

Safeguarding

and Child
Protection Policy
and Procedures

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures

The Switch is a leading education charity with over 25 years' experience of delivering successful business supported programmes in London and beyond.

Our goal is to end poverty of opportunity through education and through partnerships with businesses. We work with businesses to help children and young people build confidence and skills. We want all young people to learn more, do more, and become more, because it is our firm belief that an educated community will become a thriving community.

The Switch Board of Trustees takes seriously their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our organisation support schools with their responsibilities. The Switch is committed to keeping children safe in all the experiences we arrange.

We work with schools to ensure their safeguarding procedures are followed.

We support organisations to keep children safe when they are working with them.

We support volunteers to keep their work safe and know what to do if they are concerned about the welfare of a child or young person.

We follow up-to-date The Switch safeguarding procedures in our office.



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1. Purpose of Policy and Procedures

- 1.1. This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures provides a secure framework for The Switch workforce in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of those children and young people who use our brokered services. The policy aims to ensure that:
 - All young people are safe and protected from harm.
 - Other elements of provision and policies are in place to enable young people to feel safe and adopt safe practices.
 - Staff and volunteers are aware of the expected behaviours and legal responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.
 - The Child Protection Policy of the young person's school is followed.
- 1.2. This policy sets the framework for good practice within The Switch, to establish procedures and ensure that each person and organisation can demonstrate an understanding of the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people including those who are vulnerable. It provides evidence of how this will be implemented within our organisation and within multi-agency working arrangements.

This document states The Switch's policy in relation to Child Protection and gives guidance on:

- What The Switch staff and volunteers should do if they have a concern about the welfare of a child or young person.
 - What the organisation will do to ensure employees and volunteers, do not pose a risk to children.
 - How The Switch's procedures fit with procedures in schools and other local agencies.
- 1.3. This information is to be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

2. Relevant legislation and roles

This policy is informed by the '[Working Together to Safeguard Children' guidance DfE \(2018\)](#), '[Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance HM Government \(2021\)](#), Regulated activity in relation to children: scope' DfE (2018), 'Work-Related Learning and the Law' guidance DfES (2006), relevant legislation and Acts including The Children Act 2004, The Human Rights Act 1998, the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, the Protection of Children Act 1999, the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. We have also consulted guidance provided by Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Board, NSPCC and Catalyst to inform this policy.

'The Switch; refers to Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership, trading as The Switch.

'Volunteer' refers to any current employee of a company which partners with The Switch, who participates in a current volunteering event or programme provided by The Switch.

'Frequent volunteer' refers to any volunteer who participates in a current volunteering programme which requires volunteers to participate on four or more days in a 30 day period. ([Regulated activity in relation to children: scope Factual note by HM Government.](#))

'Infrequent volunteer' refers to any volunteer who participates in the same current volunteering programme which requires volunteers to participate on fewer than four days in a 30 day period. ([Regulated activity in relation to children: scope Factual note by HM Government.](#))

'Mentor' refers to any volunteer who is a participant in The Switch's current mentoring programme.

'Consultant' refers to a freelance trainer, who may specialise in working with groups, and is employed by The Switch for a short time, to complete a task such as delivering an event. (See Appendix 2. Consultants' Memorandum of Understanding.)

'Member of The Switch staff' refers to current employees of The Switch.

'Designated Safeguarding Lead' or 'DSL' refers to The Switch's director.

'Local Area Designated Officer' or 'LADO' refers to the person currently employed by London Borough of Tower Hamlets with that job title. They are involved in the management and oversight of allegations against people who work with children, and other safeguarding concerns.

3. Staff Responsibilities

- 3.1. The Switch's Director, Helen Sanson, is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). She is supported at board level by a dedicated trustee who is DSL at an FE college. In addition, she attends regular local area meetings which furnishes updates on safeguarding policy changes, plus training. The deputy DSL is the Senior Project Manager for the Learn More team. They both undertake training every two years minimum.
- 3.2. The Switch's Senior Management Team ensure that the policy and procedures are kept up to date and are applied consistently. The overall responsibility for this area lies with the Director.
- 3.3. All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of the children and young people with whom we work and to respond to concerns about child abuse.
- 3.4. All staff read this policy and ensure that they are clear about what they should do if they have such a concern or if a child or young person discloses abuse to them.
- 3.5. All new staff receive safeguarding training from an external organisation.
- 3.6. All staff receive refresher safeguarding training from an external organisation every two years.
- 3.7. All staff and consultants working directly with young people are required to read '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)' guidance HM Government (2021) every two years.
- 3.8. Consultants follow The Switch's Safeguarding Procedures. They read this policy every year and the relevant Safeguarding Summary and Risk Assessment ahead of every event, confirm that they have done so by email and obtain answers to any questions before the event. (See Appendix 5. Safeguarding Summaries.)
- 3.9. Consultants and temporary staff are required to confirm that they have read and understood our Safeguarding Policy and sign a Memorandum of Understanding. (See Appendix 2. Consultants' Memorandum Of Understanding.)
- 3.10. Consultants are sometimes used to deliver one off employability events in schools. They complete an enhanced DBS check before they can work with schools. They are also required to prove they have done basic safeguarding training in the past two years by showing The Switch a course confirmation/certificate.
- 3.11. If a safeguarding concern arises during an event in school, then the member of The Switch staff or consultant delivering the event should report it to the school's DSL before they leave the school, and to The Switch's DSL or the Deputy before the end of the day.

- 3.12. Where a one-off event is delivered by a consultant or apprentice, a member of The Switch staff will informally debrief with the school contact. This gives the school the opportunity to provide feedback on the event and consultant or apprentice.
- 3.13. The Switch staff should communicate their expectations of teachers in advance of the event as well as in the school's Service Level Agreement.
- 3.14. If a member of school staff or volunteer is required to supervise another volunteer, The Switch will make them aware that they should not leave the volunteer alone in the room with a child or young person. They are not required to watch or listen to the conversation in detail but should remain in the room so that the volunteer's communication is not private.
- 3.15. For Partner Schemes, the teacher should agree the location of Partner Scheme sessions with the Project Manager before the first session and review it annually. The location should be within sight and hearing of a member of school staff, or where staff regularly pass through during the session time.
- 3.16. At a business or another trip location, a member of school staff, (or The Switch staff if no school staff are present), will escort young people to the bathroom and wait outside.
- 3.17. For mentoring, the school must obtain parental consent for each young person before the first one-to-one session with their mentor.
- 3.18. Mentors (See 2. Relevant Legislation) who arrange their own in-person sessions are required to discuss the most suitable location with the Project Manager during volunteer recruitment and review it during the scheme. An ideal space is public (e.g. the office cafeteria) or has an open door which makes the mentor and young person visible to others. Sessions should not take place in a secluded area, where other staff members are unable to see into the room.

4.Complaints and allegations

4.1. Complaints

- 4.1.1. The Switch recognises the right of all stakeholders to express any concerns about the behaviour of children, young people, The Switch staff or volunteers. It is The Switch's policy to ensure that all complaints are taken seriously and dealt with swiftly and in confidence.
- 4.1.2 Separate guidance on complaints procedures is available [here](#).

4.2. Allegations

- 4.2.1. The Switch's The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse about someone who works with children or young people. They have been trained in handling allegations against or concerns about abuse by a member of staff or volunteer.
- 4.2.2. All staff and volunteers know who this is and how to contact them (See Appendix 1: Contact Details.)

- 4.2.3. The Switch's DSL or their deputy will report concerns to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- 4.2.4. When a child abuses another child, it is sometimes called 'peer on peer abuse' or 'peer abuse' (Department for Education, 2020; Department of Health, 2017). Allegations or suspicions of abuse about a child should be handled in the same way as other safeguarding concerns. (See 10. Responding to disclosures.)
- 4.2.5. If an allegation has been made against a member of school staff, the school's Headteacher and DSL must be informed immediately. Once this has happened, The Switch's DSL should be informed.

4.3. Allegations against a member of The Switch staff or volunteer

- 4.3.1. Separate guidance about allegations is in the Handling Allegations. (See Appendix 3: Handling Allegations Procedure.)
- 4.3.2. If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, The Switch's Allegations Policy will be followed and an investigation conducted. The Switch reserves the right to restrict a staff member or volunteer from any contact with children and young people once an allegation has been made (justified or not), whilst an investigation is being conducted. Appropriate support, including access to an external person to speak with, will be provided for staff or volunteers who are subject to any investigations.
- 4.3.3. The school's DSL must be informed immediately. Once this has happened, The Switch's Director and DSL should be informed.
- 4.3.4. If there is a concern about The Switch's DSL, it should be reported to their deputy or the trustee responsible for safeguarding. (See Appendix 1. Contact Details.)
- 4.3.5. If a member of The Switch staff or volunteer feels unable to report an incident within the organisation, they should contact the trustee responsible for safeguarding and or the NSPCC. (See Appendix 1. Contact Details.)

5. Risk assessment

- 5.1. The Switch recognises that risk assessment is an important factor in keeping children and young people safe. We aim to incorporate risk assessment procedures into our everyday working practices.
- 5.2. Each programme has a Risk Assessment which is reviewed and updated and shared with the school each time the programme or event is delivered, except Aim2Attain, for which the school is required to provide the Risk Assessment.
- 5.3. The Switch office risk assessment is reviewed and updated at least annually.

6. Confidentiality

The Switch respects the rights of children and young people to privacy and confidentiality but recognises that in certain circumstances confidentiality must be breached because of safeguarding concerns and the need for possible intervention.

7. Recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers

7.1 Safe recruitment and selection of staff

- 7.1.1. The Switch's recruitment policy aims to ensure that staff appointments will only be made if the appointing The Switch staff member is satisfied, from the information gained through the selection process, that the applicant poses no risk of harm to children or young people.
- 7.1.2. Applicants for employment who have been legally barred from 'regulated' activity with children or young people will not be employed or permitted to volunteer in a role which involves 'regulated' activity.
- 7.1.3. Working in a school is classed as 'regulated' activity unless it is less frequent than for four days within a 30 day period. ([Regulated activity in relation to children: scope Factual note by HM Government.](#))
- 7.1.4. If any applicant offered employment in a at The Switch is found to have convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings that indicate a potential risk to children or young people, it is The Switch's policy that an open and measured discussion will take place on this subject, involving the applicant, before a recruitment decision is taken.
- 7.1.5. If any member of staff is found to have withheld relevant information that indicates a potential risk to children and young people, the employment will be terminated with immediate effect.
- 7.1.6. The Switch staff and consultants must undertake an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. (See 7.4. DBS checks.)

7.2. Appointment of volunteers to work with children and young people

- 7.2.1. Volunteers on 'frequent' programmes are allowed to exclude themselves from the programme before or after training without giving a reason.
- 7.2.2. A volunteering programme is 'frequent' if it involves volunteering on four or more days in a 30 day period. ([Regulated activity in relation to children: scope Factual note by HM Government.](#))
- 7.2.3. Volunteers on 'frequent' programmes must not begin volunteering until their enhanced DBS check has been cleared. Volunteers whose enhanced DBS check has not yet been cleared must not participate in a frequent volunteering programme.
- 7.2.4. Volunteers applying to work with children or young people must undertake an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check where necessary. (See 7.4. DBS checks.)
- 7.2.5. A DBS check is necessary if the volunteer will be taking part in a 'frequent' activity,
- 7.2.6. The Switch may ask volunteers for photo ID upon arrival at a school, especially where a DBS check is not necessary. If the volunteer has forgotten to bring photo ID, ID without a photo will be accepted (e.g. a bank card or work ID card.)

7.3 Appointment of mentors

- 7.3.1. Mentors are asked to disclose any criminal record in their application form.
- 7.3.2. Mentors are asked in their application form why they want to volunteer.
- 7.3.3. Mentors participate in compulsory training which includes the opportunity to speak freely, to help the The Switch Project Manager understand their motivation for volunteering.
- 7.3.4. Mentors whose DBS certificate has not yet arrived must not contact their mentee or participate in a session, though they may attend a Lloyd's mentoring launch.

7.4 DBS checks

- 7.4.1. The Switch only accepts enhanced DBS checks.
- 7.4.2. The Switch only accepts DBS checks marked 'child workforce'.
- 7.4.3. The Switch only accepts DBS checks which are obtained through The Switch.
- 7.4.4. The Switch only accepts DBS checks which are less than three years old.
- 7.4.5. If a volunteer loses their certificate, they must inform The Switch and apply for a reprint. They may continue to volunteer until it arrives, as long as the certificate remains valid.

8. Induction and training for volunteers

- 8.1. Volunteers on 'frequent' programmes (see 7.2.3.) are required to attend a compulsory training relevant to their programme before they start volunteering. This will include:
 - Guidance on safeguarding and child protection when working with children and young people.
 - Guidance on indicators of abuse to look out for when working with children and young people.
 - Guidance on potential scenarios when working with children and young people.
 - Appropriate reporting systems for safeguarding concerns.
- 8.2. Volunteers on 'frequent' programmes are provided with induction information relevant to their school before they start volunteering. This will include the key contacts at the school and how to contact them.
- 8.3. Volunteers on programmes which are not 'frequent' are made aware of:

- Guidance on safeguarding and child protection when working with children and young people.
- Appropriate reporting systems for safeguarding concerns.
- The key contacts at the school.

8.4. All volunteers are given a written Safeguarding Summary for their programme including appropriate reporting systems for safeguarding concerns. (See Appendix 5. Safeguarding Summaries.)

8.5. All volunteers are given a written copy of the Code of Conduct and Responding to Disclosures. (See 9. Code of Conduct and 10. Responding to disclosures.)

9. Code of Conduct for working with children and young people



Code of Conduct for Volunteers working with children and young people



Volunteers should ALWAYS:

- Maintain professional boundaries at all times.
- Know your role and responsibilities in relation to young people. The Switch will ensure that you have the relevant information and are clear about your role in relation to the safeguarding of children and give you the opportunity to ask questions.
- Be an excellent role model – keep conversation and actions appropriate to the situation.
- Adhere to the The Switch safeguarding policy.
- Put the welfare of each child first.
- Avoid inappropriate physical contact (a business handshake is appropriate).
- Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision making process.
- Provide an environment that encourages children and adults to feel comfortable and confident in challenging any attitudes or behaviours that may be discriminatory in any way.
- Provide an opportunity and environment for children to talk to others about any concerns they may have.
- Remember that others may misinterpret your behaviour and actions regardless of how well intentioned they may be.
- Respect a child's right to privacy and be careful with information the child shares.
- Show understanding and sensitivity when dealing with emotional issues.
- Treat everyone with respect and dignity and be sensitive to individual beliefs, faiths, religions, cultures and sexuality of young people, other volunteers and staff.
- Give enthusiastic praise and constructive feedback rather than criticism.
- Dress appropriately – business attire is welcome, but avoid revealing clothing or anything with inappropriate images or slogans.

Volunteers should NEVER:

- Place yourself into situations where your actions may be misinterpreted.
- Allow or encourage others (staff, volunteers or children) to engage in inappropriate behaviour or contact.
- Believe 'it could never happen to me' or trivialise abuse.
- Deliberately put yourself or others in compromising or potentially dangerous situations.
- Engage in a sexual relationship with a child, whether inside or outside work. Any person in a Position of Trust engaged in sexual activity with a person under 18 years of age is breaking the law.
- Give gifts from an individual volunteer to an individual child, no matter how small.
- Give personal money to a child.
- Have inappropriate physical, verbal or online contact with a child.
- Ignore this code of conduct, even if you happen to encounter a child when not on site or involved with a project.
- Invite a child or young person to individual homes or other venues.
- Make sexually suggestive comments.
- Permit or accept abusive and discriminatory behaviour (e.g. bullying, racial harassment, taunting, rude or abusive language)
- Promote your religious or political ideas or beliefs.
- Use alcohol, drugs or other substances when working/volunteering with children.
- Use inappropriate or demeaning language.
- Take photos, videos or screenshots of young people.
- Promise to keep anything secret.

10. Responding to Disclosures

10.1. General practice for Responding to Disclosures



What to do if a young person discloses abuse

Volunteers are not expected to be experts in recognition; however, all adults working with The Switch have a duty of care to be vigilant and respond appropriately to suspicions of poor practice, bullying or abuse (either physically, emotionally, sexually or by neglect).

This does not mean that it is your responsibility to decide if a situation is poor practice, abuse or bullying, but it is your responsibility to report your concerns.

If a child says that he or she has been abused, either physically, emotionally, sexually or by neglect, the member of The Switch staff or volunteer should:

- Acknowledge the disclosure but do not push or lead the conversation.
- Explain that the information they have shared will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
- Always take action straight away.
- Take seriously any allegations, suspicions or concerns about abuse that a child/young person makes seriously (including those made against staff or volunteers) and report them following appropriate procedures. (See 'What to do if you have a concern about the welfare of a young person.').
- Tell the child that they have made the right decision to tell you.
- React calmly so as not to frighten the child – give them your full attention.
- Be aware of your non-verbal messages.
- Never stop a child who is talking freely about what happened – let them use their own words.
- Observe and listen but don't ask for more information.
- Never make promises that you cannot keep.
- Keep responses short, simple, slow and gentle.
- If you have difficulty in understanding the child's communication method, reassure them that you will find someone who can help.
- Tell them what you are going to do next. (See 'What to do if you have a concern about the welfare of a young person.').
- Never try to interpret any of the information yourself.
- Remember it is not your job to prove or disprove what the child tells you.
- Report any concerns that you have, no matter how small you think they might be.
- Write the facts as heard, using the child or young person's own words and anything else that is relevant. Record factually what is being alleged, by whom and include the time, place and details of the incident and any action taken and whether there were any potential witnesses.

10.2. Programme-specific procedures for Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

10.2.1. Responding to Disclosures and Concerns in Live Webinars

If you have any concerns about the welfare of anyone involved, please let the host know or contact The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead: Helen Sanson 020 7655 0300

10.2.2. Responding to Disclosures and Concerns in 'infrequent' remote volunteering

To report a concern in front of the young person, use the 'ask for help' button to invite a member of The Switch staff into the breakout room.

To report a concern without the young person, return to the main Zoom room either during the session or at the end and tell the member of The Switch staff responsible that you have a safeguarding concern.

The member of staff will tell the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The member of staff will also tell The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy.

If you would rather discuss the concern and receive support and guidance, contact The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead instead of your contact at The Switch. Helen Sanson 020 7655 0300

10.2.3. Responding to Disclosures and Concerns in 'infrequent' in-person volunteering

You must tell the member of The Switch staff responsible for the event about your concern before you leave.

The member of staff will tell the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The member of staff will also tell The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy.

If you would like to discuss the concern and receive support and guidance, contact The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead as well as your contact at The Switch. Helen Sanson 020 7655 0300

10.2.4. Responding to Disclosures and Concerns in remote Mentoring

Mentors are uniquely placed to notice signs and symptoms of abuse.

If you have a concern about the welfare of a young person during a group session, you must return to the main Zoom room during the session or at the end, and tell the member of The Switch staff responsible that you have a safeguarding concern. They will meet you in a private breakout room or phonecall to listen to the details.

The member of staff will tell the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The member of staff will also tell The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy.

You may also discuss this with the member of The Switch staff responsible for mentoring to discuss how your concern will impact your sessions.

If you have a concern about the welfare of a young person outside a group session, you must contact the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. The main school contact number will be on the Brightside platform and you would ask to speak to the Designated Safeguarding

Lead or the Deputy if the Lead isn't available. You will receive their name and phone number via Brightside. You must also tell The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead. Report to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead anything communication that makes you feel uncomfortable, is offensive, discriminatory, threatening or bullying in nature. Do not respond to it.

The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead is Helen Sanson 020 7655 0300

10.2.5. Responding to Disclosures and Concerns in blended Mentoring

Mentors are uniquely placed to notice signs and symptoms of abuse.

If you have a concern about the welfare of a young person during a video call session, you must return to the main Zoom room and tell the member of The Switch staff responsible that you have a safeguarding concern. They will meet you in a private breakout room or phonecall to listen to the details. The member of staff will tell the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. The member of staff will also tell The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy.

If a concern arises during an event at the school, you must tell the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead before you leave. If you are unsure who they are, ask for the Safeguarding Lead at the school office. You must also tell The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If you have a concern about the welfare of a young person at another time, you must tell the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. The main school contact number will be on the Brightside platform. Ask to speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy if the Lead isn't available. (You will be sent their name and phone number via Brightside). You must also tell The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If a concern arises during a session outside school at the end of the day, follow the steps above and send the young person back to school if sending them home would put them in an unsafe situation. If it is too late in the day to reach the school or The Switch by phone, call the Local Area Designated Office (LADO) on 0207 364 0677 or NSPCC's 24 hours helpline on 0808 800 5000.

The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead is Helen Sanson 020 7655 0300

You may also discuss this with the member of The Switch staff responsible for mentoring to discuss how your concern will impact your sessions.

10.2.6. Responding to Disclosures and Concerns for Writing Partners

If you have any concerns, however small, about a child's welfare, you must phone the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. Your Safeguarding Moderator will send you their name and phone number.

If anything in the child's letter makes you feel uncomfortable, is offensive, discriminatory, threatening or bullying in nature, phone the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. Do not respond to it in your letter.

You must also tell The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead that you have reported a concern. Helen Sanson 020 7655 0300

10.2.7. Responding to Disclosures and Concerns for in-person Partner Schemes

If you have a concern about the welfare of a child, you must report it to the school's

Designated Safeguarding Lead before you leave the school. If you are unsure who they are, ask for the Safeguarding Lead at the school office.

You must also tell The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead that you have reported a concern.

Helen Sanson 020 7655 0300



11. Abuse

11.1. Understanding Abuse

A child is defined as anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday. Children therefore means 'children and young people'.

There are four main categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. Each has its own warning indicators. Everyone coming into contact with children or young people should be alert to them.

11.2. Physical abuse

Physical abuse is when someone hurts or harms a child or young person on purpose.

11.2.1. Types of physical abuse

Physical abuse includes:

- Hitting with hands or objects.
- Slapping and punching.
- Kicking.
- Shaking.
- Throwing.
- Poisoning.
- Burning and scalding.
- Biting and scratching.
- Breaking bones.
- Drowning.

It's important to remember that physical abuse is any way of intentionally causing physical harm to a child or young person. It also includes making up the symptoms of an illness or causing a child or to become unwell.

11.2.2. Signs of physical abuse

Bumps and bruises don't always mean a child is being physically abused. All children have accidents, trips and falls. And there isn't just one sign or symptom to look out for. But it's important to be aware of the signs.

If a child regularly has injuries, there seems to be a pattern to the injuries or the explanation doesn't match the injuries, then this should be reported.

Physical abuse symptoms include:

- Bruises.
- Broken or fractured bones.
- Burns or scalds.
- Bite marks.

It can also include other injuries and health problems, such as:

- Scarring.
- The effects of poisoning, such as vomiting, drowsiness or seizures.
- Breathing problems from drowning, suffocation or poisoning.

Visible signs include:

- Swelling.
- Bruising.
- Fractures.
- Being extremely sleepy or unconscious.
- Breathing problems.
- Seizures.
- Vomiting.
- Unusual behaviour, such as being irritable or not feeding properly.

11.3. Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is any type of abuse that involves the continual emotional mistreatment of a child. It's sometimes called psychological abuse. Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare, humiliate, isolate or ignore a child.

Emotional abuse is often a part of other kinds of abuse, which means it can be difficult to spot the signs or tell the difference, though it can also happen on its own.

11.3.1. Types of emotional abuse

Emotional abuse includes:

- Humiliating or constantly criticising a child.
- Threatening, shouting at a child or calling them names.
- Making the child the subject of jokes, or using sarcasm to hurt a child.
- Blaming and scapegoating.
- Making a child perform degrading acts.
- Not recognising a child's own individuality or trying to control their lives.
- Pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations.
- Exposing a child to upsetting events or situations, like domestic abuse or drug taking.
- Failing to promote a child's social development.
- Not allowing them to have friends.
- Persistently ignoring them.
- Being absent.
- Manipulating a child.
- Never saying anything kind, expressing positive feelings or congratulating a child on successes.
- Never showing any emotions in interactions with a child, also known as emotional neglect.

11.3.2. Signs of emotional abuse

There might not be any obvious physical signs of emotional abuse or neglect. And a child might not tell anyone what's happening until they reach a 'crisis point'. That's why it's important to look out for signs in how a child is acting.

As children grow up, their emotions change. This means it can be difficult to tell if they're being emotionally abused. But children who are being emotionally abused might:

- Seem unconfident or lack self-assurance.
- Struggle to control their emotions.
- Have difficulty making or maintaining relationships.
- Act in a way that's inappropriate for their age.
- Use language you wouldn't expect them to know for their age.
- Act in a way or know about things you wouldn't expect them to know for their age.
- Struggle to control their emotions.
- Have extreme outbursts.
- Seem isolated from their parents.
- Lack social skills.
- Have few or no friends.

11.4 Sexual abuse

According to '[Keeping Children Safe in Education Part One](#)' (2021) '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.'

When a child or young person is sexually abused, they're forced or tricked into sexual activities. They might not understand that what's happening is abuse or that it's wrong. And they might be afraid to tell someone. Sexual abuse can happen anywhere – and it can happen in person or online.

It's never a child's fault they were sexually abused – it's important to make sure children know this.

11.4.1. Types of sexual abuse

There are 2 types of sexual abuse – contact and non-contact abuse.

Contact abuse is where an abuser makes physical contact with a child. This includes:

- Sexual touching of any part of a child's body, whether they're clothed or not.
- Using a body part or object to rape or penetrate a child.

- Forcing a child to take part in sexual activities.
- Making a child undress or touch someone else.
- Contact abuse can include touching, kissing and oral sex – sexual abuse isn't just penetrative.

Non-contact abuse is where a child is abused without being touched by the abuser. This can be in person or online and includes:

- Exposing or flashing.
- Showing pornography.
- Exposing a child to sexual acts.
- Making them masturbate.
- Forcing a child to make, view or share child abuse images or videos.
- Making, viewing or distributing child abuse images or videos.
- Forcing a child to take part in sexual activities or conversations online or through a smartphone.

11.4.2. Signs of sexual abuse

Knowing the signs of sexual abuse can help give a voice to children. Sometimes children won't understand that what's happening to them is wrong. Or they might be scared to speak out.

Some of the emotional and behavioural signs you might notice include:

- Avoiding being alone with or frightened of people or a person they know.
- Language or sexual behaviour you wouldn't expect them to know.
- Having nightmares or bed-wetting.
- Alcohol or drug misuse.
- Self-harm.
- Changes in eating habits or developing an eating problem.
- Changes in their mood, feeling irritable and angry, or anything out of the ordinary.

Some of the physical signs you might notice include:

- Bruises.
- Bleeding, discharge, pains or soreness in their genital or anal area.
- Sexually transmitted infections.
- Pregnancy.

If a child is being or has been sexually abused online, they might:

- Spend a lot more or a lot less time than usual online, texting, gaming or using social media.
- Seem distant, upset or angry after using the internet or texting
- Be secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online or on their mobile phone.
- Have lots of new phone numbers, texts or email addresses on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet.

Children and young people might also drop hints and clues about the abuse.



11.5. Neglect

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and the most common form of child abuse. A child might be left hungry or dirty, or without proper clothing, shelter, supervision or health care. This can put children and young people in danger. And it can also have long term effects on their physical and mental wellbeing.

11.5.1. Types of neglect

Neglect can be a lot of different things, which can make it hard to spot. But broadly speaking, there are 4 types of neglect:

- Physical neglect: A child's basic needs, such as food, clothing or shelter, are not met or they aren't properly supervised or kept safe.
- Educational neglect: A parent doesn't ensure their child is given an education.
- Emotional neglect: A child doesn't get the nurture and stimulation they need. This could be through ignoring, humiliating, intimidating or isolating them.
- Medical neglect: A child isn't given proper health care. This includes dental care and refusing or ignoring medical recommendations.

11.5.2. Signs of neglect

Neglect can be really difficult to spot. Having one of the signs doesn't necessarily mean a child is being neglected. But if you notice multiple signs that last for a while, they might show there's a serious problem. Children and young people who are neglected might have:

- poor appearance and hygiene:
 - being smelly or dirty
 - being hungry or not given money for food
 - having unwashed clothes
 - having the wrong clothing, such as no warm clothes in winter
- Health and development problems:
 - anaemia
 - body issues, such as poor muscle tone or prominent joints
 - medical or dental issues
 - missed medical appointments, such as for vaccinations
 - not given the correct medicines
 - poor language or social skills
 - regular illness or infections
 - repeated accidental injuries, often caused by lack of supervision
 - skin issues, such as sores, rashes, flea bites, scabies or ringworm
 - thin or swollen tummy
 - tiredness
 - untreated injuries
 - weight or growth issues.
- Housing and family issues:
 - living in an unsuitable home environment, such as having no heating
 - being left alone for a long time



- taking on the role of carer for other family members.
- Change in behaviour:
 - becoming clingy
 - becoming aggressive
 - being withdrawn, depressed or anxious
 - changes in eating habits
 - displaying obsessive behaviour
 - finding it hard to concentrate or take part in activities
 - missing school
 - showing signs of self-harm
 - using drugs or alcohol.

11.6. Bullying and cyberbullying

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone.

For more information about bullying, please refer to [bullying and cyberbullying guidance from the NSPCC](#).

11.7. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. When a child or young person is exploited they're given things, like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities.

For more information about CSE, please refer to [Child Sexual Exploitation guidance from the NSPCC](#).

11.8. Child Trafficking

Trafficking is where children and young people tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes and are moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold.

For more information about Child Trafficking, please refer to [Child Trafficking guidance from the NSPCC](#).

11.9. Criminal Exploitation and Gangs

Criminal exploitation is child abuse where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes. Children and young people involved with gangs and criminal exploitation need help and support.

For more information about Criminal Exploitation and Gangs, please refer to [Criminal Exploitation and Gangs guidance from the NSPCC](#).

11.10. Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. It can seriously harm children and young people and witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse.

For more information about Domestic Abuse, please refer to [Domestic Abuse guidance from the NSPCC](#).

11.11. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is when a female's genitals are deliberately altered or removed for non-medical reasons. It's also known as 'female circumcision' or 'cutting', but has many other names.

For more information about FGM, please refer to [Female Genital Mutilation guidance from the NSPCC](#).

11.12. Grooming

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them.

For more information about Grooming, please refer to [Grooming guidance from the NSPCC](#).

11.13. Online Abuse

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet. It can happen across any device that's connected to the web, like computers, tablets and mobile phones.

For more information about Online Abuse, please refer to [Online Abuse Guidance from the NSPCC](#).

11.14 Radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

For more information about Radicalisation, please refer to [Radicalisation guidance from the NSPCC](#).

12. General principles in relation to disclosures of child abuse and other safeguarding concerns

12.1. Abuse will not go away if it is hidden. An abused child can only be supported if the appropriate agencies know about the abuse. As a result, if any member of staff or volunteer is disclosed sensitive information by a child, there is a duty to protect the child by sharing the information with the right person. (See 10. Responding to disclosures.)

12.2. If a child starts to talk about abuse, do not ask searching questions in case someone suggests at a later stage that the evidence has been prompted or rehearsed. This is important if a child abuse

case comes to court as suggestions that the evidence has been prompted could make it more difficult to convict the abuser.

- 12.3. It is important to treat children who disclose abuse – with gentleness, care and honesty, respecting what they say. Any child who has been abused will have suffered emotional damage and will be very vulnerable. It will require courage to talk about the abuse and what the child says may not be clear. Generally children reporting abuse are telling the truth.
- 12.4. Information about abuse should only be shared on a need to know basis, and staff or volunteers with sensitive information about a child should not talk to other members of the team, or to anyone else, about the issue.
- 12.5. The Switch staff or volunteers who are told about abuse by a child may need guidance, emotional support and assurance that they have acted in the right way. They may seek this support from The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- 12.6. Support will be provided for staff reporting other concerns and risks to children or suspicions about other members of staff, school staff or volunteers.
- 12.7. The Switch staff can access confidential support and guidance from counsellors by phone, and therapy in person, through our Westfield Health advice and information line. (See Appendix 1. Contact Details.)

12.8. What to do if you have other concerns or suspicions or know of an allegation relating to a child's welfare.

- Act immediately – do not delay; in an emergency get medical help.
- Keep a detailed written record of the incident and your concerns.
- Report to the relevant staff member as per this policy. (See 10.2. Programme-specific procedures for Reporting Safeguarding Concerns.)
- If no one else is available and you think the child is in potential or actual danger, contact the LADO or the NSPCC. (See Appendix 1. Contact Details.)

13. E-Safety

- 13.1. The Switch has a duty of care to support a safe learning environment for children and young people. This includes ensuring safety when using IT equipment or any other media device.
- 13.2. Staff, volunteers, children and young people must immediately report the receipt of any communication that makes them feel uncomfortable, is offensive, discriminatory, threatening or bullying in nature and must not respond to it.
- 13.3. Any digital communication between staff, children, young people, parents/carers, volunteers and any other partner or stakeholder (e.g. email) must be professional in tone and content.
- 13.4. The Switch staff should ensure that no reference should be made in social media to children, young people or their parents/carers.
- 13.5. The Switch's Staff Handbook includes a section on safe and responsible use of IT, both within The Switch's premises and outside.

13.6. The Switch uses widely available communication platforms. They are Microsoft 365 (including Microsoft Teams), Google (including Google Meet and Google Classroom), Zoom, Brightside, Bramble.

13.7. Messaging in mentoring

- 13.7.1. If using the BrightSide app, any message containing a 'stop word' is highlighted to The Switch for approval before it is sent. The Switch report any safeguarding concerns to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and The Switch's DSL.
- 13.7.2. Where email is permitted, the teacher is always CC'd and supervises email contact and responds or intervenes if appropriate.
- 13.7.3. A mentor running late for an in-person session will call the school and a mentee running late for a session will call the mentor's office landline number only.
- 13.7.4. Mentors are not permitted to share mobile numbers or social media. An exception may be made for LinkedIn where they may 'connect' with their mentee in order to support the building of an online network. Mentors must not use LinkedIn for private communication.
- 13.7.5. Mentees and mentors who have built a safe professional relationship may contact The Switch for permission to keep in touch after the end of the programme as part of our Alumni Mentoring Network.

13.8. Video calls and live webinars

- 13.8.1. Inappropriate backgrounds are dealt with during briefing before the children or young people arrive.
- 13.8.2. For mentoring and live webinars, all volunteers are known to the Project Manager in advance and have attended training/briefing with the Project Manager. Anyone unknown is removed from the call immediately.
- 13.8.3. For live webinars, young people can't be seen or heard, or access any email addresses. Attendees (i.e. children and young people) will interact with the webinar by commenting and asking questions, which will be moderated by a member of The Switch staff. The chat window will not be visible to attendees.
- 13.8.4. Volunteers on 'frequent' programmes (see 7.2.3.) are instructed in advance to ensure their display name matches the name they used to sign up. The video call is locked when all attendees have joined. Anyone accessing the call after the end of the briefing will be removed.
- 13.8.5. There is always at least one teacher present who can see and hear young people's conversations, look out for anything going wrong, and respond or intervene appropriately. Teachers are made aware of their responsibilities before the event.
- 13.8.6. If a young person leaves a call suddenly, The Switch project manager will check with the volunteer what the conversation was about and try to identify what lead up to the young person leaving the call. The teacher will notice and intervene or respond as appropriate. The project manager and the teacher will discuss it together and/or report it to the school's DSL and The Switch's DSL if appropriate.
- 13.8.7. The chat function is disabled in breakout rooms. The chat function in the main room is monitored by The Switch staff.



Appendix 1. Contact Details

In an emergency, contact the Police – Dial 999.

Organisation	Name	Contact details
The Switch Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Helen Sanson	020 7655 0305
The Switch Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Senior Project Manager – Learn More team	020 7655 0319
The Switch Trustee for Safeguarding	Gerry McDonald	Gerry.McDonald@NCCLondon.ac.uk
Children's Social Care Services	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Out of Office Hours (5pm – 9am)	020 7364 3444 020 7364 5601 020 7364 5606 020 7364 5006 – choose option 3
The Switch staff can access the LBTH/MASH inter-agency referral form at: General > core services > personnel > child protection and safeguarding		
Children's Social Care Services	Emergency Duty Team (5pm – 9am)	020 7364 5006
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Melanie Benzie	0207 364 0677 LADO@towerhamlets.gov.uk
NSPCC	24 Hour Helpline	0808 800 5000
Ofsted		08456 404 040
Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Board	Monawara Bakht	020 7364 2063 lscb@towerhamlets.gov.uk
Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT)	Police	020 8217 6484
ChildLine		0800 1111 (textphone 0800 400 222)
Westfield Health advice and information line	24 Hour Helpline for The Switch staff	0800 092 0987 or 0145 525 5123



Appendix 2. Consultants' Memorandum Of Understanding

Memorandum of Understanding between Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership (THEBP), trading as The Switch, and Freelance Facilitators.

Context

As a Freelance Facilitator, you have been contracted by The Switch to develop and deliver our work-related learning activities and career development workshops.

You will hold the following key responsibilities (full responsibilities can be found in the Freelance Facilitator job description):

- Deliver The Switch's suite of career development workshops and activities to young people both in person and virtually (deliver virtual sessions from our charity's office as requested).
- Arrive at the school, or be prepared for virtual delivery, 30 minutes before the start of the workshop to allow time for signing in and preparing the space and resources to start the workshop promptly.
- Work with the relevant Senior Project Manager to familiarise yourself with workshop content and conduct independent preparation to deliver outstanding workshops.
- Liaise with on-site school staff including careers leads.
- Act as an ambassador for The Switch with our funders, corporate partners, schools and act as a role model for the young people we work with.
- Brief our committed business volunteers prior to the session on their roles and objectives, as required.
- Work with volunteers either in person or via video link during the session. Incorporate them in the facilitation of the workshop to create an impactful learning experience that is positive for both the young people and our volunteers.
- Ensure student and volunteer impact surveys are completed to the required standard and the data is passed to The Switch staff member within the agreed timelines.
- Ensure key messaging of The Switch and its future rebrand, are delivered consistently and accurately.
- Pass any relevant feedback to the lead Senior Project Manager.
- Follow school external visitors policies.
- Report any safeguarding concerns immediately to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and also for tracking purposes, email the safeguarding concerns to our The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead, Helen Sanson - helen.sanson@theswitch.org.
- Develop delivery frameworks, workshop resources and training materials, within our brand guidelines.

Cancellation Policy

If The Switch/the school cancels an event:

- More than 72 hours' notice: no fee will be paid to the Freelance Facilitator.
- 24 – 72 hours' notice: The Switch will pay the Freelance Facilitator 50% of their fee.
- If the cancellation is less than 24 hours before the event, The Switch will pay 100% of the fee for the first day of work lost, and 50% for each day lost of the same tranche of work thereafter.

If the Freelance Facilitator cancels an event, no fee will be paid.

COVID-19: Procedures

- Freelance Facilitators are required to stay up to date with the latest guidance and advice on the [Government's COVID-19 website](#) and the [NHS COVID-19 website](#).
- Freelance Facilitators must wear a mask in communal areas at the school, if requested.
- Freelance Facilitators may be required to wear a mask while delivering depending on the school.
- Freelance Facilitators must not enter a school or take part in any The Switch event if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or have tested positive for COVID-19.
- Freelance Facilitators must follow any recommended NHS Test and Trace instructions that impact delivering our work, as detailed on the [NHS Test and Trace website](#).
- Freelance Facilitators must inform The Switch if they test positive for COVID-19 so we can inform schools in line with the latest Government guidance and advice.
- Freelance Facilitators must understand the risks involved with delivering workshops in schools in the present climate and accept freelance work accordingly.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets out the expectations and arrangements for the future working relationship between The Switch and the Freelance Facilitator.

1. The Freelance Facilitator will be paid the following fees for work undertaken (VAT n/a):

Workshop facilitation and delivery:

- Full day delivery = £250
- Half day delivery (defined as up to 4.5 hours delivery) = £150

Content development and creation:

- Full day (defined as up to 8 hours) = £200
- Half day (defined as up to 4 hours) = £100

2. Invoices from Freelance Facilitators are to be submitted monthly in arrears (before the 7th of each month) to the relevant Senior Project Manager. These invoices must include a brief breakdown of dates/hours worked and the activities undertaken.
3. These invoices will be paid within 14 days by The Switch.

4. All work commissioned and paid for by The Switch should be performed under The Switch branding and where appropriate that of their partners/supporters and owners of Intellectual Property used in the programmes. Collateral (for example: workshop materials) written by the Freelance Facilitator for The Switch is owned by The Switch. Please refer to appendix below.
5. On request and in any case at the termination of this Agreement, the Freelance Facilitator must deliver to the The Switch all documents related to The Switch work, and any other The Switch property in their possession or under their control, and may not make or retain copies of any documents or computer software. The ownership of all such documents and other property will at all times remain vested in the The Switch.
6. Freelance Facilitators must follow The Switch's Safeguarding Procedures. They read the Safeguarding Policy every year and the relevant Safeguarding Summary and Risk Assessment ahead of every event, confirm that they have done so by email and obtain answers to any questions before the event.
 - 6.2. Freelance Facilitators read [‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ guidance HM Government \(2021\)](#) every two years.
 - 6.3. Freelance Facilitators are required to prove they have done basic safeguarding training in the past two years by emailing The Switch a course confirmation/certificate. The Switch can recommend training but does not fund it for Freelance Facilitators.
 - 6.4. Where a one-off event is delivered by a Freelance Facilitator, a member of The Switch staff will informally debrief with the school contact, including receiving any feedback on their performance. School staff will also be asked to complete an online feedback survey.
 - 6.5. Freelance Facilitators undertake an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check marked 'child workforce', paid for by The Switch. The check must be repeated after three years. The Switch only accepts DBS checks obtained through The Switch.
7. Freelance Facilitators will not use, divulge or communicate to any person, without the Board and the Company's prior written consent, any of the confidential, technical or commercial information of The Switch and its clients whenever received or obtained and in whatever capacity.
8. Either party may terminate this agreement by providing one month's written notice. In addition this agreement may be terminated by the:
 - I. The Switch immediately by written notice if the Freelance Facilitator commits any breach of their obligations under this Agreement; or is guilty of any gross default or misconduct affecting the business of the The Switch; or is guilty of conduct tending to bring them self, or the The Switch into disrepute.
 - II. Freelance Facilitator by two weeks by written notice if the The Switch fails to make payment of fees within the timescales set out in this Agreement.



9. This Agreement will be governed by and construed in accordance with English Law and each of the parties agrees to submit to the jurisdiction of the English courts as regards any claim or matter arising under this Agreement.
10. Freelance Facilitator to be covered by The Switch's Professional Indemnity, Public Liability and Employer's Liability Insurances when on and travelling to and from The Switch official business.

Signed on behalf of The Switch by

.....

Date:

By signing below, I confirm that I've understood all the information in this MOU and will adhere to all of the above as a Freelance Facilitator for The Switch.

.....

Name of Freelance Facilitator (please complete in BLOCK CAPITALS):

.....

Date:



Appendix: Copyright of The Switch Resources

We need to ensure that The Switch work is protected against unlawful copying or adaptation, both by external parties and by staff who leave our organisation. Any staff, including Freelance Facilitators, who create work under The Switch employment must be aware that this work is the property of The Switch and does not belong to the individual who has created it.

Staff/Freelance Facilitators need to please pay attention to the following measures to protect our work. Please note that these measures only apply to substantial resources, such as handbooks, lengthy workshop resources, etc.:

1. Staff need to 'fix' materials (i.e., fix evidence that we are the original authors and the date of creation). You do this by emailing the finished version to yourself as soon as it has been completed and saving the email in a personal folder. Please also email a copy to your line manager/contact at The Switch.
2. Place this copyright notice in visible places in the resource, e.g., inside cover, back outside cover:
Copyright © 2021 Tower Hamlets EBP, First Floor, Norvin House, 45-55 Commercial Street, London, United Kingdom E1 6BD.
[This workbook] is copyright of Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership, trading as The Switch (Registered Charity No. 1040962). This handbook may not be copied without the permission of the copyright owner and all rights are reserved.
3. Distribute electronic copies only in locked PDF format. Copies on our website should also only be in PDF format unless there is a reason why parties need to access an editable version.
4. For materials that are being used by or paid for by new parties, such as an EBP outside of London for example, you may need to create written terms, including a licence to use the materials for defined and limited purposes. This ensures that we retain control over the breadth and time of distribution, especially if we have charged for the use of the materials.



Appendix 3: Handling Allegations Procedure

Handling Allegations made against an Employee/Volunteer Procedure

This procedure outlines what you should do if a child protection allegation is made against an adult working for or involved in **The Switch**. The procedure provides a clear direction to **The Switch** Associates who are called upon to deal with such allegations and to manage investigations that may result from them.

The aims of this procedure are:

- To ensure that children who attend **The Switch activities**, and any other children who may come to our attention, are protected and supported following an allegation that they may have been abused by an adult from within **The Switch**.
- To ensure that there is a fair, consistent and robust response to any allegations made, so that the risk posed to other children by an abusive individual is managed effectively.
- to facilitate an appropriate level of investigation into allegations, whether they are said to have taken place recently, at any time the person in question has been employed by/volunteered with **The Switch**, or prior to the person's involvement with **The Switch**.
- To ensure that **The Switch** continues to fulfil its responsibilities towards members of staff, volunteers or trustees who may be subject to such investigations.
- To ensure that individuals are able to continue in their role if they have been at the centre of allegations that are unfounded or deemed to be malicious in origin.

This procedure applies to:

- Any member of staff, volunteer or trustee (**The Switch Associates**) to whom an allegation of abuse has been made, that involves another member of staff, volunteer or trustee.
- Anyone in a managerial position, including the named person for child protection (**The Director**), line managers, supervisors and trustees, who may be required to deal with such allegations and manage investigations that result from them.

How you might find out about a possible case of abuse

Ways that allegations might be made against an adult working for or involved with The Switch include:

- A child or parent/carer making a direct allegation against a member of staff or trustee or volunteer.
- A child or parent/carer expressing discomfort with the behaviour of a member of staff or trustee or volunteer that falls short of a specific allegation.
- Another member of staff or trustee or volunteer directly observing behaviour that is a cause for concern.
- **The Switch** being informed by the police or another statutory authority that a member of staff, volunteer or trustee is the subject of an investigation.
- Information emerging from the renewal of a DBS check that suggests that a member of staff, volunteer or trustee may have committed an offence, or been involved in an activity that could compromise the safety of the children they work with at **The Switch**.
- A staff member or volunteer or trustee telling the organisation that they have been the subject of allegations, have actually harmed a child, or committed an offence against (or related to) a child.

What to do if an allegation is made or information is received

There are potentially two issues that need to be dealt with as a matter of urgency:

1. Is a child in immediate danger or does she/he need emergency medical attention?

- If a child is in immediate danger and is with you, remain with him/her and call the police.
- If the child is elsewhere, contact the police and explain the situation to them.
- If the child needs emergency medical attention, call an ambulance and, while you are waiting for it to arrive, get help from your first aider.
- If the first aider is not available, use any first aid knowledge that you may have yourself to help the child.

You also need to contact your manager or named person for child protection (**The Director**) to let them know what is happening.

The member of staff or manager should also inform the child's family if the child is in need of emergency medical attention, and arrange to meet them at the hospital or medical centre. The parents/carers should be informed that an incident has occurred, that the child has been injured and that immediate steps have been taken to get help.

2. Is the person at the centre of the allegation working with children now?

If this is the case, the concern needs to be discussed immediately with the **The Switch**. S/he should then, in a sensitive manner, remove the staff member involved in the allegation from direct contact with children.

It should then be explained to the person, in private, that there has been a complaint made against him/her, although the details of the complaint should not be given at this stage. The person should be informed that further information will be provided as soon as possible but

that, until consultation has taken place with the relevant agencies and within the organisation, they should not be working with children. It may be best, under the circumstances, for the person to return home on the understanding that the manager or named person will telephone him/her later in the day.

The information provided to him/her at this stage will need to be very limited. This is because discussions need to take place first with other agencies who may need to be involved, such as the local authority Children's Social Care Department, the police or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

If the person is a member of a trade union or a professional organisation, he/she should be advised to make contact with that body. Arrangements should also be made for the member of staff or volunteer or trustee to receive ongoing support in line with the responsibilities the organisation has towards his or her welfare.

Conducting an investigation

Once any urgent necessary steps have been taken, attention can be given to dealing with the full implications of the allegations. There are up to three possible lines of enquiry when an allegation is made:

- A police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
- Enquiries and an assessment by the local authority Children's Social Care Department about whether a child is in need of protection;
- Investigation by the employer and possible disciplinary action being taken against the person in question.

This includes implementing a plan to manage any risk posed by the individual to children and young people in the workplace until the outcome of the other investigations and enquiries is known.

Reporting an allegation or concern

If the allegation is made by a child or family member to a member of staff or volunteer, or if a member of staff observes concerning behaviour by a colleague at first hand, this should be reported immediately to the staff member's/volunteer's manager and the named person for child protection (**The Director**); **The Switch's** lead on handling the allegation.

If a staff member or volunteer has received an allegation or observed something of concern about their own manager, the staff member/volunteer should report the allegation or concern to the person more senior to their manager.

If the person who is the subject of the concern is the named person for child protection (**The Director**), the matter should be reported to the Chair of Trustees.

When to involve the local authority designated officer

The named person should report the allegation to the local authority designated officer (LADO) within one working day if the alleged behaviour suggests that the person in question:

- May have behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child;
- Has possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Has behaved towards a child in a way that suggests that he/she may be unsuitable to work with children.

This should also happen if the individual has volunteered the information him/herself.

The LADO may be told of the allegation from another source. If this is the case, then the first information received by **The Switch** may be when the LADO makes contact in order to explain the situation.

Whoever initiates the contact, there will be discussion between the LADO and **The Switch's** named person (**The Director**) to share information about the nature and circumstances of the allegation, and to consider whether there is any evidence to suggest that it may be false or unfounded.

If there is any reason to suspect that a child has suffered, or be likely to suffer, significant harm and there are no obvious indications that the allegation is false, the LADO, in cooperation with **The Switch**, will make an immediate referral to the local authority Children's Social Care Department to ask for a strategy discussion.

The LADO and named person will take part in the strategy discussion. The named person (**The Director**) and any other representative from **The Switch** should cooperate fully with this, and any subsequent discussion with the Children's Social Care Department.

It should be asked from the outset that the Children's Social Care Department shares any information obtained during the course of their enquiries with **The Switch**, if it has any relevance to the person's employment.

Dealing with a criminal offence

If there is reason to suspect that a criminal offence may have been committed (whether or not the threshold of 'significant harm' is reached), the LADO will contact the police and involve them in a similar strategy discussion, which will include the named person for child protection (**The Director**).

The named person (**The Director**) and any other representative from **The Switch** should cooperate fully with any discussion involving the police, and should ask for similar cooperation from the police in terms of the sharing of information relevant to the person's employment.

Discussions with the police should also explore whether there are matters that can be acted on in a disciplinary process while the criminal investigation takes place, or whether disciplinary action must wait until the criminal process is completed.

Talking to parents about the allegation or concern

If the child's parents/carers do not already know about the allegation, the named person (**The Director**) and the LADO need to discuss how they should be informed and by whom.

Talking to the person who is the subject of the allegation

The person at the centre of the allegation should be informed as soon as possible after the initial consultation with the LADO. However, if a strategy discussion with Children's Social Care Department or the police is needed, this might have to take place before the person concerned can be spoken to in full.

The police and Children's Social Care Department may have views on what information can be disclosed to the person.

Only limited information should be given to the person in question, unless the investigating authorities have indicated that they are happy for all information to be disclosed, or unless there is no need for involvement from these statutory agencies.

The named person (**The Director**) will need to keep in close communication with the LADO and the other agencies involved in order to manage the disclosure of information appropriately.

Taking disciplinary action

If the initial allegation does not involve a possible criminal offence, the named person (**The Director**) and manager of the person at the centre of the allegation should still consider whether formal disciplinary action is needed.

If the local authority Children's Social Care Department has undertaken any enquiries to determine whether a child or children are in need of protection, the named person (**The Director**) should take account of any relevant information from these enquiries when considering whether disciplinary action should be brought against the person at the centre of the allegations.

The following timings should be kept to wherever possible, depending on the nature of the investigation:

- If formal disciplinary action is not needed, other appropriate action should be taken within 3 working days.
- If disciplinary action is required, and can be progressed without further investigation, this should take place within 10 days.
- If **The Switch** decides that further investigation is needed in order to make a decision about formal disciplinary action, the named person for child protection (**The Director**) should discuss with the LADO the possibility of this investigation being done by an independent person to ensure that the process is objective. Whether or not the investigation is handled internally or independently, the report should be presented to the named person (**The Director**) within 10 working days.
- Having received the report of the disciplinary investigation, the named person (**The Director**) should decide within 2 working days whether a disciplinary hearing is needed.
- If a hearing is needed, it should be held within 15 working days.
- The named person (**The Director**) should continue to liaise with the LADO during the course of any investigation or disciplinary proceedings, and should continue to use the LADO as a source of advice and support.

If a criminal investigation is required, it may not have been possible to make decisions about initiating disciplinary proceedings or about the person's future work arrangements until this is concluded. The police are required to complete their work as soon as reasonably possible and to set review dates, so the named person (**The Director**) should either liaise with the police directly or via the LADO to check on the progress of the investigation and criminal process.

The police are also required to inform the employer straight away if the person is either convicted of an offence or acquitted or, alternatively, if a decision is made not to charge him/her with an offence or to administer a caution. In any eventuality, once the outcome is known, the named person (**The Director**) should contact the LADO to discuss the issue of disciplinary proceedings.

If the allegation is substantiated and if, once the case is concluded, **The Switch** dismisses the person or ceases to use their services, or the person ceases to provide his/her services, the named person should consult with the LADO about referral of the incident to the DBS. This should take place within a month.

Managing risk and supporting the person at the centre of the allegation

The first priority of **The Switch** must always be the safety and welfare of children and young people.

However, as an employee or volunteer, the person who is the subject of the allegation has a right to be treated in a fair, sensitive and non-judgmental manner and to have his or her privacy respected, as far as this ensures the safety of the child and other children.

Information about the allegation must only be shared on a need-to-know basis with those directly responsible for supervising and managing the staff member or volunteer. Any other information (for example, explanations to other staff members as to why the person is not at work or working to different arrangements) should be agreed and negotiated with the individual concerned.

If the person is a member of a trade union or a professional organisation, he/she should be advised to make contact with that body as soon as possible after being informed that he/she is the subject of an allegation. Arrangements should also be made for him/her to receive ongoing support and information about the progress of the investigation.

The possible risk of harm to children and young people presented by the person who is the subject of an allegation needs to be carefully managed, both during and after any conclusion to the investigation processes following the allegation. This means that **The Switch** may need to consider suspending the person if there is cause to suspect that a child may be at risk of significant harm, or if the allegation is serious enough to warrant investigation by the police, or if it is so serious that it could lead to dismissal. However, a decision to suspend should not be taken automatically, as there may be other ways of managing any risk presented by the person.

The situation should be discussed fully between the named person (**The Director**), the individual's manager and the LADO, who will seek the views of the police and the Children's Social Care Department on the question of possible suspension. The conclusions of the discussion should also be carefully documented. Grounds for suspension

should be clearly set out if this is the conclusion. If suspension is not the conclusion, then a clear plan should be made as to how any possible risk posed by the individual is to be managed. This could involve, for example, changes to the person's duties so that they do not have direct contact with children, and/or increased levels of supervision whilst at work. If it is decided, once the case has been concluded, that a person who has been suspended, or who has taken sick leave due to the stress induced by the allegation, is able to return to work, the named person (**The Director**) and the manager of the person who has been the subject of the allegations should consider how best to support the individual in this process. A plan to facilitate a return should be drawn up in consultation with the individual him/herself, and should take into account the need to manage any remaining child protection risks and also to support the person concerned after what will have been and will remain a very difficult experience.

If the decision is that the person cannot return to work and has to be dismissed or chooses to resign, the named person and the LADO should discuss the need for the matter to be referred to the DBS and/or to any professional body to which the person may belong. **The Switch** does not enter into compromise agreements with individuals who resign following the conclusion of investigations into allegations made against them, and will always comply with its statutory obligations to share information about the individual in the interests of protecting children and young people.

If the allegation is found to be without substance or fabricated, **The Switch** will consider referring the child in question to the Children's Social Care Department for them to assess whether he/she is in need of services or whether he/she may have been abused by someone else. If it is felt that there has been malicious intent behind the allegation, **The Switch** will discuss with the police whether there are grounds to pursue any action against the person responsible.

Keeping a record of the investigation

All those involved in dealing with the allegation should keep clear notes of the allegations made, how they were followed up, and any actions and decisions taken, together with the reasons for these.

These notes should be compiled gradually as the situation unfolds, with each entry being made as soon as possible after the event it describes. The notes should be signed and dated by the person making them, and the person's name should be printed alongside.

The notes should be kept confidentially on the file of the person who is the subject of the allegation. Discussion should take place with the LADO to determine whether any aspects of the notes may not be shared with the person concerned. If there are no reasons not to do so, a copy of the records should be given to the individual.

The notes should be held on file for a 10-year period, whether or not the person remains with **The Switch** for this period.

Appendix 4. The Seven Golden Rules to Information Sharing



The seven golden rules to sharing information

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.
5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles).
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

Appendix 5. Safeguarding Summaries



Thank you for volunteering to speak at a live webinar!

Attend the briefing so we can get to know you ahead of the event.

You are virtually inviting an audience of children into the room, so please follow the Video Guidelines and ensure nothing inappropriate, personal or distracting is caught by your camera, microphone or device.

For example, ensure those who live with you will not enter the room, move away from explicit artworks, and take down any phone numbers etc.

If anything inappropriate is caught, the producer will switch to another view or mute you immediately, and may remove you from the event.

Young people and school staff may join the webinar from home or school, separately or as a class. You won't be able to see or hear the attendees. This reduces risks such as cyber-bullying, hijacking and safeguarding concerns.

However, if you have any concerns about the welfare of anyone involved, please let the host know or contact The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Helen Sanson
020 7655 0300

Attendees will interact with the webinar by commenting and asking questions, which will be moderated by a member of The Switch staff.

The Moderator will publish the comments and may respond to some in writing.

The host will ask you selected questions verbally, so there is no need for you to access the Q&A window.

The chat window is only visible to the host, producer, moderator and presenters, so you can use it to contact The Switch without the attendees seeing.

Thank you for volunteering!

Attend the briefing so we can get to know you ahead of the event.

Please use correct login details and ensure your virtual name is one known to The Switch so that staff can successfully admit you into the call.

Please let The Switch know with as much notice as possible if you are unable to attend.

Young people and school staff will join the event from school. Anything the young person says will be within earshot of their peers and a teacher.

The chat window will not be enabled in your breakout room. If the chat window is enabled at any point during the workshop, messages will be monitored by The Switch.

Do not accept students' invitations on social media (eg Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn). Never share any contact details or personal information which could be used to identify you, except your name and company.

You are virtually inviting a young person into the room, so please follow the Video Guidelines and ensure nothing inappropriate, personal or distracting is caught by your camera, microphone or device.

For example, ensure those who live with you will not enter the room, move away from explicit artworks, and take down any phone numbers etc.

If anything inappropriate is caught, the host will remove you from the event immediately.

Do not take any screenshots or record the workshop. Photos of young people will only be taken by a member of staff who has permission to do so. Photos will be shared on The Switch's social media and may be included in reports.

If you do not want a screenshot to be taken of you during a video call, please let The Switch know by completing the volunteer registration survey during the briefing session, or notify a member of staff.

If a screenshot is taken by a member of staff, surnames will be omitted to ensure privacy of all participants. The school should ideally be the first to tweet workshop pictures. The school should tag the Charity (@TheSwitchOrg) and company sponsor so that it can be retweeted without any permission concerns.

What to do if you have a concern about the welfare of a young person



People working in schools are uniquely placed to notice signs and symptoms of abuse. If you have a concern about the welfare of a young person, you must report it before the end of the event.

To report a concern in front of the young person, use the 'ask for help' button to invite a member of The Switch staff into the breakout room.

To report a concern without the young person, return to the main Zoom room either during the session or at the end and tell the member of The Switch staff responsible that you have a safeguarding concern.

The member of staff will tell the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The member of staff will also tell The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy.

If you would like to discuss the concern and receive support and guidance, contact The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead as well as your contact at The Switch.
Helen Sanson
020 7655 0300

Thank you for volunteering!

- Always sign in and out at the school/college reception.
- You will be asked to show photo ID on arrival.
- Please let The Switch know with as much notice as possible if you are unable to attend a session.
- Work in an open, group environment – avoid private or unobserved situations and encourage open communication with no secrets.
- Do not accompany a young person to use the toilet. If your event takes place out of school, a member of The Switch staff will do so.
- Never share any contact details or personal information which could be used to identify you, except your name and company.
- Do not accept students' invitations on social media (eg Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn).
- Do not initiate physical contact with a young person, other than to greet them or say farewell by shaking hands. If you do find yourself on the receiving end of a hug, make sure you shake hands the next time you see them to re-establish this as the appropriate type of contact.

What to do if you have a concern about the welfare of a young person

You must tell the member of The Switch staff responsible for the event about your concern before you leave.

The member of staff will tell the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The member of staff will also tell The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy.

If you would like to discuss the concern and receive support and guidance, contact The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead as well as your contact at The Switch.

Helen Sanson
020 7655 0300

Thank you for volunteering as a Mentor!

Mentees and school staff will join the event from school. Your mentee will be within earshot of their peers and a teacher.

You must not attend a mentoring session or contact your mentee until your enhanced DBS certificate arrives. If you lose the certificate, please inform The Switch and apply for a replacement.

All communication must take place over the Brightside platform, you and your mentee shouldn't share mobile numbers, email addresses or add each other on social media.

Do not communicate with mentees via social media or become 'friends' or contacts online.

An exception may be made for LinkedIn where you may 'connect' with your mentee in order to support the building of an online network. Do not use LinkedIn for private communication.

Only e-chat with your mentee within the hours of 9am-6pm Monday-Friday.

Mentees and mentors should not meet face to face outside of the project until social distancing measures have ended, then all meetings should take place at your office at a scheduled time.

Please let The Switch know with as much notice as possible if you are unable to attend a group session.

Never share any contact details or personal information which could be used to identify you, except your name, company and office phone number. Do not accept any contact details from your mentee. You can contact them via the Brightside platform, The Switch and the school's phone number.

If you are given information about your mentee's wellbeing, treat it with sensitivity and confidentiality.

You are virtually inviting a young person into the room, so please ensure nothing inappropriate, personal or distracting is caught by your camera, microphone or device.

For example, ensure those who live with you will not enter the room, move away from explicit artworks, and take down any phone numbers etc.

If anything inappropriate is caught, you may be removed from the event immediately.

Brightside messages that are flagged and all attachments are approved/declined by site administrators.

Remote Mentoring Safeguarding Summary



For videos calls, choose the best available space, considering:

- Change background to work background if possible
- Little noise
- Good lighting
- Use headphones to reduce noise

To invite a member of The Switch staff into your breakout room, click 'ask for help'.

Do not take any screenshots or record the session.

Photos of young people will only be taken by a member of staff who has permission to do so.

Photos will be shared on The Switch social media and may be included in reports.

If you do not want a screenshot to be taken of you during a video call, please let The Switch know in advance.

The school should ideally be the first to tweet session pictures. The school should tag the Charity (@TheSwitchOrg) and company sponsor so that it can be retweeted without any permission concerns.

What should I do if my mentee asks me personal questions, becomes too attached, or contacts me after work hours?

- Meeting regularly means that mentors and mentees are likely to develop a strong rapport, and you will see your mentee grow in confidence. They will naturally be curious about you, and enjoy getting to know a new adult.
- Be friendly but not overfamiliar, and don't feel that you have to answer all of their questions. Remind your mentee that the focus of the session is to work on business topics, and try and keep conversations to relevant areas.
- Fill in the mentoring agreement together to set expectations for your relationship, including how you will contact each other.

If this does become a problem, it is best to speak to the School Coordinator or Volunteer Coordinator.

What to do if you have a concern about the welfare of a young person



Mentors are uniquely placed to notice signs and symptoms of abuse.



If you have a concern about the welfare of a young person during a group session, you must return to the main Zoom room during the session or at the end, and tell the member of The Switch staff responsible that you have a safeguarding concern. They will meet you in a private breakout room or phonecall to listen to the details.



The member of staff will tell the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.



The member of staff will also tell The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy. You may also discuss this with the member of The Switch staff responsible for mentoring to discuss how your concern will impact your sessions.



If you have a concern about the welfare of a young person outside a group session, you must contact the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. The main school contact number will be on the Brightside platform and you would ask to speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy if the Lead isn't available. You will receive their name and phone number via Brightside. You must also tell The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead.



Report to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead anything communication that makes you feel uncomfortable, is offensive, discriminatory, threatening or bullying in nature. Do not respond to it.



The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead is
Helen Sanson
020 7655 0300

Thank you for volunteering as a Mentor!

You must not contact your mentee or attend a mentoring session (except a Lloyd's launch, if applicable) until your enhanced DBS certificate arrives. If you lose the certificate, please inform The Switch and apply for a replacement.

If you are given information about your mentee's wellbeing, treat it with sensitivity and confidentiality.

Please let The Switch know with as much notice as possible if you are unable to attend a group session.

Sessions via Video Call

Mentees and school staff will join the event from school. Your mentee will be within earshot of their peers and a teacher.

You are virtually inviting a young person into the room, so please ensure nothing inappropriate, personal or distracting is caught by your camera, microphone or device.

For example, ensure those who live with you will not enter the room, move away from explicit artworks, and take down any phone numbers etc.

If anything inappropriate is caught, you may be removed from the event immediately.

For video calls, please choose the best available space, considering:

- Change background to work background if possible
- Little noise
- Good lighting
- Use headphones to reduce noise

To invite a member of The Switch staff into your breakout room, click 'ask for help'.

Do not take any screenshots or record the session

Photos of young people will only be taken by a member of staff who has permission to do so.

Photos will be shared on The Switch's social media and may be included in reports.

If you do not want a screenshot to be taken of you during a video call, please let The Switch know in advance.

The school should ideally be the first to tweet workshop pictures. The school should tag the Charity (@TheSwitchOrg) and company sponsor so that it can be retweeted without any permission concerns.



Blended Mentoring Safeguarding Summary

Sessions in person

If your scheme includes attending the school/college, you may be asked to show photo ID and/or your DBS certificate on arrival.

Always sign in and out at the school/college reception.

Ensure you meet your mentee at approved times and locations only.

Choose the best available space for mentoring sessions. An ideal space is public (e.g. the office cafeteria) or has an open door which makes you and your mentee visible to others. Sessions should not take place in a secluded area, where other staff members are unable to see into the room.

Do not accompany a young person to use the toilet.

It is acceptable to offer refreshments to mentees if they are visiting you at your workplace, but check if they have any dietary or medical issues first.

Do not initiate physical contact with a mentee, other than to greet them or say farewell by shaking hands. If you do find yourself on the receiving end of a hug, make sure you shake hands the next time you see them to re-establish this as the appropriate type of contact.

Communicating between sessions

Never share any contact details or personal information which could be used to identify you, except your name, company, office landline phone number. Don't accept any contact details from them.

All communication must take place via the Brightside platform, The Switch, and the school's phone number. Brightside messages that are flagged and all attachments are approved/declined by site administrators.

If you are given permission to communicate with your mentee by email, then you may share your work email address and accept their school email address. Please include school coordinator in any email correspondence with mentees during the programme.

Ensure you e-chat with your mentee within the hours of 9am-6pm Monday-Friday only.

Do not communicate with mentees via social media or become 'friends' or contacts online.

An exception may be made for LinkedIn where you may 'connect' with your mentee in order to support the building of an online network. You must not use LinkedIn for ongoing private communication.

What should I do if my mentee asks me personal questions, becomes too attached, or contacts me after work hours?

- Meeting regularly means that mentors and mentees are likely to develop a strong rapport, and you will see your mentee grow in confidence. They will naturally be curious about you, and enjoy getting to know a new adult.
- Be friendly but not overfamiliar, and don't feel that you have to answer all of their questions. Remind your mentee that the focus of the session is to work on business topics, and try and keep conversations to relevant areas.
- Fill in the mentoring agreement together to set expectations for your relationship, including how you will contact each other.
- If this does become a problem, it is best to speak to the School Coordinator or Volunteer Coordinator.

What to do if you have a concern about the welfare of a young person



Mentors are uniquely placed to notice signs and symptoms of abuse.



If you have a concern about the welfare of a young person during a video call session, you must return to the main Zoom room and tell the member of The Switch staff responsible that you have a safeguarding concern. They will meet you in a private breakout room or phonecall to listen to the details. The member of staff will tell the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. The member of staff will also tell The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy.



If a concern arises during an event at the school, you must tell the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead before you leave. If you are unsure who they are, ask for the Safeguarding Lead at the school office. You must also tell The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If you have a concern about the welfare of a young person at another time, you must tell the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. The main school contact number will be on the Brightside platform. Ask to speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy if the Lead isn't available. (You will be sent their name and phone number via Brightside). You must also tell The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If a concern arises during a session outside school at the end of the day, follow the steps above and send the young person back to school if sending them home would put them in an unsafe situation. If it is too late in the day to reach the school or The Switch by phone, call the Local Area Designated Office (LADO) on 0207 364 0677 or NSPCC's 24 hours helpline on 0808 800 5000.



The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead is
Helen Sanson
020 7655 0300



You may also discuss this with the member of The Switch staff responsible for mentoring to discuss how your concern will impact your sessions.

Thank you for volunteering as a Writing Partner!

If you are given information about the child's wellbeing, treat it with sensitivity and confidentiality.

Never share any contact details or personal information which could be used to identify you beyond your name and company.

Do not accept children's invitations on social media (eg Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn).

If they send you a request, let The Switch know.

What to do if you have a concern about the welfare of a young person

If you have any concerns, however small, about a child's welfare, you must phone the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. Your Safeguarding Moderator will send you their name and phone number.



If anything in the child's letter makes you feel uncomfortable, is offensive, discriminatory, threatening or bullying in nature, phone the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. Do not respond to it in your letter.



You must also tell The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead that you have reported a concern.

Helen Sanson
020 7655 0300

How does Writing Partners work?

- Submit your letter to the Safeguarding Moderator at your company before the deadline on your schedule.
- The Safeguarding Moderator will read the letter, remove any personal information and email it to the teacher.
- The children will write their letters together with the teacher who will scan them to the Safeguarding Moderator.
- The Safeguarding Moderator will read the letters, remove any personal information and email the child's letter to you.

Is Writing Partners safe?

- Any inappropriate content will be noted by the Safeguarding Moderator and not passed on to the child or volunteer, and any concerning content will be reported.
- All letters will be sent via the Safeguarding Moderator, so you will not exchange contact details with the child or stay in touch after the programme ends.
- Do not include any personal details in your letters; just your first name, initial if necessary, and company.

Thank you for volunteering on a Partner Scheme!

- Always sign in and out at the school reception.
- You may be asked to show photo ID on arrival.
- You must not attend the school until your enhanced DBS certificate arrives. Be prepared to show it every time you attend the school. If you lose the certificate, please inform The Switch. You may be asked to stop attending the school until a replacement arrives.
- Please let the school know with as much notice as possible if they are unable to attend a session.
- Co-ordinate and liaise with the company coordinator / school to ascertain term end and start dates and any INSET days etc.
- If you are given information about the child's wellbeing, treat it with sensitivity and confidentiality.
- Never share any contact details or personal information which could be used to identify you beyond your name and company.
- Do not accept a child's invitations on social media (eg Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn). If they send you a request, let The Switch know.
- Do not initiate physical contact with a child, other than to greet them or say farewell by shaking hands. If you do find yourself on the receiving end of a hug, make sure you shake hands the next time you see them to re-establish this as the appropriate type of contact.

What to do if you have a concern about the welfare of a young person

If you have a concern about the welfare of a child, you must report it to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead before you leave the school. If you are unsure who they are, ask for the Safeguarding Lead at the school office.



You must also tell The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Lead that you have reported a concern.

Helen Sanson, 020 7655 0300