

## Safeguarding Statement

At Stratford School we work hard to keep all members of our community safe. As a school we are uniquely placed to safeguard young people as we see them every day and we can track changes over time. We are committed to working in partnership with all elements of the children's workforce and, most importantly, with parents and carers.

We have a specialist member of staff who is in charge of safeguarding. She maintains close links with social services, attends core group meetings and oversees all child protection matters at school. We train all our staff to recognise and respond to the signs of abuse – be it physical, emotional, sexual or due to neglect.

If you are worried that a child is being hurt you should contact the teacher in charge of safeguarding immediately. It does not matter if you are not sure, or if you think the issue is too small; pass it on and let someone investigate further.

We work closely with parents and carers and aim to solve problems together. Where there is a problem, we try to get involved early to help sort it out. If we are concerned that a child is in danger, we have a legal duty to inform social services. If this happens, we will contact parents and tell them about the actions we are taking – unless doing so would put a child at risk.

We speak to students about their safety in assemblies and in tutor time. We also focus on safety in lessons: for example we teach about healthy relationships in PSHEE and internet safety in IT. We encourage students to support each other through our vertical tutoring system.

We do not have many cases of bullying, but when they do occur we take steps to put matters right. We are a "telling school": if a child feels he or she is being bullied they must tell an adult straight away. Whoever a child approaches, they should expect to be listened to, to be believed and to have their concerns dealt with quickly and effectively.

All schools are vulnerable to potential abusers, especially if there is a lax culture where relationships between staff and students are too informal. Our students always call staff by their title and second name and we expect staff to maintain an appropriate professional distance. This means wearing formal work clothing, never having secrets with children and never communicating with them outside school. When we appoint new staff we pay particular attention to checking for potential abusers, that is why our interview panels always contain at least one person who has completed safer recruitment training.

"No student should be anonymous at Stratford School".