



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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To be read alongside all relevant BOA Stage and Screen Production Academy policies and procedures including the Behaviour Handbook, Anti-bullying Policy and E-Safety Policy

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1. KEY CONTACTS

Designated Safeguarding Staff:

Designated Safeguarding Staff: If you are concerned about a child, please report immediately to:

Mrs Megan Rogers (Designated Safeguarding Lead and Pastoral and SEND Lead) or in her absence;

Mr James Latham (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and Principal).

Prevent single point of contact (SPOC) – Mrs Megan Rogers

Designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children – Mrs Megan Rogers

Mental Health Lead – Mrs Megan Rogers

Social Care Contacts:

Social Care Contacts: Birmingham Children's Services: 0121 303 1888

Sandwell Children's Services: 0121 569 3100

Solihull MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub): 0121 788 4300.

Walsall MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub): 0300 555 2866

Birmingham Prevent Manager: Waqar Ahmed (waqar.ahmed@birmingham.gov.uk) 0121 303 7682 / 07557 203290

Local Authority Education Safeguarding Officer: Angela James (Angela.James@birmingham.gov.uk) 07510369871

Local Authority Website <https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/schoolsafeguarding>

LADO Contacts

LADO Contacts Local Authority LADO: 0121 675 1669 (Ladoteam@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk)

2 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

2.1. OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1.1 BOA Stage and Screen Production Academy is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students and apprentices attending the Academy. We recognise that safeguarding is both a statutory responsibility and a fundamental part of our duty of care. We are committed to creating a culture in which students feel safe, valued, respected and supported to achieve their full potential. Every adult working within or on behalf of the Academy shares responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

2.1.2 The protection of students from abuse, neglect, exploitation and the risk of significant harm is the responsibility of **all** staff, governors, trustees, volunteers, contractors, supply staff and visiting professionals. Safeguarding concerns must always take precedence over other considerations. All staff are expected to maintain a child-centred approach, act in the best interests of the student at all times, and respond appropriately to concerns, regardless of whether a student is considered to be at immediate risk. Support should also be provided to students who may benefit from early help or additional intervention in order to promote their welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.

2.1.3 This policy sets out the responsibilities of all adults working within the Academy and provides clear procedures for identifying, responding to and reporting safeguarding concerns. For the purposes of this policy, "children" refers to all persons under the age of 18. The Academy also recognises that some students may be over the age of 18 and may still require safeguarding support because of vulnerability, additional needs, disability, mental health concerns or other factors that place them at risk of harm. Appropriate protections and support will therefore be provided to all students regardless of age.

2.1.4 Staff must never assume that another colleague, professional or agency will take action. Where a member of staff has a concern about a student's welfare, safety or wellbeing, they have a personal responsibility to take action and share information promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL. Information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding, and no individual should regard themselves as exempt from this responsibility.

2.1.5 All staff **must** read and understand:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 Part One;
- this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- the Academy's Staff Code of Conduct;
- the Behaviour Policy;
- the Online Safety Policy;
- the Whistleblowing Policy; and
- any safeguarding updates issued by the Academy throughout the year.

All staff will sign to confirm that they have read, understood and will comply with these documents as part of their safeguarding responsibilities. Keeping Children, Safe in Education 2026 now expects all staff, including those who do not work directly with children, to read Part One of the guidance. [\[gov.uk\]](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551022/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education_2026_Part_One.pdf), [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551022/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education_2026_Part_One.pdf)

2.1.6 The Principal, Governors, Trustees, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads and all staff will receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction and at regular intervals thereafter. Training will be updated in accordance with statutory requirements, local safeguarding arrangements and emerging safeguarding themes. Regular safeguarding briefings and updates will be provided throughout the academic year to ensure staff maintain an up-to-date understanding of safeguarding risks and responsibilities.

2.1.7 If any member of staff has a concern about a child's welfare, they must act **immediately**. Staff must follow the Academy's safeguarding procedures and report concerns without delay to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. In the absence of the DSL, concerns should be reported to a Deputy DSL or the Principal. Staff must not delay action because they are unsure whether a concern meets a particular threshold. Professional curiosity, vigilance and timely action are essential safeguarding responsibilities.

2.1.8 The Academy takes its safeguarding responsibilities seriously and expects all staff to comply fully with this policy and associated procedures. Failure to follow safeguarding procedures, failure to report concerns, or conduct that places students at risk may result in disciplinary action and, where appropriate, referral to external agencies including the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), the police or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

2.1.9 This policy is published on the Academy website and is available to all staff through the Academy's electronic document management systems, including Microsoft Teams. The policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where changes to legislation, statutory guidance, local safeguarding arrangements or Academy procedures make this necessary.

2.1.10 The Academy recognises that effective safeguarding requires a whole-school and whole-college approach. Safeguarding is embedded within leadership, governance, curriculum planning, student support, behaviour management, attendance systems, online safety arrangements, work placements, recruitment practices and wider pastoral provision.

2.1.11 The Academy remains alert to emerging safeguarding risks and will ensure that staff understand issues including, but not limited to:

- child criminal exploitation (CCE);
- child sexual exploitation (CSE);
- county lines;
- serious violence;
- online abuse and grooming;
- artificial intelligence (AI) generated harms and deepfake content;
- misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories;
- extremism and radicalisation;
- mental health concerns;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- child-on-child abuse;
- domestic abuse;
- prejudice-based harm and discrimination; and
- attendance, absence and missing education concerns.

2.1.12 The Academy will work in partnership with parents, carers, employers, external agencies, safeguarding partners and local authorities to ensure students receive the right support at the right time. Safeguarding practice will be informed by Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, local safeguarding arrangements and other relevant statutory guidance.

2.2 OUR PRINCIPLES

2.2.1 All staff, governors, trustees, volunteers, contractors and visitors working on behalf of the Academy must maintain an attitude of **"it could happen here"** where safeguarding is concerned. Every member of the Academy community has a responsibility to remain vigilant, professionally curious and prepared to take appropriate action if concerns arise. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and should underpin all aspects of Academy life. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 continues to emphasise the importance of a child-centred approach and maintaining vigilance at all times.

2.2.2 We are committed to protecting students, staff and the wider Academy community by identifying signs, indicators and risk factors associated with abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm at the earliest opportunity. Early identification, effective intervention and timely information sharing are essential in preventing concerns from escalating and ensuring students receive the right support at the right time.

2.2.3 We promote a culture of vigilance and safeguarding by maintaining a **child-centred approach** in all decision-making. We recognise the importance of hearing and understanding the voice of the child, respecting their wishes and feelings where appropriate, and ensuring that their best interests remain at the heart of all safeguarding actions and decisions. Working together to safeguard children 2026 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 both emphasise coordinated, child-centred safeguarding practice.

2.2.4 We will ensure that students understand how to recognise situations that may place them at risk, know how to access support, and feel confident to seek help when they need it. Students will be encouraged to identify trusted adults and understand the safeguarding processes available to protect them both inside and outside the Academy.

2.2.5 Safeguarding is firmly embedded throughout the curriculum, PDC curriculum and wider Academy experience. This includes teaching students about:

- online safety and digital resilience;
- healthy relationships and consent;
- child-on-child abuse;
- mental health and wellbeing;
- exploitation and grooming;
- radicalisation and extremism;
- discrimination and prejudice-based harm;
- misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories;
- artificial intelligence (AI), deepfake content and emerging technologies; and
- how and where to access support.

The curriculum is designed to support students in developing the knowledge, skills and resilience required to remain safe in modern society. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 places greater emphasis on online harms, misinformation, disinformation, AI-related risks and student resilience.

2.2.6 We are committed to providing a safe, inclusive, supportive and resilient learning environment based upon mutual respect, equality, dignity and shared values. We promote positive relationships and a culture where diversity is respected, discrimination is challenged, and all students feel safe to learn, develop and achieve.

2.2.7 We will work collaboratively and effectively with parents, carers, employers, safeguarding partners, local authorities, children's social care, health services, the police and other relevant agencies in accordance with Working together to safeguard children 2026. We will also follow relevant guidance, including NPCC When to Call the Police, to ensure that information is shared appropriately and that safeguarding concerns are addressed through a coordinated multi-agency response. Effective partnership working is central to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

2.2.8 As a specialist post-16 Academy, we recognise that many students are developing greater independence while still requiring safeguarding support. Our safeguarding approach therefore seeks to balance the promotion of independence and personal responsibility with appropriate protection, intervention and support where vulnerabilities or risks are identified.

2.2.9 We are committed to fostering a culture where students feel able to speak openly about concerns, worries or experiences without fear of judgement. We will ensure that students know they will be listened to, taken seriously and supported in accessing appropriate help and protection.

2.2.10 We recognise that safeguarding is a dynamic and evolving area of practice. The Academy will continually review its safeguarding arrangements, training, procedures and curriculum in response to changes in legislation, statutory guidance, local safeguarding priorities and emerging risks affecting children and young people. Keeping Children, Safe in Education 2026 requires schools and colleges to remain responsive to emerging safeguarding issues and developments.

2.3. DEFINITION OF SAFEGAURDING

2.3.1 For the purposes of this policy, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and Working together to safeguard children 2026 as:

- **Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge**, ensuring that concerns are identified and addressed at the earliest opportunity through appropriate intervention, early help, family help and support services.
- **Protecting children from maltreatment**, whether this occurs within or outside the home, including online. This includes recognising and responding to risks associated with extra-familial harm, child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation, serious violence, online abuse, radicalisation and other forms of harm that may occur beyond the family environment.
- **Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development**, recognising that safeguarding includes promoting wellbeing, supporting positive mental health and ensuring students can access appropriate services and interventions when required.
- **Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care**, where their welfare, safety, dignity and developmental needs are prioritised by adults and organisations responsible for their care and education
- **Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes**, including educational achievement, attendance, personal development, physical and emotional wellbeing, and preparation for adulthood and independent living.

2.3.2 The Academy recognises that safeguarding is broader than child protection and encompasses all aspects of students' welfare, wellbeing, safety and personal development. Effective safeguarding includes preventative work, early intervention, pastoral support, online safety, mental health support, attendance monitoring, behaviour support and collaborative working with external agencies.

2.3.3 As a specialist post-16 setting, the Academy also recognises that safeguarding responsibilities extend to students over the age of 18 who may be vulnerable due to disability, special educational needs, mental health difficulties, care experience, exploitation, trauma, abuse or other factors that increase their risk of harm. Where appropriate, the Academy will work with adult safeguarding services and other relevant agencies to ensure vulnerable students receive appropriate protection and support.

2.3.4 Safeguarding is underpinned by a culture of vigilance, professional curiosity, information sharing and timely intervention. All staff are expected to contribute to this culture and to take responsibility for identifying concerns, sharing information and taking appropriate action to protect students from harm.

2.3.5 The Academy adopts a whole-school and whole-college approach to safeguarding, recognising that safeguarding responsibilities are embedded in leadership, governance, curriculum delivery, attendance

procedures, behaviour systems, work placements, online safety arrangements, student support services and day-to-day interactions with students.

3. INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

It is important to recognise that abuse, neglect, exploitation and safeguarding concerns are rarely isolated incidents that can be defined by a single event or circumstance. In many cases, multiple safeguarding issues overlap and interact with one another, creating complex vulnerabilities and risks for children and young people. Staff should be alert to the possibility that indicators of harm may relate to more than one safeguarding concern and should always consider the wider context of a child's circumstances. Abuse may occur in person, online, within the family, amongst peers, through trusted relationships, within the community, or through organised exploitation. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 emphasises that safeguarding concerns often intersect and require a holistic, child-centred response

3.1. TYPES OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

3.1.1 Abuse: Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused within their family, in institutional settings, educational settings, community environments, online, or by individuals known or unknown to them. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate, enable or amplify abuse occurring offline.

Children may be abused by:

- A parent, carer or family member;
- Another adult;
- A professional or trusted individual;
- Another child or young person (child-on-child abuse); or
- Multiple individuals acting together.

Harm may include physical injury, emotional harm, psychological trauma, sexual abuse, neglect, exploitation, coercion, intimidation, harassment, discrimination or exposure to harmful experiences. Harm may also arise from seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of abuse directed at others, including domestic abuse. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 recognises that witnessing abuse can have significant and lasting effects on children and young people.

3.1.2 Physical Abuse: Physical abuse is a form of abuse that may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, suffocating, drowning or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse may occur as a single incident or as a repeated pattern of behaviour.

Physical abuse can also occur when:

- A parent or carer deliberately fabricates symptoms of illness in a child;
- A parent or carer induces illness in a child;
- A child is subjected to inappropriate restraint, punishment or discipline;
- Violence is used as a method of control, intimidation or coercion.

The deliberate induction or fabrication of illness is sometimes referred to as **Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII)** and constitutes a serious safeguarding concern.

Indicators of physical abuse may include:

- Unexplained injuries;
- Injuries inconsistent with explanations provided;
- Frequent injuries;
- Fear of particular individuals;
- Delayed medical treatment;
- Reluctance to discuss injuries.

3.1.3 Emotional Abuse: Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child that causes severe and adverse effects on their emotional health, wellbeing and development.

Emotional abuse may involve:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless, inadequate or unloved;
- Humiliating, ridiculing or degrading a child;
- Deliberately silencing a child or preventing them from expressing their views;
- Excessive criticism, rejection or hostility;
- Exposing a child to domestic abuse;
- Unrealistic expectations being placed upon a child;
- Preventing age-appropriate social interaction;
- Serious bullying, including cyberbullying;
- Coercive and controlling behaviour;
- Exploitation, corruption or criminalisation of children.

Emotional abuse may occur in person or through technology and online communication. It is important to note that emotional abuse is present to some degree in all forms of abuse, although it may occur independently.

Indicators may include:

- Persistent low self-esteem;
- Withdrawal from others;
- Anxiety or depression;
- Self-harm;
- Sudden changes in behaviour;
- Difficulties forming positive relationships;
- Excessive compliance or fearfulness.

3.1.4 Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse involves forcing, coercing, manipulating or enticing a child or young person to participate in sexual activities, whether or not the child understands what is happening and regardless of whether force or violence is used.

Sexual abuse may involve:

- Rape;
- Assault by penetration;
- Sexual assault;
- Non-contact sexual activities;
- Sexual exploitation;
- Grooming;
- Sexual harassment;
- Indecent exposure;
- Sexual communication with a child;
- Encouraging a child to engage in sexual activity;
- Producing, viewing or sharing indecent images of children;
- Online sexual abuse;
- Technology-facilitated sexual abuse.

Sexual abuse can occur:

- In person;

- Online;
- Through social media platforms;
- Through gaming platforms;
- Through messaging and communication services;
- Through the misuse of artificial intelligence technology and digitally manipulated imagery.

Sexual abuse may be committed by:

- Adult males;
- Adult females;
- Young people;
- Other children;
- Groups or organised networks.

The Academy recognises that online sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, deepfake imagery, AI-generated sexual content and coercive online behaviours are increasing safeguarding concerns and should be treated with the same seriousness as offline abuse. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 highlights the importance of understanding technology-facilitated abuse and emerging online harms.

3.1.5 Neglect: Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional, educational and/or psychological needs, resulting in or likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of parental substance misuse or other factors that place the unborn child at risk.

Neglect may involve a parent, carer or responsible adult failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing or shelter;
- Protect a child from physical or emotional harm;
- Provide appropriate supervision;
- Ensure access to medical treatment;
- Ensure access to education;
- Meet emotional needs;
- Provide a safe and nurturing environment;
- Respond appropriately to a child's developmental needs.

Neglect may also include:

- Chronic lack of parental engagement;
- Exposure to unsafe living conditions;
- Failure to protect a child from exploitation;
- Repeated failure to address attendance concerns;
- Failure to respond to significant mental health needs;
- Persistent emotional unavailability.

Indicators of neglect may include:

- Poor hygiene;
- Inadequate clothing;
- Unmet medical needs;
- Persistent hunger;
- Frequent fatigue;
- Poor attendance;
- Developmental delay;
- Social isolation;

- Unaddressed mental health concerns.

3.1.6 Staff should be aware that the effects of abuse and neglect can be long-lasting and may impact a student's physical health, mental health, emotional wellbeing, educational attainment, attendance, relationships and life opportunities. Any concerns regarding abuse, neglect or exploitation must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in accordance with this policy.

3.1.7 The Academy recognises that abuse and neglect can affect any child or young person regardless of age, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, socio-economic background or family circumstances. Safeguarding practice will always be inclusive, non-discriminatory and responsive to the individual needs of each student.

3.2. SAFEGUARDING IS NOT JUST ABOUT PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM DELIBERATE HARM

3.2.1 All staff should be aware of safeguarding issues that can place children and young people at risk of harm. Safeguarding concerns may present through a range of indicators, behaviours or circumstances and may not always be obvious. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug and alcohol misuse, unexplained or persistent absence from education, the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and videos, online exploitation, and engagement with misinformation, disinformation or conspiracy theories may indicate that a child is vulnerable, at risk of harm or in need of additional support. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 highlights the importance of staff understanding a broad range of safeguarding issues and emerging risks, including online harms, misinformation and disinformation.

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues including, but not limited to:

- Student health, safety and wellbeing;
- Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based bullying and discriminatory behaviour;
- Racist incidents and race-based harm;
- Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying;
- Harassment, discrimination and hate incidents;
- Domestic abuse and domestic violence;
- Radicalisation, extremism and terrorism-related concerns;
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE);
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE);
- County lines activity;
- Serious violence and youth violence;
- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG);
- So-called honour-based abuse (HBA), including forced marriage, breast ironing and female genital mutilation (FGM);
- Teenage relationship abuse and coercive control;
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- Child-on-child abuse;
- Harmful sexual behaviour;
- Online abuse, grooming and exploitation;
- Artificial intelligence (AI) generated harms, including deepfake imagery and digitally manipulated content;
- Misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories;
- Drug and alcohol misuse;
- Criminal behaviour and anti-social behaviour;
- Gang involvement and organised criminal activity;
- Internet safety and online safety;
- Educational visits and off-site safeguarding arrangements;
- Physical intervention and reasonable force;
- Meeting the needs of students with medical conditions;
- First aid and supporting students with health needs;

- Mental health concerns, self-harm and suicidal ideation;
- Attendance concerns, persistent absence and children missing education;
- Private fostering arrangements;
- Children required to give evidence in criminal proceedings;
- Children with family members in prison;
- Homelessness and housing insecurity;
- Children in care, previously looked-after children and care-experienced young people;
- Young carers;
- Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND);
- Prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-based prejudice and discrimination;
- Risks specific to the Academy's local context and student population; and
- Any emerging safeguarding issue identified through local safeguarding partnerships, statutory guidance or national safeguarding trends.

3.2.2 Staff should recognise that safeguarding concerns can occur both inside and outside the Academy, online and offline, and that multiple safeguarding risks may overlap. The Academy adopts a contextual safeguarding approach and will consider the wider environmental factors that may influence a student's safety, welfare and wellbeing, including peer groups, social networks, community influences, online environments and work placement settings. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 continues to emphasise the importance of understanding extra-familial harm and contextual safeguarding

3.2.3 Staff should be aware that attendance concerns may be an indicator of safeguarding risk. Persistent absence, repeated unauthorised absence, patterns of non-attendance, students missing education and disengagement from learning may indicate neglect, exploitation, abuse, mental health concerns or other welfare issues. Attendance should therefore be considered as part of the Academy's safeguarding response. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 identifies absence from education as a potential safeguarding indicator.

3.2.4 Particular attention should be given to online safety concerns. The Academy recognises that technology is a significant feature of many safeguarding issues and that online environments can facilitate abuse, exploitation, radicalisation, bullying, harassment and criminal activity. Staff should remain vigilant to risks associated with social media, online communication platforms, gaming environments, live-streaming services, AI-generated content and emerging technologies. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 includes enhanced expectations regarding online safety, artificial intelligence and technology-facilitated harms.

3.2.5 Staff should be aware that mental health difficulties can be both a safeguarding concern in their own right and an indicator that a child has experienced or is experiencing abuse, neglect, exploitation or trauma. Where concerns exist regarding a student's mental health, staff should discuss these with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and follow Academy procedures to ensure appropriate support and intervention are provided. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 places increased emphasis on identifying and supporting children who require mental health support.

3.2.6 As a specialist post-16 Academy, safeguarding considerations also extend to work placements, industry partnerships, external performances, travel arrangements, independent living skills and increasing student independence. The Academy will ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place whenever students engage in off-site activities or work-related learning experiences.

3.2.7 Further information on specific safeguarding themes, indicators, risk factors and intervention strategies can be found in **Addendum 1** of this policy.

3.2.8 The Academy delivers safeguarding education throughout the curriculum and wider Academy life. This enables students to recognise risks, understand healthy relationships, make informed decisions, develop resilience and access help when required. Safeguarding education contributes to students' physical health, mental health, emotional wellbeing and preparation for adulthood.

3.2.9 Safeguarding education is delivered through:

- Personal Development programmes;
- Tutorials and enrichment activities;
- Assemblies and themed awareness events;
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE);
- Online safety education;
- Prevent and British Values education;
- Careers and employability programmes;
- Student support services;
- Targeted interventions and specialist workshops;
- External agencies and safeguarding professionals; and
- Curriculum-based opportunities across all subject areas.

3.2.10 Further details regarding the Academy's safeguarding curriculum, student wellbeing provision and preventative education programme can be found in **Addendum 4: Safeguarding Through the Curriculum**.

3.3. VICTIMS AND ALLEGED PERPETRATOR(S)

3.3.1 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, in places, uses the term '**victim**'. This is a widely recognised and understood term within safeguarding practice. However, the Academy recognises that not everyone who has experienced abuse, neglect, exploitation or harm will identify themselves as a victim or wish to be described in this way. Staff will therefore be sensitive to the language used when supporting students and, wherever appropriate, will use terminology that the individual child or young person feels most comfortable with whilst maintaining professional safeguarding standards.

3.3.2 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 also uses the terms '**alleged perpetrator(s)**' and, where appropriate, '**perpetrator(s)**'. These are established safeguarding and legal terms. However, the Academy will carefully consider the language used when communicating with children, young people, parents and carers. Staff should recognise that in some circumstances the child displaying harmful behaviour may themselves be vulnerable, have experienced trauma, abuse or exploitation, or require safeguarding support. Decisions regarding terminology will be made sensitively and on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the needs and welfare of all individuals involved.

3.3.3 All staff should be aware that children and young people may not feel ready, able or confident to disclose that they are experiencing abuse, neglect, exploitation or other forms of harm. Some students may not recognise that their experiences are abusive or harmful, particularly where the behaviour has become normalised within their home, peer group, online environment or community. Staff should therefore remain vigilant to signs of harm and not rely solely on direct disclosure.

3.3.4 Children and young people may be reluctant to seek help or report concerns for a variety of reasons, including:

- Fear of not being believed;
- Embarrassment, shame or humiliation;
- Fear of consequences for themselves or others;
- Threats, coercion or intimidation;
- Cultural or family pressures;
- Previous negative experiences of seeking help;
- Communication difficulties;
- Disability or additional needs;
- Mental health difficulties;
- Concerns relating to sexual orientation or gender identity;
- Language barriers; or
- A lack of trust in adults or professionals.

These factors can make it more difficult for children and young people to recognise, understand or disclose abuse, neglect or exploitation.

3.3.5 The possibility that a child may be unwilling or unable to disclose abuse must not prevent staff from acting on concerns. All staff are expected to exercise **professional curiosity**, remain alert to changes in behaviour or presentation, and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) whenever they have concerns about a student's welfare. Staff should not wait for a disclosure before taking action if there are indicators that a child may be at risk. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 emphasises the importance of professional curiosity, vigilance and timely action.

3.3.6 Building positive, trusted and respectful relationships with students is an important aspect of safeguarding practice. Staff should create an environment in which students feel listened to, valued and able to raise concerns. The Academy recognises that trusted relationships can significantly increase the likelihood that students will seek support when they need it.

3.3.7 When a child or young person does choose to disclose a concern, staff should:

- Listen carefully and remain calm;
- Reassure the student that they have done the right thing by speaking out;
- Avoid asking leading or investigative questions;
- Not promise confidentiality;
- Explain what information will need to be shared and why;
- Make an accurate record of the disclosure;
- Report the concern immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL in accordance with Academy procedures.

3.3.8 The Academy recognises that disclosures may relate to abuse occurring:

- Within the family;
- Within peer groups;
- In intimate relationships;
- In educational or workplace settings;
- Online environments;
- Community settings;
- External activities, performances or placements associated with the Academy.

All disclosures and concerns will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately, regardless of where the alleged harm has occurred.

3.3.9 As a specialist post-16 setting, the Academy recognises that older students may present safeguarding concerns differently to younger children. Staff should remain alert to issues linked to increasing independence, including work placements, employment, relationships, online activity, accommodation arrangements, exploitation, substance misuse and mental health concerns.

3.3.10 The Academy delivers safeguarding education throughout the curriculum and wider student experience. This enables students to:

- Recognise situations that may place them at risk;
- Develop resilience and confidence;
- Understand healthy relationships and consent;
- Recognise abuse, exploitation and harmful behaviours;
- Stay safe online;
- Access help and support when needed; and
- Maintain positive physical and mental wellbeing.

Further information about the Academy's safeguarding curriculum can be found in **Addendum 4: Safeguarding Through the Curriculum**.

4. PROCEDURES IN RESPONSE TO DISCLOSURES OR CONCERNS

4.1. EACH ACADEMY HAS A DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)

4.1.2 Each Academy will appoint a **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** who will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. The DSL will be a member of the leadership team with the knowledge, skills, authority and capacity to carry out the role effectively. Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) will be appointed to provide support and continuity where required. This includes online safety and understanding our filtering and monitoring processes (StudentKeeper) on academy devices and academy networks to keep students safe online. If the DSL is unavailable or absent, the DDSL will assume the role of the DSL.

4.1.2 The DSL has overall responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding within the Academy. This includes:

- Child protection;
- Early Help and Family Help intervention;
- Online safety;
- Student welfare and wellbeing;
- Mental health safeguarding concerns;
- Child-on-child abuse;
- Prevent and radicalisation concerns;
- Liaison with external safeguarding agencies;
- Attendance-related safeguarding concerns; and
- Understanding and overseeing the Academy's filtering and monitoring arrangements, including the use of **StudentKeeper** and any associated online monitoring systems used on Academy devices and networks.

The DSL will ensure that online safety considerations are embedded within the Academy's safeguarding culture and that filtering and monitoring systems are effective in protecting students from harmful, inappropriate and illegal content. Filtering and monitoring will be audited by an SLT member with support from the DSL and IT department.

Raising Concerns

4.1.3 If any member of staff has concerns that a child or young person may be suffering, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect, exploitation or any other form of harm, they must report their concerns to the DSL **immediately**. Abuse may be physical, emotional, sexual, psychological or financial in nature and may arise from neglect, exploitation or harmful practices.

4.1.4 Staff must not delay sharing concerns, regardless of their perceived significance. Information that appears minor in isolation may contribute to a wider safeguarding picture when considered alongside other information known to the DSL or external agencies.

4.1.5 In most circumstances where a child discloses abuse or harm, parents and carers will be informed at the earliest appropriate opportunity. However, where doing so may:

- Place a child at increased risk of harm;
- Compromise a safeguarding investigation;
- Lead to the destruction of evidence; or
- Increase the risk to another child,

The DSL may consult with Children's Social Care and/or the Police before informing parents or carers.

Early Help and Family Help

4.1.6 The Academy recognises that many safeguarding concerns can be prevented from escalating through timely intervention and support. All staff should be aware of students who may benefit from **Early Help** or **Family Help** services and discuss concerns with the DSL at the earliest opportunity.

4.1.7 Early Help and Family Help are forms of support designed to improve outcomes for children and families, strengthen resilience and reduce the likelihood of concerns escalating into statutory intervention. Early intervention remains a fundamental safeguarding principle.

4.1.8 All staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for Early Help, Family Help or safeguarding intervention where a child or young person:

- Is disabled or has additional needs;
- Has special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), whether or not they have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP);
- Is a young carer;
- Has identified mental health needs;
- Is experiencing emotional wellbeing difficulties;
- Is displaying self-harming behaviours;
- Is at risk of suicide or serious self-harm;
- Is frequently absent or missing from education;
- Is missing from home or care;
- Is showing signs of anti-social behaviour;
- Is becoming involved in criminal activity;
- Is associated with gangs or organised crime groups;
- Is vulnerable to child criminal exploitation (CCE);
- Is vulnerable to child sexual exploitation (CSE);
- Is vulnerable to county lines activity;
- Is misusing drugs, alcohol or other substances;
- Is at risk of trafficking, modern slavery or exploitation;
- Is discussing, promoting or sharing misinformation, disinformation or conspiracy theories;
- Has experienced multiple suspensions or exclusions;
- Is at risk of permanent exclusion;
- Lives within circumstances involving domestic abuse;
- Lives within circumstances involving substance misuse;
- Lives with adults experiencing significant mental health difficulties;
- Is experiencing homelessness or housing instability;
- Has returned home from care;
- Is showing signs of abuse, neglect or exploitation;
- Is vulnerable to radicalisation or extremism;
- Is a privately fostered child;
- Has a parent or carer in custody;
- Is affected by parental offending;
- Is experiencing prejudice-based harm, discrimination or harassment;
- Has experienced bereavement, trauma or significant loss; or
- Has any vulnerability that may impact upon their safety, welfare or wellbeing.

Staff Awareness and Professional Curiosity

4.1.9 All staff should recognise that children and young people may not feel ready, able or willing to disclose abuse, exploitation or neglect. They may not recognise that their experiences constitute harm.

4.1.10 Staff must maintain an attitude of professional curiosity and should always discuss concerns with the DSL if they believe a child may require support or protection. Concerns should never be dismissed because a child has not made a direct disclosure.

Record Keeping

4.1.11 The DSL and Deputy DSLs will maintain accurate, confidential and contemporaneous safeguarding records using **CPOMS** or the Academy's approved safeguarding recording system.

4.1.12 Records must include:

- The concern;
- Actions taken;
- Decisions made;
- The rationale for those decisions;
- Outcomes reached;
- Details of discussions with agencies, parents and carers; and
- Whether referrals were made or not made and the reasons for those decisions.

Responding to a Disclosure

4.1.13 If a student discloses abuse, harm or any safeguarding concern to a member of staff, that member of staff should:

- Listen carefully and calmly;
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing;
- Inform the child that the information cannot remain confidential;
- Explain honestly what will happen next;
- Avoid expressing shock, disbelief or judgement;
- Contact the DSL or Deputy DSL personally and immediately;
- Make an accurate written record within one hour wherever possible;
- Record the child's words as accurately as possible;
- Complete a safeguarding referral on CPOMS;
- Upload or attach any handwritten notes; and
- Contact Children's Social Care or emergency services directly where immediate action is required and the DSL cannot be contacted.

4.1.14 When responding to a disclosure, staff should remain conscious that the child is seeking support and reassurance. The welfare of the child must remain central at all times.

Female Genital Mutilation

4.1.15 All staff must be aware of the mandatory reporting duty relating to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Where a teacher discovers, either through direct disclosure or visible evidence, that FGM appears to have

been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, they must report this directly to the Police without delay and inform the DSL immediately afterwards.

Staff Must Not

4.1.16 Staff must not:

- Investigate safeguarding concerns independently;
- Conduct detailed questioning beyond clarification necessary to understand the concern;
- Interview witnesses;
- Attempt to determine whether an allegation is true;
- Promise confidentiality;
- Contact alleged perpetrators;
- Discuss concerns unnecessarily with colleagues;
- Delay reporting concerns whilst gathering additional evidence.

4.1.17 In exceptional circumstances, where there is a genuine concern that appropriate action has not been taken, or where a child is at immediate risk of significant harm, any member of staff may make a direct referral to Children's Social Care, the Police or another appropriate agency. The DSL must be informed as soon as possible thereafter.

DSL Actions Following a Concern

4.1.18 Where concerns are reported, the DSL will:

- Gather relevant information from staff and agencies;
- Consider contextual safeguarding factors;
- Review previous records and concerns;
- Assess risk;
- Determine the appropriate response;
- Seek advice from safeguarding partners where required;
- Refer to Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, the Police or other agencies where appropriate; and
- Ensure appropriate support is provided to the student.

4.1.19 If at any point there is a risk of **immediate serious harm**, a referral to Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care or the Police will be made **immediately**.

Multi-Agency Working

4.1.20 The DSL, supported by safeguarding staff, will coordinate and participate in Early Help, Family Help, Child in Need, Child Protection and multi-agency meetings as appropriate.

4.1.21 The Academy recognises the significance of **extra-familial harm** and contextual safeguarding. Safeguarding concerns may arise outside the family home, including within schools, colleges, peer groups, workplaces, communities and online environments.

4.1.22 Extra-familial safeguarding concerns may include:

- Child sexual exploitation;
- Child criminal exploitation;

- Sexual harassment and sexual violence;
- County lines activity;
- Serious youth violence;
- Harmful sexual behaviour;
- Radicalisation and extremism;
- Online exploitation;
- Domestic abuse within young people's own relationships; and
- Peer-on-peer abuse.

Partnership Working

4.1.23 The Academy will attend Child Protection Conferences, Core Group meetings, Child in Need meetings and other safeguarding forums as required. Where attendance is not possible, a written report will be submitted.

4.1.24 The DSL will ensure that safeguarding concerns, plans and outcomes are appropriately communicated to relevant staff on a need-to-know basis.

4.1.25 The DSL will provide safeguarding advice, support, guidance and training to all staff and ensure safeguarding training forms part of the induction process for all new employees, volunteers and contractors.

4.1.26 Where Police involvement requires an appropriate adult, the DSL will ensure that suitable arrangements are made to support the child.

4.1.27 The Academy will continue to support and monitor children subject to Child in Need Plans, Child Protection Plans, Family Help Plans, Early Help Plans and other safeguarding interventions.

4.1.28 If, following a referral, the child's circumstances do not appear to improve or there remain ongoing concerns, the DSL will challenge decisions where necessary and seek further intervention, escalation or review to ensure that the child's welfare remains protected and that appropriate action is taken.

4.2. INDUSTRY PROVIDERS AND WORK PLACEMENTS

4.2.1 The Academy recognises that work placements, industry projects, performances, external learning activities and employer engagement opportunities form an important part of students' educational experience. All placement providers, employers and industry partners have a responsibility to provide a safe working environment for students and to take appropriate steps to safeguard and promote their welfare at all times.

4.2.2 Industry professionals working with Academy students must be suitably experienced, competent and professional in their conduct. They should demonstrate appropriate attitudes and behaviours, maintain professional boundaries and be able to establish positive, respectful and safe working relationships with young people.

4.2.3 Prior to the commencement of a placement or partnership activity, workplace providers will receive relevant safeguarding information, including:

- The Academy's safeguarding expectations;
- Information on reporting safeguarding concerns;
- Contact details for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs;
- Information regarding professional conduct and safeguarding responsibilities; and
- Any other information necessary to support the safety and welfare of students.

4.2.4 The Academy will undertake appropriate risk assessments for all work placements, employer engagements and external learning activities. Risk assessments will consider:

- Health and safety arrangements;
- Safeguarding risks;
- Supervision arrangements;
- Travel arrangements;
- Student vulnerabilities and support needs;
- Employer safeguarding procedures; and
- Any specific risks associated with the nature of the placement or activity.

Where appropriate, safeguarding considerations will be discussed as part of placement preparation meetings and workplace reviews.

4.2.5 Industry providers and employers will receive guidance regarding safe working practices when working with young people, including expectations regarding professional boundaries, communication with students, reporting concerns and appropriate supervision arrangements.

4.2.6 An appropriate level of supervision must be maintained at all times. The level of supervision required will depend upon:

- The age, maturity and needs of the student;
- The nature of the work being undertaken;
- The environment in which the placement is taking place;
- Any identified safeguarding concerns or vulnerabilities; and
- The outcome of the Academy's risk assessment.

4.2.7 The Academy must be notified immediately of any accident, injury, incident or health and safety concern involving a student whilst attending a work placement or undertaking an Academy-approved external activity.

4.2.8 The Academy must be notified immediately if:

- A student fails to attend a work placement;
- A student leaves a placement unexpectedly;
- A student cannot be accounted for during a placement;
- There are concerns regarding attendance, wellbeing or engagement; or
- A safeguarding concern arises that may affect the student's welfare.

4.2.9 Placement providers must inform the Academy immediately of any significant behavioural concerns, disciplinary issues or incidents that result in a student being removed from the workplace or prevented from continuing their placement. The Academy and provider will work together to determine the most appropriate course of action and will involve parents, carers or other agencies where appropriate.

4.2.10 If a student raises a safeguarding concern, allegation or complaint relating to an industry professional, employer, volunteer, contractor or other adult connected to a placement, the concern must be reported immediately to the Academy's DSL. Such concerns may require referral to:

- Children's Social Care;
- Adult Social Care;
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO);
- The Police;
- The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS); or
- Other relevant agencies.

The Academy will follow statutory safeguarding procedures and seek advice from external agencies where required.

4.2.11 Where a safeguarding allegation is made, the Academy will ensure that:

- The student's immediate safety and welfare are prioritised;
- Appropriate records are created and maintained;
- The student's account is accurately recorded;
- Information is shared on a need-to-know basis only;
- Relevant agencies are consulted promptly; and
- Appropriate support is provided to all parties involved.

4.2.12 Students undertaking work placements should be made aware of:

- Who to contact if they have concerns;
- How to report safeguarding issues;
- Expected standards of behaviour and conduct;
- Workplace health and safety arrangements;
- Online safety expectations where digital communication forms part of the placement; and
- Their right to feel safe, respected and supported throughout their placement experience.

4.2.13 The Academy retains overall responsibility for safeguarding students whilst on approved educational placements and will maintain appropriate oversight of their welfare, attendance, progress and safety throughout the duration of the placement.

4.2.14 As a specialist post-16 setting, the Academy recognises that students may undertake placements within the creative industries, performance venues, production environments, media settings and other workplaces that present unique safeguarding considerations. Risk assessments and safeguarding arrangements will therefore be tailored to the specific nature of each placement and reviewed regularly.

4.2.15 Any concern relating to exploitation, inappropriate relationships, harassment, discrimination, unsafe working practices, online communication or breaches of professional boundaries during a placement will be treated as a safeguarding concern and managed in accordance with this policy.

5. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

5.1.1 All safeguarding concerns, child protection information and welfare matters will be treated as **confidential and sensitive information**. Information will only be shared on a **need-to-know basis** with those professionals who require the information in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child or young person. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will determine what information should be shared, with whom, and at what stage, in accordance with statutory guidance, data protection legislation and safeguarding requirements. Staff should be aware that confidentiality must never prevent appropriate information sharing where a child may be at risk of harm. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 makes clear that information sharing is vital to effective safeguarding and that data protection legislation is not a barrier to protecting children.

5.1.2 Safeguarding information must not be discussed in public areas, shared inappropriately, or disclosed to individuals who do not have a legitimate safeguarding need to know. Staff must ensure that safeguarding records, electronic systems, emails and documentation are managed securely and in accordance with the Academy's data protection and record-keeping procedures.

5.1.3 Information relating to a student's safety or welfare should never be withheld because it was obtained outside the Academy environment. If a member of staff becomes aware of a safeguarding concern through a conversation with a parent, carer, student, employer, neighbour, community member or other external source, they must report the concern to the DSL in the same way as any other safeguarding concern.

5.1.4 Staff should not promise confidentiality to students when a safeguarding concern is disclosed. Instead,

staff should explain that information may need to be shared with appropriate safeguarding professionals in order to keep the child, young person or others safe.

5.1.5 All safeguarding concerns, disclosures, discussions and decisions must be recorded promptly on the Academy's safeguarding recording system (CPOMS) in accordance with Academy procedures. Records should be:

- Accurate;
- Factual;
- Timely;
- Objective;
- Dated and signed where appropriate; and
- Stored securely.

5.1.6 The DSL will ensure that relevant safeguarding information is shared appropriately with staff who work directly with a student where this is necessary to safeguard and support the child. The sharing of information should always be proportionate and limited to what is required to enable staff to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

5.1.7 Where a student transfers to another education provider, safeguarding records will be transferred securely and in accordance with statutory guidance. The DSL will maintain appropriate records of the transfer and seek confirmation that the receiving setting has received the information.

5.1.8 Safeguarding discussions undertaken during professional meetings, strategy meetings, child protection conferences, Family Help meetings, Child in Need reviews or other multi-agency forums will remain confidential and will only be shared with relevant staff where necessary to support the student's safety, welfare or educational needs.

5.1.9 The Academy recognises that effective safeguarding relies upon appropriate information sharing between professionals. Staff should understand that protecting children and young people takes priority over concerns regarding confidentiality where a safeguarding risk has been identified. Information should be shared lawfully, proportionately and in the best interests of the child. Working together to safeguard children 2026 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 both emphasise the importance of timely and appropriate information sharing to safeguard children effectively.

5.1.10 Any member of staff who is unsure whether information should be shared should seek advice immediately from the DSL. However, uncertainty about information sharing must never result in a delay where a child may be at risk of significant harm. Staff should always act in the best interests of the child and seek immediate safeguarding advice where required.

6. EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

6.1.1 In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, data protection legislation must not be regarded as a barrier to sharing information where failure to do so would place a child or young person at risk of harm. Effective safeguarding depends upon appropriate, lawful and timely information sharing between organisations and professionals. Where there are concerns about a child's welfare or safety, information will be shared with relevant agencies and professionals as necessary to protect and support the child.

6.1.2 The Data Protection Act 2018, the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 do not prevent or limit the sharing of information for safeguarding purposes. Information may be shared without consent where there is a lawful basis to do so and where sharing is necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child or young person. Staff should always act in the best interests of the child and seek advice from the DSL where they are uncertain about information sharing.

6.1.3 The Academy will work collaboratively with external agencies including:

- Children's Social Care;
- Adult Social Care;
- The Police;
- Health Services;
- Early Help and Family Help Services;
- Mental Health Services;
- Virtual School Heads;
- Youth Offending Services;
- Local Safeguarding Partners;
- Work Placement Providers;
- Alternative Provision Providers; and
- Other statutory and voluntary sector organisations,

to ensure that children and young people receive appropriate support, protection and intervention at the right time. Working together to safeguard children 2026 emphasises the importance of coordinated multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

6.1.4 Where referrals are made to external agencies, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will ensure that:

- Relevant information is shared promptly;
- Records of referrals and discussions are maintained;
- Outcomes and actions are monitored;
- Escalation procedures are used where concerns remain unresolved; and
- Appropriate support is provided to the child throughout the process.

6.1.5 The Academy recognises that safeguarding is most effective when agencies work together. The DSL will actively engage with external professionals and attend multi-agency meetings, strategy discussions, Child Protection Conferences, Child in Need Reviews, Family Help Meetings and any other safeguarding forums required to promote and protect the welfare of children and young people.

6.1.6 Where a student moves to another school, college, training provider or educational setting, the Academy will transfer safeguarding and child protection records securely and without delay in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. The DSL will:

- Ensure records are transferred separately from the main student file;
- Obtain confirmation of receipt from the receiving setting;
- Retain evidence of the transfer; and
- Continue to support any ongoing safeguarding arrangements until the transfer has been completed.

6.1.7 Where a child leaves the Academy and the destination is unknown, the Academy will follow children missing education procedures and work with the relevant Local Authority, external agencies and safeguarding partners to support efforts to locate the child and assess any safeguarding risks.

6.1.8 The Academy may be required to share information with parents, carers and external agencies as part of safeguarding investigations and interventions. Decisions regarding information sharing will take account of:

- The child's safety and welfare;
- Advice from safeguarding agencies;
- The child's wishes and feelings where appropriate;
- Legal obligations; and
- The need to protect other children or vulnerable individuals.

6.1.9 The Academy recognises that students aged 18 and over may be subject to adult safeguarding procedures in addition to child protection procedures where vulnerabilities exist. In such circumstances, information may be shared with Adult Social Care and other relevant agencies in accordance with safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance.

6.1.10 All external safeguarding communications, referrals and information sharing arrangements will be managed in accordance with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- Working together to safeguard children 2026;
- Local Safeguarding Partnership Procedures;
- The Data Protection Act 2018;
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025;
- UK GDPR; and
- Relevant guidance relating to information sharing and safeguarding practice.

7. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST ADULTS AND WHISTLEBLOWING

7.1.1 Whistleblowing is the act of reporting concerns about wrongdoing, malpractice, illegal activity, unsafe practice or conduct that may place children, young people, staff or others at risk. The Academy is committed to creating a culture in which concerns can be raised openly, honestly and without fear of victimisation. Staff should refer to the Academy's Whistleblowing Policy for further information and guidance on reporting concerns.

7.1.2 Any concern, allegation or disclosure that a member of staff, supply teacher, contractor, volunteer, governor, trustee or other adult working on behalf of the Academy has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child;
- Potentially committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a manner that indicates they may pose a risk of harm; or
- Behaved in a way that may indicate they are unsuitable to work with children,

must be reported **immediately** to the **Principal**, who will follow the appropriate safeguarding and allegations management procedures. The Principal will seek advice from the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** and inform the **Chief Executive Officer** before any investigation is commenced or the individual concerned is informed, unless advised otherwise by the LADO or Police.

7.1.3 Where an allegation is made against the Principal, the matter must be reported immediately to the **Chief Executive Officer of the BOA Group** or, in their absence, the **Chair of the Board of Trustees**. The Chief Executive Officer will seek advice from the LADO and other relevant agencies and will oversee the management of the allegation in accordance with statutory guidance and Academy procedures. Allegations against senior leaders will be handled promptly, fairly, consistently and confidentially.

7.1.4 The Academy will manage allegations against adults in accordance with **Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026**, local safeguarding partnership procedures and advice provided by the LADO. The welfare of the child will remain the paramount consideration throughout any investigation or safeguarding process.

7.1.5 The Academy recognises that allegations may arise from concerns occurring:

- Within the Academy;
- During educational visits;
- During performances, productions or events;
- During work placements;
- Online or through digital communication;
- Through social media activity; or
- During activities organised by third-party providers using Academy premises.

All allegations will be managed consistently regardless of where the alleged incident occurred.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Referrals

7.1.6 At the conclusion of any case, the Academy will comply with its legal duty to refer an individual to the **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)** where they have:

- Harmed a child or vulnerable adult;
- Posed a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult;
- Been removed from regulated activity because of safeguarding concerns; or
- Resigned, retired or otherwise left employment in circumstances where they may have been removed had they remained in post.

Appropriate referrals will also be made to teaching regulation bodies, professional regulators, the Police or other agencies where required.

Low-Level Concerns

7.1.7 The Academy promotes a culture of openness and transparency in which all concerns regarding adults working with children are shared appropriately. Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold but may be inconsistent with the expectations outlined in the Staff Code of Conduct are referred to as **low-level concerns**. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 continues to emphasise the importance of recognising and managing low-level concerns as part of a strong safeguarding culture.

7.1.8 Examples of low-level concerns may include, but are not limited to:

- Behaviour that is inconsistent with professional standards;
- Boundary concerns;
- Inappropriate language or conduct;
- Favouritism;
- Excessive personal contact with students;
- Inappropriate online communication;
- Conduct outside of work that may raise safeguarding concerns; or
- Behaviour that causes concern, discomfort or uncertainty but does not meet the allegations threshold.

7.1.9 Low-level concerns relating to staff, supply staff, volunteers, contractors, governors or trustees must be reported in the same manner as higher-level allegations:

- To the Principal where the concern relates to another adult; or
- To the Chief Executive Officer or Chair of Trustees where the concern relates to the Principal.

7.1.10 The Principal will maintain appropriate records of low-level concerns. Records will include:

- Details of the concern;
- The context in which the concern arose;
- Any discussions held;
- Action taken;

- Outcomes reached; and
- The name of the person raising the concern, unless anonymity is requested.

Where possible and lawful, requests for anonymity will be respected.

7.1.11 Low-level concerns will be reviewed to identify emerging patterns of behaviour that may indicate a wider safeguarding risk or professional conduct issue. Repeated concerns, even where each appears minor in isolation, may collectively indicate a more serious safeguarding concern and require escalation.

Whistleblowing

7.1.12 All staff have a professional responsibility to raise safeguarding concerns, regardless of the seniority or position of the individual involved. Concerns should be raised promptly and in good faith.

7.1.13 If a member of staff feels unable to raise concerns internally, or believes concerns have not been addressed appropriately, they may seek advice externally, including through:

- The LADO;
- Children's Social Care;
- The Police;
- The Teaching Regulation Agency;
- The Disclosure and Barring Service; or
- The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line.

7.1.14 No member of staff will suffer detriment, disadvantage or victimisation for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in accordance with Academy procedures.

Third-Party Organisations and Use of Academy Premises

7.1.15 Where an allegation or safeguarding concern arises in relation to an individual or organisation using Academy premises to deliver activities for children, young people or vulnerable adults, the Academy will:

- Follow local safeguarding procedures;
- Inform the LADO where appropriate;
- Liaise with the organisation concerned;
- Seek advice from safeguarding agencies;
- Ensure the safety and welfare of any children involved; and
- Consider whether future use of Academy premises should continue.

7.1.16 The Academy recognises its continuing safeguarding responsibilities in relation to third-party activities taking place on Academy premises. Appropriate assurances regarding safeguarding policies, safer recruitment practices and reporting procedures will be sought before permission is granted for external organisations to work with children and young people on site.

7.1.17 All allegations, concerns and whistleblowing reports will be handled:

- Promptly;
- Fairly;
- Consistently;
- Confidentially;
- In accordance with statutory guidance; and
- With due regard to the welfare of children and young people.

The Academy will ensure that all parties involved receive appropriate support throughout the process, whilst maintaining the integrity of safeguarding investigations and protecting the rights of those concerned.

8. PROCEDURES IN RELATION TO MANAGEMENT AND RECRUITMENT OF STAFF

8.1.1 The Academy recognises that **safer recruitment is an essential component of safeguarding** and is fundamental to promoting the welfare and safety of children and young people. Safer recruitment principles apply throughout the entire employee lifecycle, including recruitment, selection, induction, probation, supervision, training, performance management and, where appropriate, disciplinary procedures. The Academy is committed to ensuring that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable individuals from working with children or vulnerable students. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 continues to emphasise safer recruitment as a core safeguarding responsibility and includes updated expectations regarding recruitment checks and regulated activity.

8.1.2 The Academy will ensure that all recruitment and selection processes are conducted fairly, consistently and in accordance with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- Relevant safeguarding legislation;
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) requirements;
- Equality legislation;
- Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- Employment law; and
- Local safeguarding procedures.

8.1.3 The Academy will seek appropriate assurances that all staff, volunteers, contractors, governors, trustees, agency workers and others working with students are suitable to do so. Recruitment processes will include appropriate vetting checks, verification procedures and risk assessments where required.

8.1.4 Individuals appointed to roles involving contact with children or vulnerable young people will not begin regulated activity until all required safeguarding checks have been completed and assessed as satisfactory.

8.1.5 The Academy will maintain a strong culture of safeguarding and professional conduct through:

- Conducting enhanced DBS checks with children's barred list checks;
- Effective induction procedures;
- Regular safeguarding training;
- Ongoing supervision and support;
- Performance management;
- Staff conduct expectations;
- Clear reporting mechanisms for concerns;
- Low-level concerns procedures; and
- Whistleblowing arrangements.

8.1.6 All newly appointed staff will receive safeguarding and child protection information as part of their induction programme. This will include:

- The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- The Staff Code of Conduct;
- The Behaviour Policy;
- The Online Safety Policy;
- The identity of the DSL and Deputy DSLs;
- Safeguarding reporting procedures;
- The Whistleblowing Policy;
- The Academy's filtering and monitoring arrangements; and
- Information regarding children missing education and attendance safeguarding concerns.

8.1.7 The Academy recognises that safeguarding responsibilities continue beyond recruitment. Staff conduct, professional boundaries, online behaviour and suitability to work with children will be monitored throughout employment. Any safeguarding concerns arising during employment will be managed in accordance with statutory guidance and Academy procedures.

8.1.8 The Principal, Governors and Trustees will ensure that sufficient resources, training and oversight are provided to maintain safe recruitment and workforce safeguarding arrangements across the Academy.

8.1.9 Detailed procedures relating to recruitment, vetting checks, induction, workforce management, safer recruitment practices and ongoing safeguarding responsibilities can be found in **Addendum 3: Procedures in Relation to Management and Recruitment of Staff**. This addendum should be read alongside this policy and all associated safeguarding procedures.

9. GOVERNANCE

9.1.1 All members of the BOA Group Board of Trustees and Governance Advisory Board will undergo the appropriate safeguarding and suitability checks, including an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check including Children's Barred List checks where required by legislation and statutory guidance. The Academy will ensure that all governance arrangements comply with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

9.1.2 Trustees and Governors fulfil their legal responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people by ensuring that the Academy provides a safe, supportive and secure learning environment in which students can learn, develop and thrive. Safeguarding remains a strategic priority for the Trust and underpins all aspects of governance and leadership.

9.1.3 Trustees and members of the Governance Advisory Board will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training to enable them to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively. Governance oversight will support a robust whole-school and whole-college approach to safeguarding and ensure that appropriate policies, procedures and systems are in place to safeguard and promote student welfare. This includes ensuring that:

Safer Recruitment

- Statutory safer recruitment procedures are implemented and monitored effectively.
- Recruitment, selection, induction and workforce management arrangements comply with safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance.
- Appropriate safeguarding checks are completed for staff, volunteers, trustees, governors and contractors.

Training and Professional Development

- All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training as part of their induction programme.
- Safeguarding training is regularly updated and delivered in accordance with statutory guidance.
- Staff receive ongoing safeguarding updates throughout the academic year.
- Training includes online safety, filtering and monitoring, child-on-child abuse, mental health, exploitation, attendance safeguarding concerns and emerging safeguarding risks.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) receives training and updates appropriate to the role.
- Governors and Trustees receive safeguarding training that enables them to provide effective challenge and oversight.

Filtering, Monitoring and Online Safety

- Appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place to protect students from accessing harmful, inappropriate or illegal content through Academy networks, systems and devices.
- The effectiveness of filtering and monitoring arrangements is reviewed regularly and at least annually.
- The Academy meets the expectations outlined within the DfE Filtering and Monitoring Standards.

- Leadership teams, safeguarding staff and relevant technical staff understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.
- Staff receive safeguarding training which includes expectations relating to online safety, filtering and monitoring.
- Online safety forms an integral part of the Academy's safeguarding framework and curriculum.

The governing body will receive assurance that systems such as **StudentKeeper** and associated monitoring tools are operating effectively and proportionately to protect students from online harm. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 places increased emphasis on governance oversight of filtering and monitoring arrangements.

Safeguarding Through the Curriculum

- Students are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, through a broad and balanced curriculum.
- The curriculum supports students to recognise risk, build resilience, maintain positive relationships, understand consent and access support when required.
- Safeguarding education reflects local and national safeguarding priorities and emerging risks, including online harms, misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories and AI-related harms.

Strategic Safeguarding Leadership

- The Trust maintains a nominated safeguarding lead at governance level who provides strategic oversight of safeguarding and online safety arrangements.
- The nominated safeguarding governor/trustee will liaise with the Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead regarding safeguarding priorities, practice and compliance.
- The role is strategic and does not normally involve operational management of individual safeguarding cases.

Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

- The Trust appoints a suitably trained member of staff as the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC).
- Appropriate support is provided to promote educational achievement, attendance, wellbeing and safeguarding outcomes.
- The Designated Teacher works in partnership with the Virtual School, social workers, carers and other professionals to meet individual needs.
- Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are maintained and reviewed where required.

Alternative Provision and External Providers

- Appropriate safeguarding assurances are obtained from alternative provision providers, work placement providers and external organisations working with Academy students.
- The Academy remains responsible for safeguarding students placed with alternative provision providers and will maintain appropriate oversight of their welfare and educational outcomes.

Use of Academy Premises

- The Trust acknowledges its safeguarding responsibilities in relation to activities delivered on Academy premises by third-party organisations.
- Before granting access to Academy facilities, the Academy will seek assurance that external organisations have:
 - Appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures;
 - Suitable safer recruitment arrangements;
 - Appropriate safeguarding training arrangements;
 - Clear reporting procedures for safeguarding concerns; and

- Suitable insurance and risk management arrangements.
- Where appropriate, external organisations may be required to adopt or operate in accordance with Academy safeguarding procedures.

Safeguarding Assurance and Monitoring

9.1.4 Trustees and Governors will regularly monitor safeguarding arrangements through:

- Safeguarding reports;
- DSL reports;
- Safeguarding audits;
- Policy reviews;
- Attendance data;
- Behaviour and exclusions data;
- Filtering and monitoring reports;
- Training records;
- Single Central Record monitoring; and
- External safeguarding reviews where appropriate.

9.1.5 The governing body will ensure that safeguarding remains a standing item within governance arrangements and that safeguarding compliance is reviewed regularly throughout the academic year.

9.1.6 Trustees and Governors will seek assurance that:

- Safeguarding systems are effective;
- Students feel safe and supported;
- Concerns are responded to promptly;
- Multi-agency working is effective;
- The voice of the child is considered in safeguarding practice; and
- Statutory safeguarding guidance is implemented fully across the Academy.

9.1.7 The Trust and Academy leadership will foster a strong culture of safeguarding, vigilance and accountability in which safeguarding is recognised as everyone's responsibility and remains at the centre of strategic decision-making

Further information about safeguarding:

Childhood Abduction and Community Safety Incidents¹

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers. Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation. As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police staff. It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at: www.actionagainstabduction.org and www.clevernevergoes.org.

Children and the Court System

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children 5-11-year olds and 12-17-year olds.

The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

The Academy recognises that mental health and emotional wellbeing are essential components of safeguarding.

All staff should understand that mental health concerns may:

- Be a safeguarding issue in their own right.
- Be an indicator that a child has experienced abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Increase vulnerability to other forms of harm.
- Impact attendance, behaviour, relationships and educational outcomes.

Potential indicators may include:

- Persistent low mood.
- Withdrawal from friends and activities.
- Self-harm.
- Suicidal thoughts.
- Significant changes in behaviour.
- Anxiety.
- Sleep difficulties.

- Changes in appetite.
- Increased risk-taking behaviour.
- Substance misuse.

Staff are not expected to diagnose mental health conditions. However, they should be alert to concerns and report them to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

As a post-16 setting, the Academy also recognises that students may experience:

- Accommodation difficulties.
- Financial pressures.
- University and career-related stress.
- Relationship difficulties.
- Reduced family support.
- Transition into adulthood.

Students requiring support will be signposted to appropriate services and interventions

Further information to support young people and their mental health can be found using the following links:

<https://youngminds.org.uk>

<https://stem4.org.uk>

www.mind.org.uk

www.place2be.org.uk

www.mind.org.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.actionforchildren.org.uk

www.barnardos.org.uk

Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour, and mental health.

Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the DSL should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes. This should be considered as a matter of routine. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both local authorities and schools/colleges to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

Children with Family Members in Prison

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders, NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Children Missing/absent from Education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

A child being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions, going missing from education can be a potential indicator of a range of safeguarding possibilities. The Pastoral Team follows the Academy's procedures for dealing with children that are persistently absent, children deliberately missing education and children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation, and to prevent the risks of them going missing in future. This includes when problems are first emerging, but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as on a child in need plan, or as a looked after child), where going missing from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or community.

It is therefore essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as; travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage.

All children are entitled to a suitable full-time education.

The Academy recognises that absence from education can be an indicator of safeguarding concerns, including:

- Abuse and neglect.
- Child sexual exploitation.
- Child criminal exploitation.
- Mental health difficulties.
- Domestic abuse.
- Forced marriage.
- Female genital mutilation.
- Radicalisation.
- Serious violence.

Attendance concerns should never be viewed solely as an educational issue and should always be considered through a safeguarding lens.

The Academy will:

- Monitor attendance carefully.
- Investigate unexplained absences.
- Undertake welfare checks where appropriate.
- Make referrals to external agencies where safeguarding concerns exist.
- Work closely with parents, carers and local authorities.
- Follow statutory guidance relating to children missing education.

Particular consideration will also be given to:

- Persistent absence.
- Severe absence.
- Repeated lateness.
- Missing from work placements.
- Disengagement from learning.

Further information and support, includes:

- Guidance on school attendance '[Working together to improve school attendance](#)' including information on how schools should work with local authority children's services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns.
- Information regarding schools' duties regarding children missing education, including information schools must provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points, can be found in the department's statutory guidance: [Children Missing Education](#).
- General information and advice for schools and colleges can be found in the <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/missing-children-and-adults-strategy> Government's Missing Children and Adults Strategy.

The Academy will inform their Local Authority of any student who is going to be removed from the admission register where the student:

- Has been taken out of the Academy by their parents and the Academy has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education
- Has ceased to attend and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the Academy at which they are registered
- Has been certified as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend the Academy before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the Academy after ceasing to be of compulsory school age
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the Academy at the end of that period
- Has been permanently excluded.

The Academy will inform the Local Authority of any student who fails to attend the Academy regularly, adhering to the authority's guidelines. The Academy will carry out 'safe and well' checks where necessary, in discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Academy will always liaise with, and take advice from Children's Services.

The Academy will inform the Local Authority of any first day absence of a Looked After Child, where contact with carers could not be made.

For further information and guidance please refer to the relevant Academy's policies in conjunction with this policy. For further guidance on **Children Missing from Education**, please also refer to the Academy's Attendance Policy.

Parents/Carers **must** ensure the Academy has at least two emergency contacts for their child.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities or physical health issues

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. Staff in our Academy recognise that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- These children are more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice based bullying) than other children
- Children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying - without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

- Cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.

Any reports of abuse involving children and young people with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and the SENCO or the named person with oversight for SEND in the academy.

Children who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Gender Questioning (LGBTQ)

The fact that a child or young person may be lesbian, gay or bisexual is not in itself a risk factor for harm. However, some LGBT+ children may experience additional vulnerabilities due to bullying, harassment, discrimination or prejudice.

The Academy recognises that:

- LGBT+ students can be targeted by other children and adults.
- Students perceived to be LGBT+ may also be vulnerable.
- Risks can be compounded where a child lacks a trusted adult.
- Bullying of any form is unacceptable.

The Academy will provide a safe, respectful and inclusive environment and will respond promptly to concerns relating to bullying, discrimination or harassment.

When supporting gender-questioning children, the Academy will:

- Consider the individual needs, wishes and circumstances of the child.
- Take account of safeguarding considerations.
- Engage parents and carers where appropriate and safe to do so.
- Seek relevant professional advice where available.
- Consider any wider vulnerabilities, including mental health concerns and SEND.
- Provide gender neutral toilets and changing facilities.

The welfare of the child remains the Academy's paramount consideration at all times.

Cybercrime

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer).

Cyber-dependent crimes include:

- Unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded.
- Denial of Service' (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources, and
- Making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children and young people with particular skills and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the DSL (or Deputy) should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low-level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests. 146 Note that Cyber Choices does not currently cover 'cyberenabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.

Additional advice can be found at: Cyber Choices, 'NPCC- When to call the Police' and National Cyber Security Centre - NCSC.GOV.UK.

Mobile Phone Use and Safeguarding

The academy recognises that mobile phones and other smart devices are an important part of modern life and may support learners' communication, independence, safety and access to information. However, their use within the Post-16 provision must be managed appropriately to safeguard children and young people, protect privacy and dignity, and maintain a safe, respectful and purposeful learning environment.

The academy will manage mobile phone use in accordance with its safeguarding and child protection procedures, behaviour policy and online safety arrangements, having regard to the principles set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and relevant Department for Education guidance.

Mobile phones and other smart devices must not be used in a way that places a learner, member of staff or visitor at risk of harm or compromises their privacy, dignity or wellbeing. This includes, but is not limited to:

- taking, storing or sharing photographs, videos or audio recordings without appropriate consent;
- livestreaming or recording individuals without their knowledge or consent;
- sharing or distributing intimate, harmful, abusive or otherwise inappropriate images or content;
- using devices to bully, harass, threaten, intimidate or exploit others;
- accessing, creating or distributing illegal or harmful content;
- communicating with individuals in a manner that creates a safeguarding concern; or
- using a device to facilitate or conceal behaviour that may place a child or young person at risk of harm.

Learners must not photograph, record or share images, video or audio of other learners, staff or visitors without appropriate consent. Particular care must be taken in areas where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy, including toilets, changing areas and other designated private spaces. Any unauthorised recording or sharing of images or information that may place an individual at risk will be treated seriously and may constitute a safeguarding concern.

The academy will establish clear expectations regarding when and where mobile phones may be used within the Post-16 provision. As a Post-16 setting, the academy may provide learners with greater independence and responsibility in relation to mobile phone use; however, this will not override the academy's safeguarding expectations. Where mobile phone use becomes disruptive, inappropriate or presents a safeguarding concern, staff may take proportionate action in accordance with the academy's behaviour and safeguarding procedures.

Where a learner reports, receives or is involved in concerning content or communication through a mobile phone or other digital device, staff must act promptly and report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL in accordance with the academy's child protection procedures. Staff should not delay reporting a concern while attempting to investigate it themselves. The DSL will consider whether further action, support, early help or referral to another agency is required.

The academy recognises that mobile phones can also be relevant to safeguarding concerns involving online abuse, cyberbullying, exploitation, coercion, inappropriate image sharing, harmful sexual behaviour and other forms of online harm. Learners will therefore receive appropriate education and guidance on online safety, privacy, consent, digital footprints, responsible communication, image sharing and the risks associated with social media and other online platforms.

The academy will maintain appropriate filtering and monitoring arrangements in accordance with its safeguarding responsibilities and will ensure that online safety forms part of its wider safeguarding approach.

Where a mobile phone or other digital device is believed to contain information relevant to a safeguarding concern, staff will follow the academy's established procedures for reporting, searching, confiscation, preservation of evidence and information sharing. Staff should not unnecessarily view, copy, forward or distribute potentially harmful or inappropriate material. Any safeguarding concern will be managed in accordance with the academy's child protection procedures and relevant statutory guidance.

The academy will ensure that its approach to mobile phone use is applied fairly and proportionately, taking account of individual circumstances, SEND, medical needs and any reasonable adjustments that may be required.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff are expected to remain vigilant to risks associated with mobile phone and digital technology use and to report safeguarding concerns without delay to the DSL or Deputy DSL, in line with the academy's child protection policy.

Child on Child abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer/child on child abuse) and that it can happen both inside and outside of the Academy and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in the Academy, it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child on child abuse they should speak to the DSL (or deputy).

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

All staff and students should understand that we have a zero-tolerance for child on child abuse and that we take such incidents very seriously, engaging with relevant external agencies where appropriate.

Child on child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)

- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

Staff are clear as to the Academy policy and procedures with regards to child on child abuse as defined in the Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Handbook, and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

Staff will ensure that any disclosure of child-on-child abuse from a student, or indeed behaviours that have been witnessed are reported via CPOMS and a conversation held with the DSL as soon as possible to allow the incident to be investigated in the correct manner and by trained staff.

Students who abuse others will be responded to in a way that meets their needs as well as protecting others within the academy community through a multi-agency risk assessment. We ensure that the needs of children and young people who abuse others will be considered separately from the needs of their victims

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse may be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be the financial benefit to other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology. Like all forms of child sex abuse, child sexual exploitation:

- Can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex
- Can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual
- Can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity.
- Can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both.
- Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.
- May occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media).

- Can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, 13 and access to economic or other resources.

Child Criminal Exploitation is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim wants or needs and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and or through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology.

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines see section 18), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts/money or new possessions
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- Children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.
- Children with unexplained injuries
- Children in possession of multiple mobile phones.

There are some indicators that will differ for male and female victims. Staff should be mindful of female pupils wearing inappropriate clothing, found to be carrying a large number of condoms on their person, or who fall pregnant. Male pupils who are found to have committed offences, become homeless or disclosed their sexuality are at greater risk of vulnerability and therefore greater risk of exploitation.

County Lines

County lines is the police term for gangs and organised criminal networks supplying drugs to suburban areas and market and coastal towns using dedicated mobile phone lines or “deal lines”. It involves child criminal exploitation (CCE) as gangs use children and vulnerable people to move drugs and money.

County lines is a major, cross-cutting issue involving drugs, violence, gangs, safeguarding, criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery, and missing persons.

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- Can affect any child or young person under the age of 18 years
- Can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual
- Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- Can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults and

- Is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors, including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

One of the key factors found in most cases of county lines exploitation is the presence of some form of exchange (e.g. carrying drugs in return for something). Where it is the victim who is offered, promised or given something they need or want, the exchange can include both tangible (such as money, drugs or clothes) and intangible rewards (such as status, protection or perceived friendship or affection).

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move and store drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, children's homes and care homes.

The national picture on county lines continues to develop but there are recorded cases of the use of social media to make initial contact with children and young people.

Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Under the statutory definition, both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial; and
- Emotional.

Operation Encompass operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when the police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child's needs.

Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to local authority children's social care if they are concerned about a child's welfare.

National Domestic Abuse Helpline Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a safe time from the team for a call can be booked.

Elective Home Education

Many home educated children have an overwhelmingly positive learning experience. We would expect the parents' decision to home educate to be made with their child's best education at the heart of the decision. However, this is not the case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

From September 2016 the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 were amended so that schools must inform their Local Authority of all deletions from their admission register when a child is taken off roll.

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from the Academy, with a view to educating at home, we will liaise with the Local Authority and relevant key professionals to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible. Ideally, this would be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of the child. This is particularly important where the child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage.

A useful umbrella term is "harmful sexual behaviour" (HSB).

HSB can occur online and/or face-to-face and can also occur simultaneously between the two. HSB should be considered in a child protection context. When considering HSB, both ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors.

Sexual behaviour between children and young people can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference or if one of the children is prepubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature.

Confidential specialist support and advice on HSB is available from the specialist sexual violence sector.

It is effective safeguarding practice for the DSL (and deputy) to have a good understanding of HSB. This could form part of their safeguarding training. This will aid in planning preventative education, implementing preventative measures, drafting and implementing an effective child protection policy and incorporating the approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment into the whole school or college approach to safeguarding.

HSB can, in some cases, progress on a continuum. Addressing inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. Children displaying HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important that they are offered appropriate support. A useful website for information and support is: <https://shorespace.org.uk/>

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL (and any Deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties: Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets. The new duties shift the focus to early intervention and encourages those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis

In most cases we will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16- and 17-year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and appropriate referrals should be made based on the child's circumstances.

'Honour Based' Abuse (HBA)

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and treated as such. If in any doubts staff should speak to the DSL. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers that requires a different approach (see below).

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person.

Possible warning signs that FGM might be about to take place are:

- Mention of a female relative coming to visit
- A girl becoming easily distressed, fearful or anxious

- Referencing FGM (or its other alternative names)
- A child talking about a special procedure/ceremony that is going to take place
- The family making preparations to take the girl abroad 'on holiday' e.g. arranging vaccinations or requesting a prolonged absence from school.

There is a range of symptoms of FGM that could consist of:

- Severe and/or constant pain
- Infections, such as tetanus, HIV and hepatitis B and C
- Infertility
- Bleeding, cysts and abscesses
- Difficulties urinating or incontinence.

Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM.

FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers, along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils or students, but the same definition of what is meant 152 Under Section 5B(11)(a) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, "teacher" means, in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England). 155 by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information.

Teachers must personally report to the police (dialling 999), after informing the DSL, if they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.

Forced Marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage.

Our Academies can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) has created: Multi-agency practice guidelines: handling cases of forced marriage and, Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage, which can both be found at The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

Staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmu@fcdo.gov.uk.

In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

Looked after children and previously looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. The Academy will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe.

In particular, we will ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order) and the child's contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They will also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The DSL should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

Looked after and previously looked after children may also have additional barriers to overcome in relation to safeguarding. The staff member at the Academy with responsibility for LAC and PLAC children is named in section1: Key Contacts.

Online Safety

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation - technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers the Academy to protect and educate the whole community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate any incident where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material
- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
- Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm – this can include sending nude images and/or semi-nude images
- Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing or financial scams

Please also refer to the Academy's E-Safety and ICT Acceptable Use Policies.

As our students increasingly work online, it is essential that they are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, including when they are online at home. The Academy use specialist online monitoring software to ensure that inappropriate content or sites are not accessed by students or staff. Please also refer to the Academy's 'Staff Conduct Policy'.

The Academy uses specialist online monitoring software to ensure that inappropriate content or sites are not accessed by pupils or staff on school devices and school networks. Please also refer to the 'Employee Code of Conduct'.

The safeguarding and online training that our Academy staff receive will include an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.

As outlined in our E-safety policy, the DSL take responsibility in this area and have a full understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes.

The Academy IT Department will ensure that our Academies are meeting the [DFE's filtering and monitoring standards](#). The Governor with specific responsibility for safeguarding will pay due regard to the DFE's filtering and monitoring standards and consider how our Academies are meeting these standards during their annual safeguarding audit.

The Academy will cascade information regarding keeping children safe online regularly to parents/carers.

Artificial Intelligence (AI), Deepfakes and Emerging Technologies

Artificial intelligence is becoming increasingly common within education, employment and everyday life.

Whilst AI can provide significant educational benefits, it may also create new safeguarding risks.

Potential safeguarding concerns include:

- AI-generated sexual images.
- Deepfake images and videos.
- AI-assisted grooming.
- Online impersonation.
- Fraud and scams.
- Image-based abuse.
- Misinformation and disinformation.
- Radicalising content.
- Harassment and bullying.
- Blackmail and extortion.

Students are taught to critically evaluate information they encounter online and understand that images, videos and audio recordings may be artificially created or manipulated.

Staff should remain vigilant to safeguarding concerns arising from the misuse of AI technologies and report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism

Children may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools or colleges safeguarding approach.

Protecting children from radicalisation is part of the Academy's wider safeguarding responsibilities

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Radicalisation is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Children may be vulnerable to radicalisation through:

- Social media.

- Gaming platforms.
- Peer influence.
- Online communities.
- Misinformation and disinformation.
- Conspiracy theories.
- Exploitative relationships.

Indicators may include:

- Increasing isolation.
- Fixation on extremist beliefs.
- Significant changes in behaviour.
- Intolerance of others.
- Accessing extremist content.
- Attempts to recruit others.
- Justification of violence.

The Academy will:

- Promote critical thinking and media literacy.
- Teach Fundamental British Values.
- Challenge extremist narratives.
- Encourage respectful discussion and debate.
- Provide staff training regarding Prevent responsibilities.

If you have any concerns about any of the above please report immediately to the DSL.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children's services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism ("the Prevent duty"). The Internet and use of social media has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

All staff should be aware of the signs and symptoms of a young person being at risk of becoming radicalised:

- Spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists
- Changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group
- Their day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centred around an extremist ideology, group or cause
- Loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause;
- Possession of material or symbols associated with an extremist cause (e.g. the swastika for far right groups)
- Attempts to recruit others to the group/cause/ideology
- Communications with others that suggest identification with a group/cause/ideology.

The examples above are not exhaustive and vulnerability may manifest itself in other ways.

Concerns may result in a referral to the Channel panel. The Channel panel is a voluntary process which supports people identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist

violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

The Academy value freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs/ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both students and staff have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. The Academy is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.

We seek to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to the Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse, protecting children from this risk is part of our Academy's safeguarding approach. Please refer to our 'Radicalisation and Extremism' policy and our 'Prevent' risk assessment.

Private Fostering

Private fostering is an arrangement made privately, (without the involvement of a local authority) where a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by someone other than a parent or close relative, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

Private foster carers may be from the extended family, such as a cousin or great aunt. However, a person who is a relative under the Children Act 1989 i.e. a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether full or half blood or by marriage) or step-parent will not be a private foster carer. A private foster carer may be a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child, or someone previously unknown to the child's family who is willing to privately foster a child.

Parents and private foster parents both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least 6 weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.

Academy staff should notify the DSL if they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The Academy will notify the Local Authority of the circumstances and the Local Authority will check that the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child. Local authorities have a duty to satisfy themselves that the welfare of children who are, or will be, privately fostered within their area is being, or will be, satisfactorily safeguarded and promoted.

Serious Violence

All staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime.

These may include increased absence from the Academy, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate

that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school/academy, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

A fuller list of risk factors can be found in the Home Office's Serious Violence Strategy.

Professionals should also be aware that violence can often peak in the hours just before or just after school, when pupils are travelling to and from school. These times can be particularly risky for young people involved in serious violence. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance. The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) Toolkit sets out the evidence for what works in preventing young people from becoming involved in violence.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act will introduce early in 2024 a new duty on a range of specified authorities, such as the police, local government, youth offending teams, health and probation services, to work collaboratively, share data and information, and put in place plans to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities. Educational authorities and prisons/youth custody authorities will be under a separate duty to co-operate with core duty holders when asked, and there will be a requirement for the partnership to consult with all such institutions in their area. The Duty is not intended to replace or duplicate existing safeguarding duties. Local partners may choose to meet the requirements of the Duty through existing multi-agency structures, such as multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, providing the correct set of partners are involved.

Sexting (Youth Produced Imagery)

Sexting is the sharing of sexual imagery (including nudes and semi-nudes) by young people.

Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s (including those created and shared with consent) is illegal and therefore causes the greatest complexity for schools/academies and other agencies when responding. It also presents a range of risks which need careful management.

The Academy adheres to guidance from the [UK Council for Child Internet Safety \(UKCCIS 2020\)](#) which acknowledges the current broad usage of the term 'sexting' and introduces the phrase 'youth produced sexual imagery or 'youth involved sexual imagery'.

The guidance covers the following incidents:

- A person under the age of 18 creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under the age of 18
- A person under the age of 18 shares sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with a peer under the age of 18 or an adult
- A person under the age of 18 is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18.

The advice does not cover the sharing of sexual imagery of people under the age of 18 by adults as this constitutes child sexual abuse and requires immediate police involvement.

The advice does not cover a person under the age of 18 sharing adult pornography or exchanging sexual texts which do not contain images.

All incidents of youth produced sexual imagery or youth involved sexual imagery are dealt with as safeguarding concerns. Staff must follow the safeguarding referral system if any such incident comes to their attention.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex, from primary to secondary stage and into colleges. It can also occur online. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

As set out in Part one Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, all staff working with children at our Academy are advised to maintain an attitude of **‘it could happen here’**.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are **never acceptable**.

It is important that **all** victims are taken seriously, offered appropriate support and reassured that we will work with agencies to keep them safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment, nor should they ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Challenging inappropriate behaviours
- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is **not** acceptable, will **never be tolerated** and is **not** an inevitable part of growing up
- Not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as ‘banter’, ‘part of growing up’, ‘just having a laugh’ or ‘boys being boys’; and
- Challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. **Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.**

The Academy adheres to guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 when dealing with an incident of sexual violence and sexual harassment between students.

Following a report of sexual violence, the DSL (or a deputy) will make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

What is the difference between sexual violence and sexual harassment?

Sexual Violence

It is important that Academy staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way, **and that it can happen both inside and outside of the Academy**. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent:

A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.)

What is consent?

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and had the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

Academy staff should be aware that:

- A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity
- The age of consent is 16
- Sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

Sexual Harassment

When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to; violate a child's dignity and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- Sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names
- Sexual 'jokes' or taunting
- Physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (Academies should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
- Online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
 - consensual and non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos
 - sharing of unwanted explicit content
 - upskirting (is a criminal offence)
 - sexualised online bullying
 - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and
 - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

Child-on-Child Abuse

The Academy maintains a **zero-tolerance approach** to child-on-child abuse.

Staff should recognise that children can abuse other children both online and offline.

Child-on-child abuse may include:

- Bullying.
- Cyberbullying.
- Prejudice-based bullying.
- Sexual harassment.
- Sexual violence.
- Upskirting.
- Harmful sexual behaviour.
- Image-based abuse.
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes.
- Deepfake sexual imagery.
- Physical abuse.
- Initiation and hazing behaviours.
- Abuse within intimate relationships.
- Coercive control.
- Misogyny and misandry.
- Gender-based abuse.

Abusive behaviour should never be dismissed as:

- "Banter".
- "Kids being Kids".
- "Part of growing up".
- "Just having a laugh".

All concerns must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and recorded on CPOMS.

Both victims and those displaying harmful behaviour will receive appropriate support and intervention. The welfare needs of each individual will be considered separately and managed through appropriate safeguarding and behaviour procedures.

Staff receive the necessary training on child-on-child abuse including updates in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

These rewritten sections would bring Addendum 1 significantly closer to KCSIE 2026 expectations and provide a stronger post-16 focus.

Upskirting

The Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. 'Upskirting' is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and/or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any sex, can be a victim.

The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment:

The response to a report from a child is important. The Academy is aware that how we respond to a report can encourage or undermine the confidence of future victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment to report or come forward. If we fail to recognise, acknowledge or understand the scale of harassment and abuse, or even downplay some of these behaviours, we are risking this leading to a culture of unacceptable behaviour. It is **essential** that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should **never** be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

An example of what to say to a child if they disclose to a member of staff is given below:

“Thank you for sharing this with me. You have been very brave in telling me and I appreciate how difficult that will have been. You have done nothing wrong, and I am so proud of you for sharing this today. It is really important that I pass this information onto (DSL name) so that we can support you”

Confidentiality and Anonymity

Academy staff taking a report should never promise confidentiality as it is very likely it will be in the best interests of the victim to seek advice and guidance from others in order to provide support and engage appropriate agencies. They should only engage staff and agencies who are required to support the children involved and/or be involved in any investigation.

The victim may ask the Academy staff not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment. There are no easy or definitive answers when a victim makes this request. If the victim does not give consent to share information, staff may still lawfully share it, if there is another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies. For example, the public task basis may apply, where the overall purposes are to perform a public interest task or exercise official authority, and the task or authority has a clear basis in law.

Advice should be sought from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy), who should consider the following:

- parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
- the basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children’s social care, and rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes.

Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of referring to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice approach, in these cases.

Ultimately, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) will have to balance the victim’s wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children. If the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) decide to go ahead and make a referral to local authority children’s social care and/or a report to the police against the victim’s wishes, this should be handled extremely carefully, the reasons should be explained to the victim and appropriate specialist support should be offered.

Additional information on confidentiality and information sharing is available at Safeguarding Practitioners Information Sharing Advice and NSPCC: Information sharing and confidentiality for practitioners.

Where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, schools and colleges should be aware of anonymity, witness support, and the criminal process in general so they can offer support and act appropriately.

As a matter of effective safeguarding practice, schools and colleges should do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. Amongst other things, this will mean carefully considering, based on the nature of the report, which staff should know about the report and any support that will be put in place for the children involved.

The Academy should also consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victim's identities.

Sanctions and the alleged perpetrator(s)

With regards to the alleged perpetrator(s), advice on behaviour in the academy is clear that teachers can sanction students whose conduct falls below the standard which could be reasonably expected of them.

The Academy is able to take disciplinary action and can be taken whilst other investigations by the police and/or local authority children's social care are ongoing. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident does not in itself prevent the Academy from coming to its own conclusion, on the balance of probabilities, about what happened, and imposing a penalty accordingly.

This is a matter the Academy and should be carefully considered on a case-by-case basis. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should take a leading role.

The Academy will consider if, by taking any action, it would prejudice an investigation and/or any subsequent prosecution. Careful liaison with the police and/or local authority children's social care should help the school decide. It will also be important to consider whether there are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for the Academy to reach its own view about what happened while an independent investigation is considering the same facts.

Discipline and support

Taking disciplinary action and still providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive actions. They can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary.

The Academy will be very clear as to what its approach is. On the one hand there is preventative or forward-looking action to safeguard the victim and/or the perpetrator(s), especially where there are concerns that a perpetrator themselves may have been a victim of abuse; and, on the other, there is disciplinary action to punish a perpetrator for their past conduct.

The Academy will be very clear as to which category any action they are taking falls or whether it is really both and should ensure that the action complies with the law relating to each relevant category.

Working with parents and carers

The Academy will, in most instances, engage with both the victim's and the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers when there has been a report of sexual violence (this might not be necessary or proportionate in the case of sexual harassment and should be considered on a case-by-case basis). The exception to this rule is if there is a reason to believe informing a parent or carer will put a child at additional risk.

The Academy will carefully consider what information they provide to the respective parents or carers about the other child involved and when they do so. In some cases, local authority children's social care and/or the

police will have a very clear view and the Academy will work with relevant agencies to ensure a consistent approach is taken to information sharing. Academy staff will meet the victim's parents or carers with the victim present to discuss what arrangements are being put in place to safeguard the victim and understand their wishes in terms of support they may need and how the report will be progressed. Academy staff will also meet with alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss any arrangements that are being put into place that impact an alleged perpetrator, such as, for example, moving them out of classes with the victim and what this means for their education. The reason behind any decisions will be explained and support for the alleged perpetrator should be discussed.

The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) would generally attend any such meetings. Consideration to the attendance of other agencies should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.

The Academy incorporates relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education within the curriculum. Please also refer to the Academy Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy.

Procedures in Relation to Visitors to the Academy Site

The Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students and expects all visitors, contractors, volunteers and external professionals to share this commitment. Effective visitor management forms an important part of the Academy's safeguarding arrangements and contributes to maintaining a safe environment for students, staff and visitors. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 requires schools and colleges to have effective safeguarding arrangements and appropriate control over adults accessing school premises.

All visitors to the Academy must:

- Report directly to Reception via the main entrance upon arrival.
- Sign in using the Academy's electronic visitor management system.
- Provide photographic identification where requested.
- Read and comply with the Academy's Safeguarding Information for Visitors.
- Wear the visitor badge or lanyard issued by the Academy at all times whilst on site.
- Sign out when leaving the premises.

Any unidentified, unescorted or suspicious individual found on site should be challenged respectfully and escorted immediately to Reception or reported to a member of staff.

The Academy reserves the right to:

- Refuse entry to any individual;
- Request additional identification or safeguarding information;
- Restrict access to areas of the site; and
- Terminate a visit if concerns arise regarding conduct, behaviour, safeguarding or security.

Classification of Visitors

Visitors may be categorised according to the nature of their role and level of permitted access to students.

Red Lanyard - Supervised Visitors

Visitors issued with a red lanyard:

- Have not been subject to all safeguarding checks required for unsupervised access;
- Must be escorted by a member of Academy staff at all times;
- Must not have unsupervised access to students;
- May include parents/carers, contractors, suppliers, job applicants and prospective visitors.

Green Lanyard - Approved Visitors

Visitors issued with a green lanyard:

- Have appropriate safeguarding clearance;
- Have been approved for unsupervised access where appropriate;
- May include individuals who have been appropriately vetted and, where required, included within the Academy's safeguarding records.

Grey Lanyard - External Professionals

Visitors issued with a grey lanyard may include:

- Police officers;
- Children's Social Care staff;
- NHS staff;
- Educational psychologists;
- Local Authority officers;
- Youth offending professionals; and
- Other external professionals.

Where DBS clearance is held by another organisation, confirmation of safeguarding clearance must be obtained where appropriate.

Professionals Working with Students

Examples include:

- Industry professionals;
- Work placement supervisors;
- Children's Social Care professionals;
- NHS practitioners;
- Careers advisers;
- Educational specialists;
- LA officers;
- Volunteers working directly with students.

The Academy will ensure that:

- Visitor identity is confirmed.
- Appropriate safeguarding assurances are obtained.
- Professional conduct expectations are understood.
- Visitors know how to report safeguarding concerns.
- Visitors receive relevant safeguarding information.
- Records of their attendance are maintained.

Unless a visit has been pre-arranged and authorised, permission must be obtained from a member of the Senior Leadership Team before access is granted.

Guest Speakers and External Contributors

The Academy recognises the educational value of guest speakers and visiting organisations while acknowledging its safeguarding responsibilities.

Prior to any event:

- The content and purpose of presentations will be assessed.
- Safeguarding risks will be considered.
- Where appropriate, online searches may be conducted.
- Consideration will be given to Prevent Duty requirements.
- Arrangements will be made to ensure appropriate staff supervision.

Guest speakers must not:

- Promote extremist views.
- Encourage unlawful activity.
- Undermine fundamental British values.
- Present information which could place students at risk of harm.

All guest speaker activities will be supervised by Academy staff.

Virtual Visitors and Online Presentations

The Academy recognises that educational activities may be delivered remotely.

Where external individuals participate remotely through online platforms:

- Identity and professional status must be verified.
- Sessions should be planned and risk assessed.
- Staff supervision should be maintained throughout.
- Academy online safety expectations must be followed.
- Any safeguarding concerns arising from online events must be reported immediately.

Contractors and Site Maintenance Staff

Examples include:

- Builders;
- Electricians;
- IT engineers;
- Maintenance contractors;
- Gardeners;
- Cleaning contractors.

Before access is granted:

- Identity must be confirmed.
- Sign-in procedures must be followed.
- Appropriate authorisation must be obtained.
- Contractors must be appropriately supervised whenever students are present unless the Academy has undertaken appropriate risk assessments and safeguarding checks.

The level of supervision required will depend upon:

- The nature of the work being carried out;
- The location of the work;
- The likelihood of contact with students;
- The duration of the visit; and
- The safeguarding assurances available.

Escorted Visitors

Examples include:

- Parents and carers;
- Prospective parents;
- Governors not undertaking official visits;
- Interview candidates;
- Delivery personnel;
- External visitors.

Escorted visitors must:

- Be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.
- Wear a visitor badge.
- Follow Academy safeguarding procedures.
- Remain only in approved areas.

Parents and Carers Who May Present a Safeguarding Risk

The Academy reserves the right to restrict or prohibit access to the site where an individual may pose a safeguarding risk to students, staff or visitors.

Examples may include individuals who:

- Are subject to safeguarding restrictions;
- Are known registered sexual offenders;
- Are subject to court orders affecting access to children;
- Have displayed threatening, abusive or violent behaviour; or
- Have otherwise been assessed as presenting a safeguarding concern.

Such decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis following risk assessment and appropriate professional advice.

Photography, Recording and Social Media

Visitors must not:

- Photograph students without permission;
- Record students without authorisation;
- Share images or information relating to students on social media;
- Access or distribute student information without lawful authorisation.

Any concerns regarding photography, recording or inappropriate online activity should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Any visitor who becomes concerned about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a student while on site must:

- Report the concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL; or
- Inform Reception, who will contact the safeguarding team.

Visitors should never assume that another person will report a concern on their behalf.

Monitoring and Review

The Academy will regularly review visitor procedures, safeguarding arrangements and site security measures to ensure compliance with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- Working together to safeguard children 2026;
- The Prevent Duty; and
- Local safeguarding partnership requirements.

All visitors are expected to support the Academy's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

Procedures in Relation to Management and Recruitment of Staff

Our recruitment procedures pay full regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and safer recruitment principles. Recruitment processes include scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and qualifications, obtaining references, reviewing employment history, undertaking appropriate DBS and vetting checks, and assessing suitability to work with children and young people.

Additional checks are completed for applicants who have lived or worked outside the UK.

As part of the recruitment process, online searches are undertaken on shortlisted candidates as part of due diligence requirements. Information identified through these searches may be explored further during interview where relevant to suitability for working with children.

At least one member of every interview panel will have completed accredited Safer Recruitment training. The Academy maintains a Single Central Record (SCR) of all required recruitment and safeguarding checks, including those relating to staff, teacher trainees, governors, trustees and volunteers where appropriate.

The Academy will ensure that agencies and third-party organisations supplying staff provide evidence that appropriate safeguarding checks have been completed before individuals commence work within the Academy.

All staff, governors and trustees receive safeguarding and child protection training as part of induction, including:

- The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Online Safety and Filtering and Monitoring expectations;
- Behaviour procedures;
- Whistleblowing procedures; and
- The Academy's safeguarding reporting processes.

All staff receive regular safeguarding updates and annual refresher training to ensure they remain informed of safeguarding developments and emerging risks. This includes online safety, child-on-child abuse, exploitation, attendance concerns, mental health, artificial intelligence (AI) related risks, misinformation, disinformation and professional conduct expectations.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs undertake advanced safeguarding training and receive regular updates to ensure they remain fully informed of developments in safeguarding legislation, guidance and local safeguarding arrangements. Training includes:

- Early Help and Family Help processes;
- Child protection procedures;
- Multi-agency working;
- Online safety and filtering and monitoring;
- Child welfare and protection;
- Participation in strategy discussions and safeguarding meetings; and
- Working in accordance with Working together to safeguard children 2026 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

Where physical intervention is used in accordance with Academy policy and statutory guidance, the member of staff involved must report the incident to the Principal immediately so that it can be reviewed and recorded appropriately.

Staff are aware of their responsibilities and legal powers in relation to behaviour management, reasonable force and safeguarding. They must report any incident that may have safeguarding implications, including incidents occurring off-site, online or outside normal Academy hours.

Staff relationships and associations, both within and outside the workplace, including online activity, may have safeguarding implications. Staff are expected to declare any circumstances that may impact their suitability to work with children and should discuss concerns with the Principal or Designated Safeguarding Lead as appropriate.

The Academy promotes a culture of professional curiosity, vigilance and accountability and expects all staff to contribute to maintaining a safe environment for children and young people.

BOA Stage and Screen Production Academy

Safeguarding through the Curriculum

Student safeguarding and the promotion of the Academy's values and Fundamental British Values are central to the work of BOA Stage and Screen Production Academy. We recognise that safeguarding is most effective when it is embedded throughout the curriculum and wider student experience, enabling students to develop the knowledge, skills, confidence and resilience required to keep themselves safe both now and in the future.

We are committed to providing a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that prepares students for life, learning and work in modern Britain. Through our academic, vocational, pastoral, Personal Development and Careers Curriculum (PDC), tutorial programme, enrichment opportunities and wider Academy experiences, students are supported to become safe, respectful, responsible and informed young adults.

Safeguarding education is delivered explicitly and implicitly across the curriculum. Students are encouraged to develop critical thinking, digital literacy, emotional resilience, independence and an understanding of how to recognise and respond to risk. The curriculum supports students to understand their rights, responsibilities and the support available to them within and beyond the Academy.

Personal Development and Careers Curriculum (PDC)

The Personal Development and Careers Curriculum (PDC) is a key vehicle for safeguarding education and preparation for adulthood. Through structured lessons, workshops, assemblies, tutorial activities, employer engagement and enrichment experiences, students explore a wide range of safeguarding, wellbeing, citizenship and employability themes.

Topics covered through PDC may include:

- Online safety, cyber security and digital resilience;
- Artificial Intelligence (AI), deepfakes, misinformation and disinformation;
- Healthy relationships, consent and boundaries;
- Sexual harassment and sexual violence;
- Child-on-child abuse;
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing;
- Self-care and resilience;
- Drugs, alcohol and substance misuse;
- Exploitation, including CSE, CCE and county lines;
- Personal safety and risk awareness;
- Equality, diversity and inclusion;
- Protected characteristics and the Equality Act 2010;
- British Values and citizenship;
- The rule of law and democracy;
- Hate crime and prejudice-based behaviour;
- Radicalisation, extremism and the Prevent Duty;
- Financial literacy and economic wellbeing;
- Careers education and employability;
- Workplace expectations and professional conduct;
- Apprenticeships, higher education and progression routes;
- Independent living skills;
- Student finance, budgeting and housing awareness;

- Work-related learning and industry safeguarding;
- Creative industry professional boundaries;
- Social media, personal branding and online reputation; and
- Keeping safe in employment, training and higher education settings.

Safeguarding Through the Curriculum

Safeguarding themes are also reinforced through pathway and vocational learning, tutor sessions, assemblies, enrichment activities, external speakers and awareness campaigns throughout the academic year.

As a specialist creative and performing arts academy, the curriculum also supports students to understand safeguarding issues that may arise within creative industries, including:

- Professional boundaries;
- Audition and casting processes;
- Social media engagement;
- Public performances;
- Industry networking;
- Travel and accommodation;
- Freelance working practices; and
- Personal safety in professional environments.

External Agencies and Partnerships

To enhance the quality and relevance of safeguarding education, the Academy works with a range of specialist organisations, employers, higher education providers and safeguarding professionals. These partnerships enable students to access expert knowledge, current information and real-world experiences.

External contributors may support delivery of topics including:

- Mental health and wellbeing;
- Healthy relationships and sexual health;
- Online safety;
- Equality, diversity and inclusion;
- Careers education and employability;
- Criminal exploitation and serious violence;
- Substance misuse awareness;
- Higher education progression; and
- Personal safety.

Examples of partner organisations may include local authorities, NHS services, universities, police services, safeguarding organisations, employers, creative industry professionals and specialist charities.

The Academy regularly reviews its safeguarding curriculum to ensure it remains responsive to emerging risks, local safeguarding priorities, student needs and statutory guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.

Through this comprehensive approach, we aim to ensure that every student develops the knowledge, understanding and confidence needed to recognise risk, make informed decisions, seek support when required and thrive as safe, successful and responsible members of society.