



Safeguarding

and Child Protection
Policy and Procedures

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures

Since 1991, the Switch has been providing educational experiences to raise the aspirations and boost the career chances of young people. With a committed, enthusiastic team, and our extensive relationships with schools and local businesses, we're helping the community of Tower Hamlets work together to give every child a promising future.

Through a wide range of volunteer-based programmes, The Switch provides a vital link between education and the world of work. Bringing communities together, we're helping businesses to give back and enabling schools to achieve more. The result: we're permanently changing the future outlook for thousands.

The Switch Board of Trustees takes seriously their responsibility to safeguard and promote the wellbeing 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 wellbeing of a child or young person.

We follow The Switch safeguarding procedures in our office.



Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Purpose of Policy and Procedures | 4 |
| 2. Relevant legislation and roles | 4 |
| 3. Staff Responsibilities..... | 5 |
| 4.Complaints and allegations..... | 6 |
| 5. Risk assessment..... | 7 |
| 6. Confidentiality | 8 |
| 7. Recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers | 8 |
| 8. Induction and training for volunteers..... | 9 |
| 9. Code of Conduct for volunteers..... | 11 |
| 10. Responding to Disclosures | 12 |
| 11. Abuse | 14 |
| 12. Support for Staff and Volunteers..... | 21 |
| 13. Online Safety | 22 |
| Appendix 1. Contact Details | 24 |
| Appendix 2. The Seven Golden Rules to Information Sharing | 25 |
| Appendix 3. Multi-Agency Safeguarding Team | 26 |
| Appendix 4. Safeguarding Summaries..... | 26 |
| | |
| Appendix 4.1. Partner Scheme Safeguarding Summary..... | 31 |
| Appendix 4.2. Writing Partners Safeguarding Summary..... | 32 |
| Appendix 4.3. Mentoring Safeguarding Summary..... | 33 |
| Appendix 4.4. Remote Volunteering Safeguarding Summary..... | 36 |
| Appendix 4.5. Workshops in Offices Safeguarding Summary..... | 38 |
| Appendix 4.6. Workshops in Schools Safeguarding Summary..... | 39 |
| Appendix 4.7. Work Experience Safeguarding Guide..... | 40 |



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 wellbeing 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 wellbeing of children and young people.
 - The Child Protection Policy of the child or 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 wellbeing 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 wellbeing 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 procedures fit with procedures in schools and other local agencies.

2. Relevant legislation and roles

This policy is informed by the '[Working Together to Safeguard Children' guidance DfE \(2023\)](#), ['Keeping Children Safe in Education'](#), relevant legislation and Acts including the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004 and the Children and Social Work Act 2017. We have also consulted guidance provided by Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Board and NSPCC to inform this policy.

'Volunteer' refers to any current employee of a company which partners with The Switch, or community volunteer, 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 any of The Switch's current Mentoring programmes.

'Freelance Facilitator' refers to a consultant, 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.

Freelance Facilitators

Safeguarding

Reviewed January 2026

Page 4 of 40



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

'Designated Safeguarding Officer or 'DSO' refers to The Switch's director.

'Local Authority 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. When working beyond the borough, this refers to the LADO for the relevant Local Authority (See Appendix 1. Contact Details.)

3. Staff Responsibilities

- 3.1.1. The Switch's Director, Megan Hunter, is the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO). She is supported at board level by a dedicated trustee who has safeguarding experience at an FE college. In addition, she attends regular local area meetings and training.
- 3.1.2. The Switch has a Deputy DSO with responsibility for under 18s, a Deputy DSO with responsibility for 16-25 year-olds and a Deputy DSO with responsibility for Work Experience.
- 3.1.3. Both the DSO and their Deputies undertake 12 hours of safeguarding training over every two year period.
- 3.1.4. When a concern is reported to a DSO or Deputy, they ensure the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) has received the concern and responded to it appropriately by the end of the day.
- 3.1.5. If they cannot get hold of the school's DSL, they contact Tower Hamlets' Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST) or the out of hours support team after 5pm. (See Appendix 1: Contact Details.)
- 3.1.6. The DSL or Deputy also records the concern, using the Safeguarding Incident Form which staff can view at: [General > 02. Operations > 08. Safeguarding > 08. Records](#)
- 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 wellbeing of the children and young people with whom we work and to respond to concerns.
- 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 online safeguarding training (including online safety) from NSPCC and read '[Keeping Children Safe in Education Part One](#)'
 - 3.5.1. All new staff read and sign the Staff Handbook, including Core Standards of Behaviour and the Code of Conduct for staff.
 - 3.6. All staff receive refresher safeguarding training from an external organisation every two years.
 - 3.7. All staff and Freelance Facilitators working directly with young people are required to read '[Keeping Children Safe in Education Part One](#)' and any updates at least every two years.
 - 3.8. Freelance Facilitators are sometimes used to deliver events. Freelance Facilitators follow The Switch's Safeguarding Procedures. They read this policy and '[Keeping Children Safe in Education Part One](#)' every year and the relevant Safeguarding Summary ahead of every event, and obtain answers to any questions before the event. (See Appendix 4. Safeguarding Summaries.)



- 3.9. Freelance Facilitators and temporary staff are required to confirm that they have read and understood our Safeguarding Policy and sign a Memorandum of Understanding.
- 3.10. Freelance Facilitators complete an enhanced DBS check before they can work with the Switch. 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 Freelance Facilitator delivering the event should report it to the school's DSL before they leave the school, and to The Switch's DSO or the Deputy before the end of the day.
- 3.12. Where a one-off event is delivered by a Freelance Facilitator 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 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 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. For 'infrequent' volunteering (see 7.2.2.), the Project Manager is responsible for planning for the volunteers to be supervised at all times, and communicating this to the delivery staff and volunteers.
- 3.17. 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.
- 3.18. For Mentoring, the school must obtain parental consent for each young person before the first one-to-one session with their Mentor.
- 3.19. Mentors 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 Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is responsible for dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse about someone who works with children or young people.
- 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 DSO or their Deputy will report concerns to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- 4.2.4. When a child or young person abuses another child or young person, it is sometimes called 'peer on peer abuse', 'peer abuse' or 'child-on-child abuse'. 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 DSO 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 Procedure which is available at theswitch.org/safeguarding/
- 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 DSO should be informed.
- 4.3.4. If there is a concern about The Switch's DSO, 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 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 at The Switch is found to have convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings that indicate a potential risk to children or young people, 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 Freelance Facilitators 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.) A DBS check is necessary if the volunteer will be taking part in a 'frequent' activity,

7.2.5. 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 Induction of mentees

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 Switch Project Manager understand their motivation for volunteering.

7.3.4. Mentors complete a safeguarding quiz, following their training, to test their knowledge of Safeguarding and Children Protection. The Project Manager contacts any Mentor with a significant number of incorrect answers, to improve their understanding.

7.3.5. Mentors whose DBS certificate has not yet arrived must not contact their mentee or participate in a session, though they may attend a Mentoring launch.

7.3.6. Mentees are reminded of their school's instructions for speaking up if they feel uncomfortable or unsafe, before the start of the programme.

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 requires continuing staff and volunteers to apply for a new DBS check every three years.

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.

8. Induction and training for volunteers

8.1.1. Volunteers on 'frequent' programmes (see 7.2.3.) are required to attend a compulsory training or watch a training video 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.

8.1.2. After watching a training video, volunteers are required to tick a box confirming that they have watched the video in full and understand the Child Protection and Safeguarding information.

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.

8.4. All volunteers are given a written Safeguarding Summary for their programme including appropriate reporting systems for safeguarding concerns. (See Appendix 4. 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 Volunteers

NB: For the Staff Code of Conduct, see 3.5.1



- Follow this code of conduct, even if you happen to encounter a young person when not on site or involved with a project.
- You are representing The Switch, so uphold The Switch's positive reputation and behave in a way which would not be misinterpreted, avoiding compromising or potentially dangerous situations.
- Be an excellent role model – keep conversation and actions appropriate to the situation. Keep your focus on the task and learning objectives.
- Keep an open mind, taking care not to hold presuppositions or stereotypes.
- Treat everyone with respect and sensitivity. Never promote your religious or political ideas or beliefs.
- Put the wellbeing of each young person first.
- Don't share contact details or social media (eg LinkedIn). (If a young person shares contact details or social media, treat it as a Safeguarding concern).
- Keep your phone out of sight throughout the event. In an emergency, leave the room before using it.
- Never take photos, videos or screenshots of young people.
- Dress appropriately, avoiding revealing clothing or anything with inappropriate images or slogans. If in doubt, wear business attire.
- Call out any abusive, discriminatory or demeaning attitudes, language or behaviour from staff, volunteers and young people.
- If a young person needs to use the toilet, prompt them to ask their teacher or a member of The Switch staff. Never accompany them to the toilet yourself or give them permission.
- Never initiate physical contact with a young person.
- Do not make sexually suggestive comments.
- Never engage in a sexual relationship with a young person, 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.
- Never give gifts or money to an individual young person.
- Never invite a young person to individual homes or other venues.
- Do not vape, smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of a young person, virtually or in person.
- Never promise to keep anything confidential.
- Always adhere to the The Switch safeguarding policy.
- Know what to do if a young person makes a disclosure.



10. Responding to Disclosures

Dealing with a disclosure

Volunteers have a duty of care to be vigilant and respond appropriately to concerns about the wellbeing of a young person.

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

If you have a concern, you should:

- Take seriously any allegations, suspicions or concerns about abuse that a young person makes.
- Observe, listen and remain calm. Allow them to talk freely without interruptions or questions.
- Don't ask for more information or make judgements or negative comments. Don't push or lead the conversation.
- Never try to interpret any of the information yourself. Remember it is not your job to prove or disprove what the young person tells you.
- Tell them what you are going to do next. Explain that the information they have shared will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep anything confidential.
- Report any concerns that you have, no matter how small they might be.
- Report your concern on the day you first feel concerned.

Follow your programme's procedure for reporting concerns. If in doubt, phone The Switch Designated Safeguarding Officer:

Megan Hunter - 020 7655 0300

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 wellbeing of anyone involved, please let the host know or contact The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Officer: Megan Hunter 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. Megan Hunter 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 Officer or the Deputy.

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

10.2.4. 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 wellbeing of a young person, 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 Officer.

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 Children's Services out of hours emergency contact number on 020 7364 5006 and choose option 3 or NSPCC's 24 hours helpline on 0808 800 5000.



If the young person's situation does not improve as you would expect, make the report again, highlighting that the situation has not improved since your last report.

The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Officer is Megan Hunter 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.

10.2.5. Responding to Disclosures and Concerns for Writing Partners

If you have any concerns, however small, about a child's wellbeing, 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 Officer that you have reported a concern. Megan Hunter 020 7655 0300

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

If you have a concern about the wellbeing 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 Officer that you have reported a concern. Megan Hunter 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 is the process through which a person comes to support or be involved in extremist ideologies. It is in itself a form of harm.

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

11.15 Problematic and Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Problematic sexual behaviour (PSB) is developmentally inappropriate or socially unexpected sexualised behaviour which doesn't have an overt element of victimisation or abuse.

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour displayed by children and young people which is harmful or abusive1.

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

12. Support for Staff and Volunteers

The Switch staff can access confidential support and guidance from counsellors by phone, and counselling in person, by phone and online, through our HSF health plan. (See Appendix 1. Contact Details.)



13. Online 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 online.
- 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's IT Policy explains safe and responsible use of IT, both within The Switch's premises and outside.
- 13.5. The Switch uses widely available communication platforms. They are Microsoft 365 (including Microsoft Teams), Zoom and Brightside.

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 DSL and The Switch's DSO.
- 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 Young Talent 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, 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. 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 briefed privately.

13.8.4. There is always at least one teacher present in person 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.

13.8.5. 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 DSO if appropriate.

13.8.6. 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 Officer (DSO) | Megan Hunter | 020 7655 0300 |
| The Switch Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer for under 18s | Rachel McMahon, Senior Project Manager – Primary | 020 7655 0319 |
| The Switch Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer for Work Experience | Aimee Staniford, Work Experience Manager | 020 4591 0999 |
| The Switch Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer for 16-25 year-olds | Nicky Sahota, Young Talent Project Manager | 020 7655 0312 |
| The Switch Trustee for Safeguarding | Alison Arnaud | alison.arnaud@NCCLondon.ac.uk |
| Children's Social Care Services | Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST) | 020 7364 3444 020 7364 5601 020 7364 5606 020 7364 5358 020 7364 7796 |
| | Out of Office Hours Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team (5pm – 9am) | 020 7364 4079 |
| The Switch staff can access the MAST request for support form at: General > 02. Operations > 08. Safeguarding > 06. Resources > 03. Local | | |
| Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) | Melanie Benzie | 0207 364 0677 LADO@towerhamlets.gov.uk |
| Directory of Children's Social Care Services in other Local Authorities | Government website | gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council |
| NSPCC | 24 Hour Helpline | 0808 800 5000 |
| Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT) | Police | 020 8217 6484 |
| ChildLine | | 0800 1111 (textphone 0800 400 222) |
| HSF Counselling for The Switch employees | HSF Assist Counselling Services provided by HealthHero | 0800 988 6599 Select option 2 for the Counselling Service. Tell the operator that you are with HSF HealthPlan and have HSF Assist. |
| Directory of Talking Therapies | NHS Anxiety & Depression | nhs.uk/nhs-services/mental-health-services/find-nhs-talking-therapies-for-anxiety-and-depression/ |



Appendix 2. 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 3. Multi-Agency Support Team



Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST) 020 7364 3444 / 5601 / 5606 / 5358 / 7796

If there is a concern about the welfare of a child or young person and you would like to talk it through then you should contact the Tower Hamlets Children Services' Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST).

The Duty Officer will be able to discuss the concern, assist in deciding whether a referral is appropriate and facilitate the reporting of a referral in accordance with Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership (THSCP) Procedures and to offer advice.

When there is a specific concern of a child protection nature whereby it is thought that a child has been harmed or at risk of being harmed then the MAST should then be contacted on 020 7364 3444 / 5601 / 5606 / 5358 / 7796 in the first instance to discuss the matter followed by the completion of the [LBTH MAST Request for Support Form](#) to MAST@towerhamlets.gov.uk.

The MAST operates between 9am and 5pm except at weekends and on public holidays. If the concern arises outside of the hours operated by the MAST and it is believed the child may be at immediate risk the Children's Social Care Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team or the Police should be contacted without delay.

Important contact information:

| | |
|--|--|
| The Multi Agency Support Team (MAST) Note – information should only be emailed following prior discussion with the Duty Officer. | MAST@towerhamlets.gov.uk |
| Children's Social Care Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team (5.00pm onwards) | 020 7364 4079 |





MULTI – AGENCY SUPPORT TEAM (MAST)

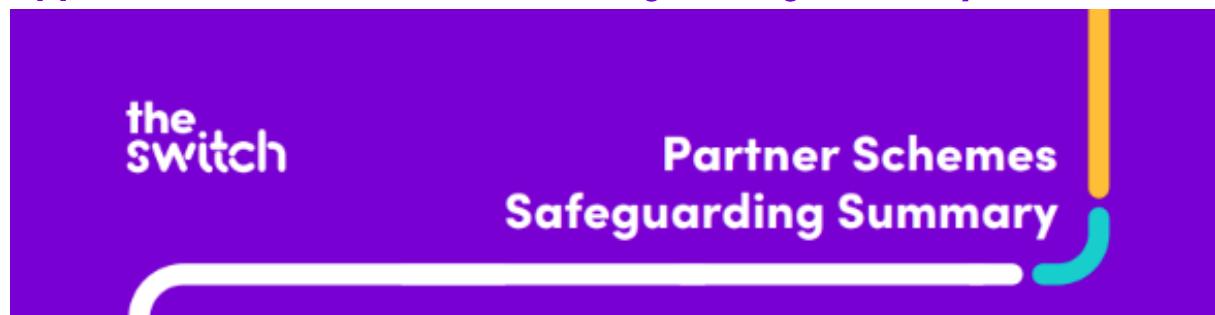
020 7364 3444
/ 5601 / 5606 /
5358 / 7796

direct line 9am to 5pm weekdays (not
including public holidays)

| | | |
|--|---|----------------------------|
| Designated Safeguarding Lead: | Megan Hunter, Deputies: Rachel McMahon, Aimee Staniford, Nicky Sahota | Date September 2025 |
|--|---|----------------------------|

Appendix 4: Safeguarding Summaries

Appendix 4.1. Partner Schemes Safeguarding Summary



Thank you for volunteering on a Partner Scheme!

- Make it clear that you're in school for the right reasons, **by having nothing to hide**.
- Don't do anything which would be **misinterpreted** by an adult watching.
- **Never be alone with a pupil**. If you are the only volunteer, you may need to find another space.
- **Don't take your pupil to the toilet**. Only use the **adult toilet** yourself.
- **Don't give gifts**.
- **Don't initiate physical contact** (set boundaries if the child initiates physical contact).
- **Don't have secrets**.
- **Don't share contact details or social media** (eg LinkedIn). (If a child shares contact details or social media, treat it as a Safeguarding concern.)
- 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.
- If you are given information about the child's wellbeing, **treat it with sensitivity and confidentiality**.

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

If you have a concern about the wellbeing of a child, you must report it to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) before you leave the school. Their name is in your Overview document. If you are unsure who they are, ask for the DSL at the school office.



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

Megan Hunter - 020 7655 0300

theswitch.org



Appendix 4.2. Writing Partners Safeguarding Summary



The document cover features a purple background with the 'the switch' logo on the left. On the right, the title 'Writing Partners Safeguarding Summary' is displayed in white text, with a yellow and teal decorative bar to its right.

Thank you for volunteering as a Writing Partner!

If you are given personal information about the child, **treat it with sensitivity and confidentiality**.

Do not accept children's invitations on social media (e.g. 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 wellbeing, you must phone the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. Your Safeguarding Moderator will send you their name and phone number at the start of the programme.

↓
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 Officer that you have reported a concern.

Megan Hunter - 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.



Appendix 4.3. Mentoring Safeguarding Summary



Thank you for volunteering as a Mentor!

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

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

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

You must ensure you know what to do if you have a concern about a young person. Please see the flowchart on page 3 and ask any questions if you are unsure.

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.

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 goodbye 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 and 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.

Ensure you e-chat with your mentee within the hours of 9am-5pm Monday-Friday only.

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



Mentoring Safeguarding Summary

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 artwork, 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

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.

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 Anita**, the Coordinator at The Switch.



I have a concern about the wellbeing of a young person

Tell the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). You will have been sent their name and phone number.

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 must also tell The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) that you have reported a concern.

Megan Hunter
020 7655 0300

After 5pm or at a weekend, if you can't reach either the DSL at the School or the DSO at The Switch, call the Tower Hamlets Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST) Emergency Duty Team on:
020 7364 4079

Email a summary to:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead at the school

The Designated Safeguarding Officer at The Switch: megan.hunter@theswitch.org

The Mentoring coordinator: anita.kessie@theswitch.org



Appendix 4.4. Remote Volunteering Safeguarding Summary



Remote Volunteering Safeguarding Summary

Thank you for volunteering!

We look forward to seeing you online soon! There is no doubt you will have fun with the young people, but it is important that you read this document in full to ensure that the experience is safe and enjoyable for all those involved. Please do get in touch if you have any questions or concerns.

Before

- 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 artwork, and blur your background.

- Please log onto the event and set your Zoom name as your first name only.

You must ensure you know what to do if you have a concern about a young person. Please see the flowchart on the next page and ask any questions if you are unsure.

During

- 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 breakout rooms. If the chat window is enabled at any point during the event, messages will be monitored by The Switch.

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

- Do not take any photographs or screenshots, or record the event.

After

- If you have a concern about a student's wellbeing, you must report it to a member of The Switch staff on the call, or phone The Switch before the end of the day. The Switch can arrange a private breakout room on Zoom to discuss any concerns.

- Do not accept a student's invitation on social media (e.g. Facebook or LinkedIn). If a young person contacts you after the event, do not respond but let The Switch know.

Schemes Safeguarding Summary





What to do if you have a concern about the wellbeing 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 day of the event.

To report a concern speak to a member of The Switch staff on the call, or phone The Switch before the end of the day.

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

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

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

Megan Hunter, Director and Designated Safeguarding Officer - 020 7655 0300



Appendix 4.5. Workshops in Offices Safeguarding Summary



As a volunteer, you must:

- Ensure you are always in view of a member of staff from The Switch or the school.
- If a young person needs the toilet, the teacher must accompany them, even if you need to provide directions or access.
- Never share any contact details, social media (eg LinkedIn) or personal information which could be used to identify you, except your name and company.
- Never accept students' invitations on social media (e.g. Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn or others). If a student attempts to contact you on social media, inform The Switch.
- Never initiate physical contact with a student.
- Never serve food unless the teacher has communicated the young people's allergies.
- Keep your phone out of sight: leave the room if you need to use it.

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

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



The Switch member of staff will take you to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead to tell them your concern.



The member of staff from The Switch will also inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer at The Switch.

theswitch.org



Appendix 4.6. Workshops in Schools Safeguarding Summary

the
switch

Workshops in Schools Safeguarding Summary

As a volunteer, you must:

- Always sign in and out at the school/college reception.
- Bring photo ID to show on arrival.
- Work in an open, group environment – avoid private or unobserved situations and encourage open communication. Never have a secret with a young person or promise confidentiality.
- Never accompany a young person to use the toilet or give them permission to go: direct them to their teacher instead.
- Never share any contact details, social media (eg LinkedIn) or personal information which could be used to identify you, except your name and company.
- Never accept students' invitations on social media (e.g. Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn). If a student attempts to contact you on social media, inform The Switch.
- Never initiate physical contact with a student.

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

Tell the member of staff from The Switch about your concern before you leave.

If there is no member of staff from The Switch at your workshop, ask at the office for the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead

They will take you to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead to tell them your concern.

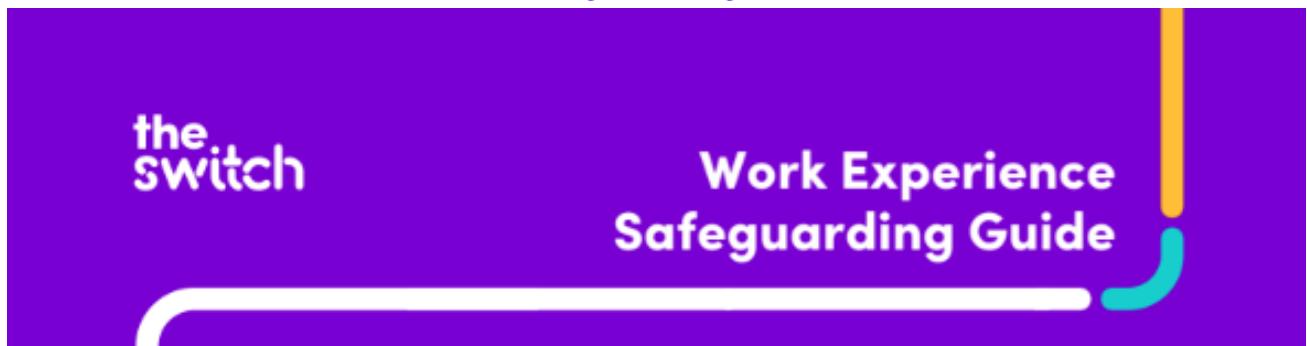
After telling the school's DSL, phone The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Officer
Megan Hunter
020 7655 0300

The Switch will also inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer at The Switch.

theswitch.org



Appendix 4.7. Work Experience Safeguarding Guide



Please ensure all staff have read the Safeguarding Guide before the Work Experience placement begins.

This Safeguarding Guide contains all of the information you need to ensure a safe environment for Work Experience students. The Guide includes details about our Safeguarding Procedure, as well as information about:

1. **What to do if you have a Safeguarding concern about a student**
2. **What to do if a student is absent**
3. **What to do during a medical emergency**
4. **Our Safeguarding Code of Conduct**

The Switch staff are on hand to support you throughout the Work Experience placement. We are your first port of call for any concerns, and we can guide you through the best course of action.

If you have raised a safeguarding concern and would like to discuss it further, you can contact Megan, our Designated Safeguarding Officer and CEO, for more support.

You will receive all of the contact details you need, including School contact numbers and email addresses, in advance of the placement starting.

Key contacts at The Switch:

Aimee Staniford

The Switch Work Experience Manager
T: 020 3882 6626
E: aimee.staniford@theswitch.org

Megan Hunter

The Switch Designated Safeguarding Officer
T: 0207 655 0355
E: megan.hunter@theswitch.org

If there is an urgent safeguarding concern and you cannot get through to The Switch:

MAST (Multi Agency Support Team)
T: 020 7364 5006 option 3.



Please see below key points for ensuring a safe working environment during Work Experience.

- If you are supervising a young person doing work for you, **work in a communal area if possible**. If not, **please leave your office door open and ensure you are in view of another member of staff**.
- Do not accompany a young person to use the toilet.
- Never share any personal social media accounts or personal information which is not appropriate for the workplace.
- **Do not accept students' invitations on personal social media accounts** (e.g. Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn). If a student attempts to contact you on personal social media, inform The Switch.
- **Do not initiate physical contact with a young person**, other than to greet them or say farewell by shaking hands.
- **Ensure that all concerns are promptly reported to The Switch or the relevant school**. Simply sending an email is not sufficient – you must receive confirmation that your report has been received and acknowledged by the relevant person.

What to do if a student is absent unexpectedly

If a student is absent and did not inform you previously, you must call The Switch within the first hour of the placement workday.



The Switch will contact the School, who will contact the student's parents or guardians immediately. This is to ensure the safety of our students. The Switch will let you know any updates.



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

You must phone The Switch before the end of the working day. You will receive these contact details via email.



The Switch may ask you to send an email detailing the concern. The Switch will then contact the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Switch will let you know that your concern has been reported and that the School are following it up.



If it is urgent and you do not get a reply from The Switch by the end of the working day, you should contact MAST (Multi Agency Support Team) for advice on 020 7364 5006 option 3.

What to do if there is a medical emergency

Contact the relevant emergency services and the School immediately. You will receive the School's contact details via email before the placement begins.



You should then contact The Switch to make them aware of the situation. The Switch will follow up with the School.



You should always contact the School before contacting The Switch in a medical emergency, so parents or guardians of the student can be informed.



- Follow this code of conduct, even if you happen to encounter a young person when not on site or involved with a project.
- Be an excellent role model – keep conversation and actions appropriate to the situation. Keep your focus on the task and learning objectives.
- Keep an open mind, taking care not to hold presuppositions or stereotypes.
- Treat everyone with respect and sensitivity. Never promote your religious or political ideas or beliefs.
- Put the wellbeing of each young person first.
- Don't share contact details or social media. (If a young person shares contact details or social media, treat it as a Safeguarding concern).
- Never take photos, videos or screenshots of young people without written photo consent. Please ask The Switch if in doubt.
- Never give gifts or money to an individual young person. Lunch and travel may be considered, please contact The Switch for more information.
- Ensure any sickness or lateness from the work experience student is reported to The Switch within the first hour of their working day.
- Report any and all concerns to The Switch immediately.
- Do not travel alone with a young person, unless it is via public transport and has been communicated to The Switch
- Call out any abusive, discriminatory or demeaning attitudes, language or behaviour from staff, volunteers and young people.
- Never initiate physical contact with a young person.
- Do not make sexually suggestive comments.
- Do not vape, smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of a young person, virtually or in person.
- Never invite a young person to individual homes or other venues other than those agreed with The Switch.
- Never promise to keep anything confidential.
- Ensure that all concerns are promptly reported to The Switch or the relevant school. Simply sending an email is not sufficient – you must receive confirmation that your report has been received and acknowledged by the relevant person.
- Always adhere to [The Switch safeguarding policy](#), and know what to do if a young person makes a disclosure.