

Safeguarding Policy

The Bridge recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all members of staff and students enrolled with us. We are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for children, staff and visitors and promoting a climate where children and adults will feel confident about sharing any concerns which they may have about their own safety or the well-being of others.

We aim to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by protecting them from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Our Safeguarding policy draws upon duties conferred by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, The Children and Families Act 2014, S175 of the 2002 Education Act, The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (for independent schools), and the guidance contained in "[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)", the DfE's statutory guidance "[Keeping children safe in education](#)", Ofsted Guidance and procedures produced by the London Safeguarding Children Board ([LSCB](#)) and the Southwark Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB).

We also have regard to the advice contained in DfE's "[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#)" and "[Information Sharing – Advice for practitioners](#)".

The policy is applicable to all on and off-site activities undertaken by pupils whilst they are the responsibility of the School.

We will ensure that all staff read at least Part one of DfE guidance "[Keeping children safe in education](#)" and that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part one.

The Aim of our safeguarding policy includes:

- Identifying the names of responsible persons in the school and explain the purpose of their role
- Describing what should be done if anyone in the school has a concern about the safety and welfare of a child who attends the school
- Providing protection for students enrolled at The Bridge School
- Setting out expectations in respect of training
- Providing staff and host families with guidance on procedures they should follow if they suspect any student may be experiencing or at risk of harm
- Setting out expectations of how to ensure children are safeguarded when there is potential to come into contact with non-school staff.
- Outlining how complaints against staff will be handled
- Clarifying how students will be kept safe through the everyday life of the school
- Measures to follow to avoid making ourselves vulnerable to suspicion of any form of abuse

The measures include among others:

- Taking steps to ensure that all applicants who work within THE BRIDGE SCHOOL are interviewed and required to provide at least one reference, all such references will be followed up.
- Disclosure and Barring Service checks on all members of staff. It will be made clear to applicants that the work will involve working with young people under age 18 and is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- THE BRIDGE SCHOOL excludes known abusers.
- Appointment of a Safeguarding Officer to monitor issues relating to the safety of students.
- Members of staff are registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).*
- Providing training opportunities for staff to ensure that symptoms of possible abuse can be recognised (physical, sexual, emotional and neglect) and the appropriate response to suspicions of abuse.
- Implementing Safeguarding guidelines and accepted procedures including a Code of Conduct for staff.
- Ensuring students and stakeholders know how to make reports and to whom.
- Sharing information and acting promptly and professionally to any observation or concerns raised.

Safe Working guidelines for Staff

All members of staff are advised to ensure that they avoid making themselves vulnerable to suspicion of any form of abuse by following the guidelines and procedures set out in THE BRIDGE SCHOOL's Staff Handbook.

Responsibilities and immediate action

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students in our school is the responsibility of the whole school community.

All adults working in this School (including visiting staff, volunteers and students on placement) are required to report instances of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Designated Safeguarding officer who are members of the school's leadership team.

The Designated Safeguarding officers are:

James Nuttall (academicmanager@lvcenglish.com) 07952646561

and

Edith Eneanya-Bonito (edithenanya-bonito@liralveget.co.uk) +44(0) 7930561661

Types of abuse and neglect

Abuse: a form 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 in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

	<p>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.</p> <p>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 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 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.</p> <p>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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.</p> <p>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 as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, 12 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 care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.</p> <p>Identifying abuse: The following are guidelines to identifying abuse; it is not an exhaustive list as abuse may exist in various forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained injuries • Sexually explicit behaviour during activities 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear or distrust of adults or other students • Difficulty socialising with other students • Unexplained mood swings and personality changes • Avoiding activities when they usually participate <p>Procedure on suspicion of abuse</p> <p>If a member of staff is suspected of any form of abuse, such suspicions will be reported to the Course Co-ordinator.</p> <p>The person against whom the allegation is made will be informed of the allegation and interviewed immediately. Following the interview, if there is any potential substance to the allegation, they will be suspended from their duties pending further investigation. Confidential records will be kept of the allegation and all subsequent proceedings.</p> <p>Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being re-instated. Founded allegations will be passed on to the police and will result in a termination of employment. THE BRIDGE SCHOOL will also inform the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) to ensure accurate records are kept.</p> <p>Preventing Radicalisation</p> <p>The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children's services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism ("The Prevent duty"). Young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views, in particular those via the internet and other social media.</p> <p>Schools can help to protect children from extremist and violent views in the same ways that they help to safeguard children from drugs, gang violence or alcohol.</p> <p>Examples of the ways in which people can be vulnerable to radicalisation and the indicators that might suggest that an individual might be vulnerable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example indicators that an individual is engaged with an extremist group, cause or ideology include: spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists; changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group; their day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centred around an extremist ideology, group or cause; loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause; possession of material or symbols associated with an extremist cause (e.g. the swastika for far right groups); attempts to recruit others to the group/cause/ideology; or communications with others that suggest identification with a group/cause/ideology. • Example indicators that an individual has an intention to use violence or other illegal means include: clearly identifying another group as threatening what they stand for and blaming that group for all social or political ills; using insulting or derogatory names or labels for another group; speaking about the imminence of harm from the other group and the importance of action now; expressing attitudes that justify offending on behalf of the group, cause or ideology; condoning or supporting 	
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	<p>violence or harm towards others; or plotting or conspiring with others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example indicators that an individual is capable of contributing directly or indirectly to an act of terrorism include: having a history of violence; being criminally versatile and using criminal networks to support extremist goals; having occupational skills that can enable acts of terrorism (such as civil engineering, pharmacology or construction); or having technical expertise that can be deployed (e.g. IT skills, knowledge of chemicals, military training or survival skills). <p>The examples above are not exhaustive and vulnerability may manifest itself in other ways. There is no single route to terrorism nor is there a simple profile of those who become involved. For this reason, any attempt to derive a 'profile' can be misleading. It must not be assumed that these characteristics and experiences will necessarily lead to individuals becoming terrorists, or that these indicators are the only source of information required to make an appropriate assessment about vulnerability.</p> <p>We will refer children at risk of harm as a result of involvement or potential involvement in extremist activity to Southwark Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). The MASH will share the referral details of new referrals with the Prevent lead police officer and LA Prevent coordinator at the point the referral is received.</p> <p>The referral will then be processed through the MASH multi agency information sharing system and parallel to this the Prevent police officer will be carrying out initial screening checks.</p> <p>The Prevent police officer will make a referral to the Channel Practitioner if there are sufficient concerns.</p> <p>Excursions: Safeguarding Under 18s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Where possible if there are students who are under 18 on an excursion, there should be 2 teachers and or a teacher's assistant accompanying each group. *Under 18 students should be clearly identified on the passenger list. *Teachers should double check before the journey to ensure that all Under 18 students are noted. *If an under 18 student fails to arrive at the appointed time for the excursion, the Teacher should inform the Student Welfare Officer. *Teachers must have the mobile number of all under 18 students. *Under 18 students should stay with the teacher during the excursion. *Generally under 18 students that are not enrolled as THE BRIDGE SCHOOL should not be allowed in the classroom. Exceptions to this can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief visits, e.g., an employee brings his/her child, grandchild or other minor relative in to introduce that child to co-workers, provided the employee supervises the child(ren) at all times during the visit. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Special occasions that are employer-sanctioned and at which attendance by children is encouraged. Special occasions should be coordinated with and approved by the employee's supervisor after considering and satisfactorily addressing the factors set forth in paragraph 3 below. The employee's schedule for the special occasion should take the child's presence into consideration. b. In the event of an emergency, and if there are no other alternatives, parent employees may have children present in the classroom for brief periods of time provided the parent obtains the immediate supervisor's prior approval. Similarly, in the event 	
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	<p>of an emergency, and if there are no other alternatives, parent students may have children present in the classroom for brief periods of time provided the parent obtains the instructor's prior approval</p> <p>The exceptional circumstances under which children may be brought into a classroom setting should be established in a discussion between the academic manager, the parent, and the instructor, respectively, taking into account the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the parent is willing to accept full responsibility for the child's safety and for any damage to property or injury to persons that is caused by the child's presence. • When considering the presence of children on campus, the extent to which the child's presence in the classroom creates a potential danger to the child or exposes the department and the University to liability must be considered. Safety is a primary concern for parents, supervisors and the University. The extent to which the child's presence in the classroom disrupts or has the potential to disrupt the classroom environment and/or creates an atmosphere that is not conducive to achievement of the specific goals and objectives of the classroom. • Whether the parent agrees to assume responsibility for the child at all times and to ensure that the child's presence does not disrupt his or her work or interfere with the classroom activities. • Whether the parent agrees to supervise the child at all times and agrees that he or she will not leave the child with another employee. • Such other factors as the instructor deems appropriate. <p>Absence</p> <p>Students reported absent to the Course Co-ordinator immediately this is observed and steps taken to confirm the location and safety of the student.</p> <p>A meeting will be arranged with an absent student and their parent or carer to confirm the reason for absence and check whether there are causes for concern; the result of the meeting will be recorded and kept in the student's file.</p> <p>Additional Checklist for Under 18s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identifying Under 18's by their student ID card, the Date of Birth highlighted in bold red. ✓ The Safeguarding Officer meets with the student during the first week (thereafter monthly) of Under 18's stay, to ask how they are faring. The Student Welfare Officer also checks with students every week to ensure there are no problems with accommodation, attending classes or coping with workload (checking overall well-being). ✓ Safety during Excursions and social activities: ensuring every student is aware of the procedure and has teacher's phone number ✓ Refer students to the Under 18 section of Student Handbook ✓ Safety: ensuring all students are aware of emergency phone numbers ✓ The Academic Manager will identify Under 18 students on the class register 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Records of such meeting notes will be stored for safe-keeping in the Safeguarding File ✓ Any social event will be planned to ensure that there is variety of inclusive activities for students of all ages ✓ THE BRIDGE SCHOOL will consider under 18's with regards to staff conduct, social activities and risk assessment ✓ Requesting permission letters from parents/guardian before arrival for under 18's. <p>Training</p> <p>All staff members will receive appropriate safeguarding and PREVENT training which is regularly updated.</p> <p>In addition, all staff members will receive safeguarding and PREVENT updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.</p> <p>All newly recruited staff (teaching and non-teaching) and Governors will be apprised of this policy and will be required to attend relevant LA or internal Safeguarding training. In addition, all new staff and temporary staff will be required to attend an induction session with the Designated Safeguarding officer on their first day in the school.</p> <p>Complaints/allegations made against staff</p> <p>The Bridge School takes seriously all complaints made against members of staff. Procedures are in place for students, parents and staff to share any concern that they may have about the actions of any member staff or volunteer.</p> <p>All such complaints will be brought immediately to the attention of the Principal or one of the Designated Safeguarding officers if the Principal is not available and nothing should be said to the colleague involved.</p> <p>In cases where the Principal is the subject of the allegation or concern, staff should report to the Local Authority in the borough where the school is located, in order that they may activate the appropriate procedures. These procedures are used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a teacher or member of staff (including volunteers) in a school or college that provides education for children under 18 years of age has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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; or • behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm children. <p>The Local Authority's Designated Officer(s) (DO) should be informed of all allegations that come to a school's attention and appear to meet the criteria.</p> <p>Contact can also be made with LA's Schools Safeguarding Coordinator who will liaise with the DO.</p> <p>Many cases may well either not meet the criteria set out above, or may do so without warranting consideration of either a police investigation or enquiries by local authority children's social care services. In these cases, local arrangements will be followed to resolve cases without delay.</p> <p>Some rare allegations will be so serious they will require immediate intervention by children's social care services and/or police. In such cases, referral to the DO will lead to a Strategy Meeting or Discussion being held in accordance with the DfE guidance and London</p>	
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	<p>Safeguarding Children Board procedures. This process will agree upon the appropriate course of action and the time-scale for investigations.</p> <p>The school has a legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. Referrals will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual.</p> <p>The full procedures about dealing with allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff can be found in Part Four of the DfE guidance “Keeping children safe in education”.</p> <p>The LA’s Designated Officer is: Eva Simcock 020 7525 0689</p> <p>There is also a duty system and one of the CP Coordinators in Quality Assurance Unit is on duty each day to deal with DO issues when DO is unavailable. Duty telephone number for enquiries/referrals is 020 7525 3297</p> <p>The LA’s Strategic Lead Officer for safeguarding in education services is: the Director of Education Nina Dohel 020 7525 3252</p> <p>The LA’s Deputy in education services is: the EHS Duty Manager 020 7525 3893</p> <p>The LA’s Schools Safeguarding Coordinator is: Apo ÇAĞIRICI 020 7525 2715</p> <p>We also note the ‘Safeguarding information for professionals and the community in Southwark’ http://safeguarding.southwark.gov.uk on Southwark Council’s website.</p> <p>Safety in the school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No internal doors to classrooms will be locked whilst pupils are present in these areas. • Entry to school premises will be controlled by doors that are secured physically or by constant staff supervision or video surveillance. Authorised visitors to the school will be asked to wear their identity badges or be issued with school visitor badges. • Unidentified visitors will be challenged by staff and/or reported to the Principal. • Carelessness in closing any controlled entrance will be challenged. • The presence of intruders and suspicious strangers seen loitering near the school or approaching students, will be reported to the Police by calling 101 or 999, depending on the circumstances and the urgency of the case so that if police stops these individuals they can be spoken to about what they were doing and dealt with accordingly. • Brief information about the incident will be sent to LA’s Schools Safeguarding Coordinator with a view to alerting other local schools in liaison with the police and through appropriate systems. • Parents, carers or relatives may only take still or video photographic images of pupils in school or on school-organised activities with the prior consent of the school and then only in designated areas. • Images taken must be for private use only. Recording and/or photographing other than for private use would require the consent of the other parents whose children may be captured on film. • Without this consent the Data Protection legislation would be breached. If parents do not wish their children to be 	
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photographed or filmed and express this view in writing, their rights will be respected.

Curriculum

The Bridge School acknowledges the important role that the curriculum can play in the prevention of abuse and in the preparation of our students for the responsibilities of adult life and citizenship. It is expected that the curriculum co-ordinator will consider the opportunities that exist in their area of responsibility for promoting the welfare and safety of students.

As appropriate, the curriculum will be used to build resilience, help students to keep safe and to know how to ask for help if their safety is threatened. As part of developing a healthy, safer lifestyle, students will be taught, for example:

- to recognise and manage risks in different situations and then decide how to behave responsibly;
- to judge what kinds of physical contact are acceptable and unacceptable;
- to recognise when pressure from others (including people they know) threatens their personal safety and well-being; including knowing when and where to get help;
- to use assertiveness techniques to resist unhelpful pressure;
- emotional literacy.

All computer equipments and internet access within the School are be subject to appropriate “parental controls” and Internet safety rules in line with our Online Safety Policy.

Online safety

The Bridge School is aware of the dangers posed by students using the internet unsupervised or unprepared for the dangers. These dangers include:

- Cyberbullying
- Sexual predators
- Identity or information theft
- Exposure to pornographic images
- Exposure to violent images

Students at The Bridge School are allowed to use the Internet supervised in the library or on their own personal devices between lessons and in their induction each student is warned about the dangers of the internet and advised on how to remain safe when surfing online. There are posters advertising the dangers and how to avoid the risks in the library facilities, and each of the teachers must complete obligatory Safeguarding and Prevent training. Teachers may use the internet in their classrooms but in the classroom students are not permitted to use the school computers to surf the internet unsupervised.

	<p>The IT department are responsible for ensuring the school's equipment is not open to misuse or attack.</p> <p>The academic manager is responsible for ensuring all teachers and staff have an up to date awareness of online safety measures and of the current school Online Safety Policy.</p> <p>Teachers and reporting staff are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reporting any suspected misuse or problem • ensuring any digital communication with learners is purely professional • online safety issues are embedded in all aspects of the curriculum and other activities • students understanding and following the Online Safety Policy and acceptable use policies • ensuring students have a good understanding of research skills and the need to avoid plagiarism and uphold copyright regulations • monitoring the use of digital technologies, mobile devices, cameras etc in lessons and other school activities (where allowed) and implement current policies with regard to these devices <p>Delayed suitability check</p> <p>Any staff with delayed suitability checks may begin work at The Bridge SEN School, at the discretion of the Academic Manager and the Principal but will not be allowed to teach a group or individual students without supervision until the suitability checks have been completed. If at any time the new employee demonstrates any behaviour that is unsuitable, their offer of employment will be withdrawn. Any staff member who has been unable to complete the suitability checks according to The Bridge SEN School's Recruitment policy within two months may have their offer of employment withdrawn. In the case of the new staff member being unsuitable to continue teaching either on the day or permanently, then the lessons will be covered by the academic manager or administrative assistant until further notice. If either the academic manager or administrative assistant are not available, then a teacher who has successfully completed their suitability check will be asked to cover the class.</p> <p>Working in partnership with parents</p> <p>It is our policy to work in partnership with parents or carers to secure the best outcomes for our students. We will therefore communicate as clearly as possible about the aims of this school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will use clear statements in our brochures and correspondence. • We will liaise with agencies in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors and locality teams that are active in supporting families. • We will be alert to the needs of parents/carers who do not have English as their first language and will utilise the translation services as necessary. • We will make available a copy of this policy to any parent who requests it. The policy will also be available through the school's 	
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	<p>web site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will keep parents and carers informed as and when appropriate. <p>This policy applies to all staff, including all stakeholders working for or with THE BRIDGE SCHOOL. We are also committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.</p>	
	<p>Updated December 2018</p> <p>Next update scheduled for December 2019</p>	