - Where there are multiple low-level concerns relating to the same individual these will be kept in chronological order as a running record. These records are kept confidential and held securely, with restricted access by the Director or HR as required
 - Records of low-level concerns will not be kept in the personnel file of the individuals to whom the concerns pertain, unless there have been multiple low-level concerns made about the same individual. Where a concern is thought to be serious and is processed as an allegation, records of this will be kept in staff personnel files
- Low-Level Concerns will not be referred to in references unless they have been formalised into more significant concerns resulting in disciplinary or misconduct procedures

Following an allegation

When dealing with allegations the DSL will:

- Deal with allegations quickly, fairly and consistently

- Provide effective protection for the child and support the person subject to the allegation

Looking after the welfare of the child and those involved

- For incidents within a school or event context, the team would immediately refer to local safeguarding arrangements e.g. the DSL at the school

Supporting members of staff who have had allegations made against them

- The Harmony Project has a duty of care to all staff and should act to minimise stress inherent in the allegations and disciplinary process
- Individuals will be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and be told the likely course of action; unless there is an objection by Social Care or the Police
- The individual will be advised to contact their trade union representative or a suitable colleague for support
- In the event of employee suspension, they must be kept informed of both the progress of their case and developments occurring in the workplace
- Social contact with colleagues and friends should not be prevented except where it is likely to be prejudicial to the gathering and presentation of evidence. This will be made as a joint decision with appropriate bodies and will take into account internal requirements. Where suspension takes place, all contact with The Harmony Project will happen through the Head of Business Development & Operations in the first instance
- Guidance on accessing medical advice where appropriate will be provided
- When an employee returns to work following a suspension, or at the conclusion of a case, planned arrangements will be made to facilitate their reintegration. This may involve informal counselling, guidance, support, reassurance and help to rebuild confidence in their role

Investigating the person subject to the allegation

- **Confidentiality and Information sharing** – the case manager should take advice from the LADO, the Police and the Local Authority, Social Care to agree the following:
 - Who needs to know and exactly what information can be shared

- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip
- What, if any, information can be given to the wider team to reduce speculation
- How to manage press interest, if and when it should arise

Allegation outcomes

The outcomes of an allegation are set out below:

- **Substantiated** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- **Malicious** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive or cause harm to the person subject to the allegation
- **False** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- **Unsubstantiated** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term therefore does not apply guilt or innocence, or
- **Unfounded** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

9. Safer Recruitment

The Harmony Project ensures that a robust recruitment procedure is in place that follows best practice:

- The Harmony Project's commitment to safeguarding is made clear in all job advertisements and applicants are made aware that safeguarding checks will be made
- Safeguarding responsibilities are outlined in job descriptions and personal specifications
- Formal applications are necessary for all vacancies
- Applicants are required to complete a self-declaration ([Annex E](#)) of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children
- A minimum of two references (followed up by letter or phone call) from reputable sources are requested prior to interview, where possible, and any

missing information, gaps in employment, reasons for leaving or discrepancies are followed up

- References include a declaration of the person's suitability to work with children or young people
- Where a person has worked with children or young people, at least one reference should be taken up from that employer
- Acceptable forms of personal identification are the same as are used for the Disclosure and Barring Service
- Interview questions explore potential areas of concern and candidates' suitability to work with children (Warner style questions)
- DBS checks will be conducted for all staff who have contact with children
- No formal job offers are made until after suitability checks have been completed
- A single central record for all employees is maintained
- Appropriate checks, written notification and suitable contracts are in place for staff, freelancers and volunteers, as appropriate
- All staff engage in an induction programme which includes safeguarding and child protection training
- The Harmony Project has in place continuous vigilance and a rolling programme of DBS re-checking, where appropriate and recognises its duty to refer concerns to the DBS

10. Whistleblowing

- All staff have a copy of and understand the written procedures for managing safeguarding allegations/concerns about members of staff and other adults working in the organisation or within individual settings. They know how to make a complaint and understand policies on whistleblowing and how to manage other concerns about the practice of adults in respect of the safety and protection of children and learners. (Ofsted guidance)
- All staff, trustees and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the organisation's

safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the leadership team.

11. Review

As part of The Harmony Project's commitment to best practice, the following actions will take place:

- **Review of policy:** This policy will be reviewed annually, as a minimum, and updated if needed and/or following any updates to national and local guidance
- **Learning Lessons:** Case manager and LADO to review cases to determine whether there are improvements to be made to the organisation's procedures where appropriate
- **Monitoring:** General monitoring of safeguarding policy, implementation, and practice. Specific monitoring of areas such as:
 - Communications to all staff re: policy and safeguarding updates
 - Safer recruitment practice including DBS checks and reference checks
 - Training – records of training for all staff including child protection, prevent awareness and update training
 - Whether concerns are being reported and actioned
 - Safeguarding data to proactively identify any trends, themes, or causes for concern
 - Workload of DSL and time given to safeguarding duties
 - Effectiveness of support on offer to DSL and deputies, including supervision where appropriate

Annex A: Categories of Abuse

Physical Abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only as far 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 from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving 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. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual

abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as peer-on-peer abuse) in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it,

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, because of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Annex A: Categories of Abuse: included in this document

Annex B: [Link](#) to Glossary of Terms

Annex C: [Link](#) to Summary of Legislation and Guidance

Annex D: [Link](#) to THP Safeguarding Incident Record

Annex E: [Link](#) to Safeguarding Self Disclosure Form

Annex B, C, D & E can be found in our staff shared folders:

SharePoint > Operations > Policies > Safeguarding > Policy and forms