

## HORIZONS EDUCATION TRUST

### Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy Riverside Meadows Academy

January 2026

#### POLICY ISSUE CONTROL

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January 2026	
August 2025	<p><b>Policy changes by Director of Safeguarding &amp; Attendance: Stephanie Campey</b></p> <p>Policy Amendment – KCSIE 2025          This policy reflects the technical updates made to Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025 as published in draft form by the Department for Education, including changes to dates, updated web links, and other minor amendments.          The Government has confirmed that the final version of KCSIE 2025 will be published on 1 September 2025 and is expected to include links to revised statutory guidance on: Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RSHE)          Gender Questioning Children          Following publication, this policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure full compliance with the final statutory requirements and any additional guidance issued.</p> <p><b>Changes to this policy throughout:</b></p> <p>Policy versions updated          Director of Safeguarding and Attendance updated name          References to LAC/PLAC removed and changed to Child in Care, Child Previously in care          LGBTQ+ replaced with <b>lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning</b></p> <p><b>4.2</b>          Added in emphasis to be professionally curious in relation to a child's behavior as an indicator of a safeguarding concern</p> <p>Added detail to updated version of DfE doc Teaching Online Safety in school</p> <p>Added paragraph providing clarity around leaders and governors responsibility under the Counter-Terrorism And Security Act 2015</p> <p>Added extended title for KCSIE 2025</p> <p><b>6.0</b>          Added reference to HSB assessment tool</p> <p><b>6.5</b>          Added line to clarify that extreme views can also relate to the place of women and girls in society          Added reference to the academy having a prevent risk assessment in place in line with the Prevent Duty.</p> <p><b>7.0</b>          Added to require an annual review of online safety</p> <p>Added bullet points to clarify the filtering and monitoring and cyber security duties of the academy including in relation to generative AI</p> <p>'Statutory' added for clarity of the status of the guidance referred to</p> <p>Alternative Provision section added to reflect KCSIE update and publication of updated statutory DfE guidance</p>

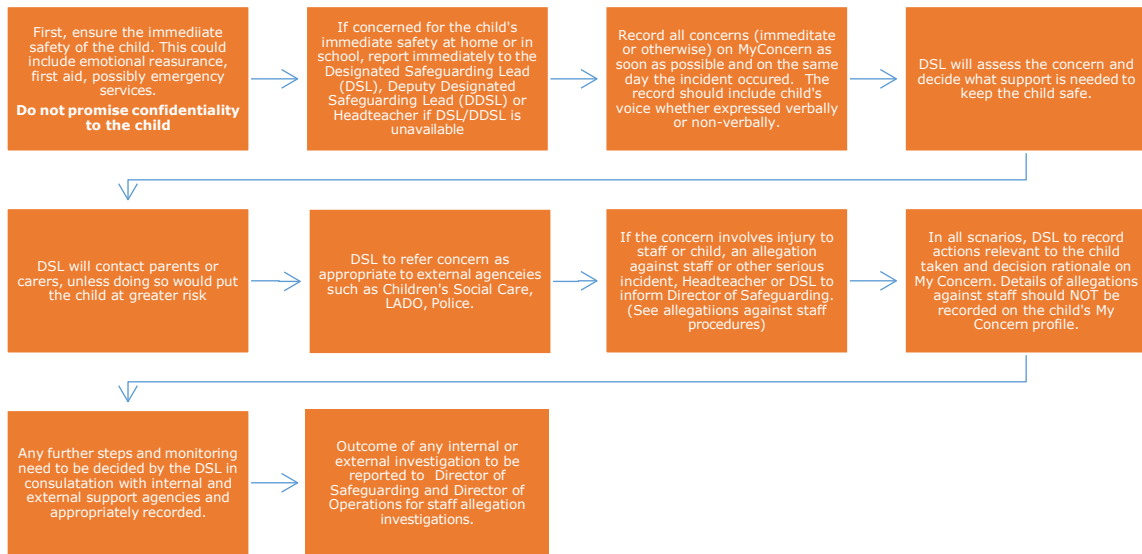
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## 1.0 SAFEGUARDING FLOWCHART:

If you have a safeguarding concern:



## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

The word 'parent' is used throughout to refer to, 'parent, carer or guardian'.

### 2.1 **Horizons Education Trust (HEdT) is committed to safeguarding children and expects everyone who works for the trust to share this commitment.**

**Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, all staff, governors, volunteers and visitors are expected to play their full part in keeping children safe.**

- 2.2 This policy has been authorised by HEdT. It is published on the trust website and is available in hard copy to parents on request.
- 2.3 This policy and its procedures apply wherever staff or volunteers are working with children, even when this is away from the academy on educational visits.
- 2.4 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (KCSIE) defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:
- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
  - protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online;
  - preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
  - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
  - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
- 2.5 Every child should feel safe and protected from any form of harm, abuse or exploitation. HEdT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.
- 'Children' includes everyone under the age of 18.
- 2.6 Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a responsibility to ensure their approach is child-centred. Practitioners should ensure they are working in the best interest of the child at all times.

### 3.0 KEY CONTACTS (Riverside Meadows Academy)

<b>Academy Safeguarding Team</b>		
<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	<b>Summer Ali</b> Deputy Headteacher Wisbech Green	<a href="mailto:Sali@riversidemeadows.cambs.sch.uk">Sali@riversidemeadows.cambs.sch.uk</a>
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<b>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	<b>Claire Heseltine</b> Assistant Headteacher St Neots	<a href="mailto:cheseltine@riversidemeadows.cambs.sch.uk">cheseltine@riversidemeadows.cambs.sch.uk</a>
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<b>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	<b>Zoe Kirby</b> Teacher St Neots	<a href="mailto:zkirby@riversidemeadows.cambs.sch.uk">zkirby@riversidemeadows.cambs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Academy Safeguarding Governor</b>	<b>Mike Andrews</b>	Contact via the academy office.
<b>Trust Safeguarding Governor</b>	<b>Julie Perry</b> Chair of Trustees	<a href="mailto:jperry@horizons.org.uk">jperry@horizons.org.uk</a>
<b>Director of Safeguarding &amp; Attendance</b>	<b>Stephanie Campey</b> Horizons Education Trust	<a href="mailto:Scampey@horizons.org.uk">Scampey@horizons.org.uk</a>

## 4.0 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

### 4.1 All staff, volunteers and governors have a responsibility for:

- Providing a safe environment in which children can learn.
- Identifying children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.
- Taking appropriate action, working with other services as required.
- Keeping themselves updated with the systems within the academy (trust) which supports safeguarding and were explained to them as part of their induction (including the [Staff Code of Conduct](#)). This includes knowing the role of, and working with, the academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Ensuring they receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including digital safeguarding/online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles, and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) which is regularly updated.
- Supporting social workers to take decisions about individual children when required.

### 4.2 Specifically, all academy staff are responsible for:

- Knowing who the academy's DSL and DDSLs are.
- Raising any safeguarding concerns with the DSL and/or DDSL.
- Ensuring that safeguarding concerns are reported immediately, and always on the same day.
- Ensuring that MyConcern reports are comprehensive, clear, accurate and professionally written accounts that will stand up to scrutiny.
- Being alert to the signs of abuse.
- Maintaining an attitude of '*it could happen here*,' and always acting in the best interests of the child.
- Listening to, and seeking out, the views, wishes and feelings of children
- Sharing information and working together to provide children with the help they need.
- Immediately referring to the headteacher any safeguarding concerns about another member of staff, or if the concerns are about the headteacher, referring them to the Director of Safeguarding and Attendance who will inform the chair of governors, and Director of Operations where appropriate.
- Raising concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the academy's safeguarding regime through the academy's [Whistleblowing Policy](#).
- Attending academy training on Cambridgeshire Local Authority safeguarding procedures and ensuring these procedures are followed.
- Seeking Early Help where a child and family would benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency via Cambridgeshire Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
- Knowing the academy's procedures for dealing with child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence between children.
- Knowing the academy's procedures for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, and reporting any such concerns to the DSL and/or DDSL.
- Reading part 1, KCSIE (2025).
- Referring to the academy's Anti-Bullying policy and Behaviour Policy where necessary, however, when considering a child's behavior, all staff must be professionally curious and make a judgement as to any possible underlying safeguarding concerns.



#### 4.3 Specifically, governors and leadership are responsible for:

- Reading, understanding, and applying the latest version of KCSIE and Working Together to Safeguard Children (WTTSC) statutory guidance.
- Ensuring that there is an effective Safeguarding Policy in place together with a Staff Code of Conduct, which are provided to all staff.
- Ensuring all staff are given a mandatory induction, which includes clear guidance on their safeguarding and child protection responsibilities, including online safety, and procedures to follow if anyone has any concerns about a child's safety or welfare.
- Ensuring that policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body, the Academy Advisory Group - particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are understood, and followed by all staff.
- Ensuring that the academy has an appropriate senior member of staff in the leadership team, with appropriate status, funding, resources and support, to lead on safeguarding and child protection, including online safety.
- Ensuring that they are aware of and follow local procedures related to safeguarding.
- Ensuring that they are doing all they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to online harms from the academy's IT system, ensuring that 'over-blocking' does not lead to unreasonable restrictions.
- Ensuring that the academy has in place online filtering systems, the efficacy of which is regularly monitored and reported on, and which complies with current filtering and monitoring standards.
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety, which includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles, and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring).
- Ensuring governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online safety which includes an understanding of filtering, monitoring systems and cyber security) training at induction which is updated regularly and at least annually to keep pace with KCSIE updates. This training should equip governors with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in the academy are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole academy approach to safeguarding and child protection.
- Ensuring that they are aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, The Equality Act 2010 including The Public Sector Equality Duty, and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensuring they have appropriate level of security protection procedures in place in order to safeguard children, staff and systems and which meet the standards in 'Cyber security standards for schools and colleges' guidance.
- Ensuring that the obligations under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 are met and that the Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales is followed including the production of an annual written risk assessment.
- Ensuring that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, through various teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum in line with the DfE's 'Teaching online safety in school' (updated January 2023) and UKCIS 'Education for a connected world' (June 2020).
- Reading and referring to all of Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025.

#### **4.4 The DSL (and the DDSL in their absence) is responsible for:**

- Taking lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place) in their academy.
- Managing referrals from academy staff or any others from outside the academy
- Working with external agencies and professionals on matters of safety and safeguarding.
- Undertaking relevant training and attending update sessions.
- Liaising with the headteacher to inform them of issues – especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult (PACE code C 2019).
- Raising awareness of safeguarding and child protection amongst the staff and parents; and ensuring that child protection information is transferred to the child's new academy.
- Ensuring all staff receive the appropriate training, which is kept up to date and tracked.
- Notifying the Children's Social Care Department if there are concerns over unexplained absences of a child.
- Informing the Local Authority when a private fostering arrangement is in place
- Ensuring Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies are kept up to date
- Keeping all child protection records up to date on My Concern; including a clear summary of the concern, decisions reached and the rationale behind the decision, details of how the concern was resolved/outcomes.
- Having an overview of the numbers of safeguarding and child protection referrals made, and provide an anonymised report to the headteacher, and governing body termly.
- Having in place effective ways to identify emerging problems and potential unmet needs for individual children and families.
- Ensuring that there is a planned programme of evidence based, inclusive, age and stage appropriate, RSHE delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum.
- Ensuring through the safeguarding curriculum that children know the process of raising a concern (about themselves or a friend/other), that they know the academy's DSL and DDSL, and are aware of other support mechanisms such as ChildLine, etc.
- Ensuring at least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training which is renewed every two years.
- Ensuring the adherence to statutory responsibilities to check staff working with children, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for checks beyond what is required; and ensuring volunteers are appropriately supervised.
- Ensuring procedures are in place to handle allegations against members of staff and volunteers and that where appropriate, records are maintained.
- Ensuring there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children.
- Ensuring that there is support available for staff involved in difficult child protection cases/incidents both at the academy and externally through counselling and/or other services.

- Creating a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and in the academy's development.
- Taking lead responsibility for promoting the educational outcomes for children who have or have had a social worker.
- Making this policy available to parents as appropriate.
- Ensuring that our staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role.
- Ensuring all staff have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time.
- Ensuring any paper records are secure and kept separately from the child's main file in a locked location.
- Fulfilling their duties in line with annex C, KCSIE (2025).
- Reading and referring to all of KCSIE, parts 2, 4 and 5 of WTTSC (2025) and the Cambridgeshire Local Authority threshold information.

## **5.0 PROCESS & PROCEDURES**

### **5.1 How to Report Concerns:**

- 5.1.1 All child protection and/or safeguarding concerns should be reported to academy DSL or DDSL in their absence (see [section 3.0](#)).
- 5.1.2 Clear procedures on the reporting of any concerns are given to all staff/volunteers in the academy. This is done as part of the staff induction training and staff are given a Child Protection & Safeguarding reminder of this annually in refresher training.
- 5.1.3 All concerns should be reported using the academy's MyConcern system.
- 5.1.4 Concerns should be completed as soon as possible, on the same day. Staff should never wait until the next day to complete a safeguarding concern report.
- 5.1.5 Concerns about a member of staff should be reported immediately to the headteacher. If the concern involves the headteacher, concerns should be reported immediately to the CEO.
- 5.1.6 The academy takes its responsibility to safeguard children seriously. Failure to follow these reporting procedures may result in disciplinary action.

### **5.2 Taking Action:**

- 5.2.1 If at any time it is considered that a child has suffered significant harm or is likely to do so, a referral should be made to Cambridgeshire Local Authority Emergency Duty Team by contacting 01733 234 724 or Police by dialling 101 or by calling 999 if you are concerned a child needs immediate protection. Cambridgeshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) can be contacted on: 01223 727 967.
- 5.2.2 If the child has an injury that requires medical attention, the child protection process will not delay the administration of first aid or emergency medical assistance.
- 5.2.3 The DSL and any deputies should liaise with the three safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with WWTSC.
- 5.2.4 When to call the Police - Guidance for Schools & Colleges (NPCC) should help DSLs understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do.

### **5.3 Children's Disclosure of Abuse:**

- 5.3.1 At Riverside Meadows Academy we have a clear procedure for reporting concerns. If a child talks, or uses their preferred method of communication, to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, the staff member will let the child know that they must pass the information on to the safeguarding team (DSL) in order to offer the proper support that the child requires.

- 5.3.2 Staff members will allow the child to speak freely and will not ask investigative questions.
- 5.3.3 Staff will be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and /or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. Staff will be aware this could be due to their vulnerability, disability and or sexual orientation or language/communication barriers.
- 5.3.4 Children communicate in different ways. Staff will adapt their practice and consider how best to communicate with the child, taking in to account disability, age, development and language. Staff will consider if any specialist communication support is needed for children who have disabilities and/or complex communication needs. This will sometimes need wider discussion with other agencies.
- 5.3.5 The staff member will tell the child what will happen next. It is the duty of the member of staff to inform the DSL of what has been discussed. The staff member will write up details of their conversation with the child as soon as possible and certainly on the same day. They must record the concern in full on the My Concern system.
- 5.3.6 If MyConcern is temporarily unavailable, the academy 'back up' paper procedures should be followed.
- 5.3.7 Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis only. Issues or concerns **must not** be discussed with colleagues, friends or family, unless necessary for the welfare of the child.

#### **5.4 Suspecting that a Child is at Risk of Harm**

- 5.4.1 There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a child may be at risk but have no 'real' evidence. In these circumstances, staff will endeavour to provide a safe and supportive environment where the child feels encouraged to communicate in a way that suits their needs. For children who are non-verbal, or have difficulties with communication, staff will use alternative methods to enable them to express their thoughts or feelings.
- 5.4.2 All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (child on child abuse) and that it can happen both inside and outside of the academy, and online.
- 5.4.3 Staff should use MyConcern to record these early concerns.
- 5.4.4 Following an initial conversation with the child, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL.
- 5.4.5 Staff will be aware of the harm caused by child-on-child abuse including sexual violence or harassment and recognise that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported.

- 5.4.6 Staff will use the academy's [Anti-Bullying Policy](#) where necessary, however, there will be occasions when a child's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.
- 5.4.7 The academy acknowledges that some of our children will be particularly vulnerable or may have an increased risk of abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare. To ensure that all of our children receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children that are considered to be vulnerable.

## **5.5 Notifying Parents:**

- 5.5.1 The academy will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a child with their parents. The DSL or a member of the safeguarding team, will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.
- 5.5.2 However, if the academy believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child, exacerbate the problem or compromise the safety of a staff member, advice will first be sought from Children's Social Care.

## **5.6 Referral to Children's Social Care:**

- 5.6.1 The DSL or DDSL will make a referral to Children's Social Care if it is believed that a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm.
- 5.6.2 The young person (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

## **5.7 Reporting Directly to Other Child Protection Agencies:**

- 5.7.1 Staff will follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with Children's Social Care, police, or the NSPCC if:
- The situation is an emergency and the following staff members are unavailable:
    - The DSL
    - The DDSL
    - The headteacher
    - The Director of Safeguarding and Attendance
  - They are convinced that a direct report is the **only** way to ensure the child's safety

## **5.8 Cause for concern / Disclosure of harm, abuse or exploitation:**

- 5.8.1 Every disclosure or suspicion of abuse from within or outside the academy will be taken seriously and action taken in accordance with this policy.
- 5.8.2 A member of staff, agency/supply staff or volunteer suspecting or hearing a disclosure of abuse (including child on child abuse and online safety concerns) must:
- listen carefully to the child or young person and keep an open mind
  - not make a decision as to whether or not the abuse has taken place
  - not ask leading questions, i.e. a question which suggests its own answer

- reassure the child or young person but not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality
- 5.8.3 The member of staff should explain that they need to pass the information to the DSL who will ensure that the correct action is taken
- 5.8.4 Children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges because:
- there may be assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's diagnosis without further exploration
  - children with SEND are more prone to peer group isolation or bullying/child on child abuse (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
  - there is potential that children with SEND or certain medical conditions can be disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying/child on child abuse without outwardly showing any signs, pupils may hide or mask the difficulties they experience; and
  - there may be communication barriers and children and young people's communication may not be understood by the adults around them; and
  - difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges
- 5.8.5 The trust is aware that we have children on roll who might need more support to be kept safe or to keep themselves safe. With this in mind, we will ensure that:
- The DSL works closely with relevant members of staff to share information relating to children
  - Pastoral support is targeted as required
  - Adaptations are made and resources used to capture the views of individuals who may be non-speaking or who may need additional support due to a disability or communication need
  - All notable changes in behaviour, mood or presentation are reported to the SL
  - All unexplained injuries and injuries for which there have been where conflicting explanations are reported to the DSL
- 5.8.6 Staff must keep a sufficient written record of the conversation or concern within MyConcern.
- 5.8.7 This record should be made as possible after the concern has been raised and certainly within 24 hours of receiving it.



5.8.8 The record should include:

- the date and time of the disclosure or concern
- the location that the conversation or concern took place
- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern including the child's voice where possible
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- a note of any actions taken
- decisions reached and the outcome

5.8.9 The MyConcern record must clearly outline those involved using initials for children and full names and roles of professionals and family members.

5.8.10 The MyConcern record should be factual and not contain the opinion of the staff member.

5.8.11 The MyConcern record should not contain information relating to staff investigations or suspensions beyond the initial concern relating to the child.

5.8.12 Where a concern is significant, such as regarding injury to children or staff, serious incidents, and any external referral, contact should be made directly with appropriate staff such as the DSL, headteacher, and the Director of Safeguarding.

5.8.13 Recording a concern on MyConcern **is not** a substitute for this reporting process

## 5.9 Early Help

5.9.1 Whilst all of our children are identified within the criteria for those potentially requiring Early Help (in accordance with KCSIE), if a member of staff is concerned that a child may be in need of additional support via an Early Help Assessment or are concerned they are suffering harm, the matter should be referred to the DSL as soon as possible.

## 5.10 Private Fostering

5.10.1 A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a Local Authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent, person with parental responsibility or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

5.10.2 Comprehensive guidance on private fostering can be found here in the DfE's publication Children's Act 1989 Guidance on Private Fostering.

5.10.3 Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the Local Authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases, privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or are involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

5.10.4 We have a duty to notify the Local Authority where we are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although academies have a duty to inform the Local Authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the academy. However, it should be clear to the academy who has parental responsibility.



- 5.10.5 Academy staff should notify the DSL or DDSL when they become aware of private fostering arrangements.
- 5.10.6 The DSL will notify the Local Authority if we are involved directly or indirectly in arranging for a child to be fostered privately. Notifications must contain the information specified in schedule 1 of Children Act 1989: private fostering and must be made in writing.
- 5.10.7 On admission to the academy, we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered.

## 6.0 TYPES OF SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

All children at HEdT have Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), therefore all staff must be extra vigilant to the possible indicators of abuse and/or neglect.

The DSL should liaise regularly with the wider safeguarding, attendance, behaviour and pastoral teams, including external agencies where appropriate, to support in maintaining a culture of vigilance and being alert to any relevant new information or concerns.

If staff have a concern for any pupil they must consider:

- The child's communication needs and how they can communicate effectively with them.
- What information in relation to the child disability and special needs staff need to be aware of in order to assess risk of abuse.
- What resources staff require in order to undertake an informed assessment of safeguarding risk.
- Where child protection issues are considered regarding a child with disabilities, there must be involvement by key professionals who know the child well, including those who have a comprehensive understanding of the child's disability, method of communication, and any associated medical condition.
- The academy should consider what specialist advice, guidance and training may be required in order for staff to understand why children with SEND can be more vulnerable to abuse and how to recognise signs of abuse and/or neglect of disabled children.

### 6.1 Mental Health

- 6.1.1 Research suggests that children and young people with SEND are at increased likelihood to experience mental health concerns such as anxiety and depression. Children may feel anxious in their day-to-day lives due to navigating social and sensory environments that might be difficult or challenging.
- 6.1.2 Academy staff need to be alert to all children's mental health needs and consider what additional support may be needed.
- 6.1.3 Academy staff need to be alert to changes in a children's mental health and be curious as to what may be causing this.
- 6.1.4 All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- 6.1.5 Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to diagnose a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- 6.1.6 Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

6.1.7 Any concerns in relation to the mental health of our children and young people should be raised with a member of the DSL team without delay to ensure children and young people can access the right support at the right time.

## **6.2 All staff must know what the different signs of abuse are and be alert to those signs.**

6.2.1 Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

6.2.2 Further information and resources can be found in annexes A, B and part 5 of KCSIE (2025) and in the MyConcern resources library or on safeguarding information boards in staff preparation areas, the main office and the conference room.

6.2.3 All staff must maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and ensure any concern, no matter how small is reported. It could be the vital missing piece of the jigsaw that indicates a child is at risk of harm

6.2.4 All staff will receive ongoing training regarding types of abuse including local and national context.

6.2.5 The DSL and/or DDSL will respond to all concerns, following Local Authority procedures and where there is an immediate risk of serious harm to a child will inform the police.

6.2.6 There are four types of child abuse as defined in KCSIE.

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

All staff must know what these are and be alert to the signs.

6.2.7 All academy staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another

## **6.3 Physical Abuse**

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

## **6.4 Emotional abuse**

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include

interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

### **6.5 Sexual abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

### **6.3 Neglect**

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **6.4 Specific Safeguarding issues**

KCSIE acknowledges the following as specific safeguarding issues:

- Abuse including faith-based abuse
- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Child abduction and community safety incidents
- Children and the court system
- Children missing from education
- Children missing from home or care
- Children with family members in Prison
- Child sexual exploitation
- Child exploitation: criminal exploitation including through county lines and trafficking
- Domestic abuse
- Drugs
- Health and wellbeing – including Fabricated and Induced illness, Medical conditions and Mental health concerns

- So called 'Honour based Abuse'– including Female genital mutilation (FGM), Forced Marriage and Breast Flattening (or Breast Ironing)
- Homelessness
- Online safety
- Private fostering
- Radicalisation and Hate
- Child on Child abuse
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools
- Upskirting
- Violence – including Gangs and youth violence and Gender- based violence /violence against women and girls

Annex B of KCSIE (2025) contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues.

### **Contextual Safeguarding**

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the academy and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families/home.

### **Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic 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.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

CSE 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.

### **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) & County Lines**

CCE 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 needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

### **County Lines**

Is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas (within the UK), using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line".

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

FGM refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK. All staff should speak to the DSL or DDSL with regard to any concerns about FGM. Teachers should be aware that there is a mandatory legal duty upon them that, if in the course of their work, they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18 years, they must report this to the police. See annex B of KCSIE (2025) for further details.

Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out and discuss any such cases with the DSL and children's social care.

The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases though staff will always refer to the DSL to take the next appropriate steps.

### **Forced Marriage**

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. A marriage must be entered into with the free and full consent of both parties, there must be a choice. Where staff or volunteers have any reason to suspect that someone is experiencing pressure or being forced in marriage, they must report this to the DSL through the academy process. For more information on forced marriage see annex B in KCSIE (2025).

### **Preventing Radicalisation**

The Counter-Terrorism & Security Act, 2015, places a duty on specified authorities, including education, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, it is known as "the Prevent duty".

Where staff are concerned that children are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalised they should discuss this with the DSL and be recorded on MyConcern. This can include extreme views on the role of women and girls.

The DSL will complete the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism training and will support staff with any concerns they may have.

The DSL will decide if it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel Programme when they receive a concern that may be linked to extremism. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

The academy will have a risk assessment in place which is updated annually in line with the Prevent Duty.

### **Child on Child Abuse**

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children at any age and that it can happen both inside and outside of the academy and online.

All staff must know the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, know how to identify it and respond to reports of it. This includes sexual violence and sexual harassment.

All staff must be aware that even if there are no reports it does not mean child on child abuse is not happening. It may be the case that it is just not being reported. Staff must be vigilant and if they have any concerns they should speak to the DSL or DDSL.

Staff will recognise the individual needs of children with SEND and their additional vulnerability to child on child abuse.

We will minimise the risk of all types of child-on-child abuse through creating a positive safeguarding culture. This includes regular staff CPD focused on identifying and responding to types of abuse and neglect covering a range of specific safeguarding issues to ensure staff are ready to respond, as well as offering preventative learning opportunities for pupils to keep themselves safer.

All staff must challenge inappropriate behaviours between children including, but not limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudiced based and discriminatory bullying, inappropriate touching)
- 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 which may also include an online element
- Sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Up skirting – 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
- All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families.
- Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

### **Sexual Violence & Sexual Harassment**

This section of the policy should be read in conjunction with part 5, KCSIE (2025).

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can happen anywhere, Staff should be aware that it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely that it will be perpetrated by boys.

All staff should be aware of and respond appropriately to all reports and concerns. The academy has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual assault. It is never acceptable, will not be tolerated and will never be passed off as ‘banter’ ‘just having a laugh’ ‘part of growing up’ or ‘boys being boys’.

Staff should recognise that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur online and



face to face (both physically and verbally) and is never acceptable. All staff and volunteers will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'.

The academy will ensure that all children are taught, in a stage or age- appropriate way, about sex and relationships and understand that the law is in place to protect children rather than criminalise them.

### **Risk Assessment**

Where there has been a report of sexual violence the DSL or DDSL will make an immediate written risk and needs assessment which will be kept under review and will work to engage with children's social care and specialist services as required.

The academy will take immediate action to protect the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and other children in the academy.

The academy will not wait for the outcome or even the start of any police investigation before taking action to protect the children involved.

Any relevant action under the academy behaviour policy will be considered. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment the need for a risk assessment will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### **The risk and needs assessment will consider:**

- The victim, especially their protection and support
- Whether there may have been other victims
- The alleged perpetrator(s)
- All the other children (and, if appropriate adults and staff) at the academy, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s) or from future harms

The trust recognises that certain children in our care may face additional barriers to disclosure because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation and that procedures will ensure that all children are able to report easily.

### **Action following a report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment:**

When a report has been received the DSL or DDSL will consider the following:

- The wishes of the victim
- The nature of the alleged incident(s) including whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) has been displayed
- The ages of the children involved
- The developmental stages of the children involved
- Any power imbalance between the children
- If the alleged incident is a one off or a sustained pattern of abuse
- That sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between peers
- If there are any ongoing risks to the victim, other children, or staff
- Intra familial harms
- Support for siblings
- Other related issues and the wider context including links to CSE and CCE.
- Immediate consideration will be given as to how best to support and protect the



- victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) and any other children involved or impacted
- Making an assessment of the behaviours using a HSB assessment tool (such as Brook Traffic Light Tool)

#### **The DSL will consider 4 options when managing a report:**

- Manage the report internally
- Provide support through the local Early Help process
- Make a referral to Children's Social Care
- Report to the police

All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded on MyConcern.

If a report is assessed as being unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious the DSL will consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help, or may have been affected by someone else and that this is a cry for help. In such circumstances the DSL may make a referral to children's social care. An Early Help process may be initiated.

All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions will be recorded on MyConcern.

The academy will ensure that if a child is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence the risk assessment will be updated to ensure relevant protections are in place and needs are being met.

If a report is deliberately invented or malicious, the academy will consider what disciplinary action and support is appropriate.

### **6.7 Ongoing Response – Safeguarding & Supporting the Victim**

The following principles will help shape the decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting the victim:

- The needs and wishes of the victim will be paramount.
- Consideration of the age and development stage of the victim, nature of the allegations and the potential risk of further abuse.
- The victim will never be made to feel they are the problem or made to feel ashamed.
- Proportionality of response. Support will be tailored on a case-by-case basis.
- A holistic approach with an awareness of health needs associated with sexual assault including physical, mental and sexual health problems and unwanted pregnancy.

### **6.8 Online safety**

The DSL has lead responsibility for digital safeguarding.

[HEdT's Online Safety Policy](#) has guidance on a whole academy approach to online safety which includes:

- Online safety coverage in the curriculum
- Acceptable use of technology
- Details of filtering and monitoring systems in place to support safe use of technology and how content, contact, conduct and commerce are monitored.

All online safety concerns (including online child on child abuse) must be reported to the DSL and recorded on MyConcern.

Parents will be informed about the systems the academy has in place to monitor and filter online content. They will also be informed about how online material will be used in the curriculum and which academy staff or individuals their children may interact with online.

Where concerns are raised about a child's use of the internet or access to online content, parents will be consulted prior to any action being taken such as confiscation of devices.

Risk assessments of a pupil's needs will be completed in consultation with parents.

The academy will take a collaborative approach with parents, working together to help keep children safe both at the academy as well as at home and in the community.

The academy will assess and support all families, including consideration of whether support should be offered under the Early Help framework.

If a child or parent has a concern relating to online safety, they are encouraged to report it to the DSL who has lead responsibility for digital safeguarding.

All staff will be trained in digital safeguarding and will have a role in educating and protecting children about online harms.

We will conduct an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks our children face.

We will seek to prevent children from online harms through educating them about the laws and potential consequences of activity online.

Digital safeguarding may be addressed during lessons, through specialised digital safeguarding sessions, PHSE and assemblies.

### **Filtering, monitoring & cyber security**

The academy will limit children's exposure to risks from the academy's IT system.

The academy has in place appropriate filtering systems that are in line with the recommendations in [UK Internet Centre Appropriate Filtering for Education Settings](#).

The academy will ensure that 'over-blocking' does not lead to unreasonable restriction as to what pupils can be taught with regard to online teaching and safeguarding.

The academy will conduct regular, at least termly, tests of the filtering provision in the academy and report on findings to the governing body

The academy will follow the DfE guidance on filtering and monitoring requirements as they apply to generative AI.

Follow DfE guidance on the Prevent Duty, cyber security standards and filtering and

monitoring standards for schools,

### **Sharing of Nudes & Semi-Nudes:**

When a child has been affected by the sending of an explicit image staff will:

- Recognise that if the child or young person has been sending explicit images or videos of themselves, they may feel anxious talking or communicating about this.
- Recognise that they themselves may feel shocked, upset, angry, confused or disappointed while listening to the child.
- Give themselves time to process the information, remembering that the child will be watching their reactions.
- Reassure the child that they are not alone.
- Listen and offer support – they're probably upset and need help and advice, not criticism.
- Not shout or make them feel like it's their fault.
- Will not ask questions like 'why have you done it?' as this may stop them from opening up.
- Discuss the problem and the wider pressures that they may face, to help them to understand what's happened and understand any wider safeguarding concerns.
- Assure the child that they will do all they can to help and explain that they will seek the support of the DSL.

If a child or young person has shared an explicit image, the DSL or DDSL will:

- Ask them who they initially sent it to, their age, and if they know whether it's been shared with anyone else.
- Support the victim to get the images removed by contacting the Internet Watch Foundation.
- Assess the situation for wider safeguarding concerns and agree who will be contacted and when then contact parents/police/CEOP/ as appropriate to the case.
- Contact the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) if the image was requested by an adult, as this is grooming which is illegal.
- Contact the DSL at the relevant academy if the image was requested by a school aged child not from this academy, to raise awareness of potential wider safeguarding issues or circulation of the image in their school/academy.
- All actions and information to be logged on MyConcern.
- Parents to be contacted as appropriate.

If a child has been sent a sexually explicit image:

- The DSL or DDSL should ask the child if they know the person who sent it the image and their age.
- If the image was sent by another child, staff may want to help the child to speak to the sender to stop future messages. If the child agrees, staff can also help them to block the sender on social media.
- The DSL will consult Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident (overview) (updated March 2024) - GOV.UK.
- If the image was sent by an adult, the DSL should contact CEOP, as this may be part of the grooming process, as well as the local police.
- Parents to be contacted as appropriate, based on the specific circumstances of each case.
- All actions and information to be logged on MyConcern.

Staff must not:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save images.
- Ask a child to share or download images (if you have already viewed the images by accident, you must report this to the DSL).
- Delete the images or ask the child to delete it.
- Ask the child/children who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the image (this is the DSL's responsibility).
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the child it involves or their, or, others' parents.
- Staff are not to view or forward illegal images of a child.

### **6.9 Children who are Lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning:**

Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT. Staff will endeavor to reduce the additional barriers lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning children face and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concern with members of staff.

The academy will actively encourage lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning children to share their lived experience and views in order to inform practice.

### **6.10 Photography & Digital Images**

To protect pupils, we will:

- Seek parental consent for photographs to be taken or published by the academy, the trust or a recognised third-party (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications).
  - The trust recognises that consent can be withdrawn at any time, and requests to do so should be made in writing to the academy office.
  - We will make every effort to ensure that we do not allow images to be taken of any children for whom we do not have permission or who are 'at risk' or disallowed from having their photographs taken for legal or social reasons.
- Use only the child or young person's first name with an image.
- Ensure children and young people in our care are appropriately dressed.
- Encourage children and young people to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them, and ensure the young people in our academies are able to withdraw consent verbally.
- Remove photographs where requested.
- Only use academy equipment when taking photographs of children.
- Comply with GDPR.
- Sometimes, the academy may hold an event where parents attend in person and may wish to photograph their own child/ren. The trust states that the taking of photos by parents is only permitted at the discretion of academy staff, and that photos taken are not published in public digital spaces and remain for personal use only.

## 7.0 ANTI-BULLYING

All staff must follow the anti-bullying policy. **The academy operates a zero-tolerance policy towards bullying.**

We do the following to raise awareness of bullying and what to do about it:

- Undertaking questionnaires to monitor the extent of bullying in the academy and the effectiveness of the [Anti-Bullying Policy](#).
- Making national Anti-Bullying Week a high-profile event each year.
- Prominently displaying anti-bullying posters produced by the pupils.
- Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour.
- When bullying is reported it will be taken seriously. Staff will work with the pupil who is being bullied to help them feel safe and to find responses to bullying that work. Staff will also work with the pupil, or other pupils, who are bullying to change the bullying behaviour.
- Where appropriate, the academy will try to involve colleagues from external agencies (e.g. Young People's workers, Social Workers, YOT workers, Police etc.) in supporting pupils who are experiencing bullying or who are bullying.

If any child/member of staff/parent has a concern about bullying, they should report it to the DSL or any member of staff.

## **8.0 ATTENDANCE**

(See [Attendance Policy](#) for further details.)

Lack of, or erratic attendance, persistent or severe absence is a safeguarding issue and must act as a warning sign to a range of concerns. It may be an indication of neglect, exploitation, child-on-child abuse including bullying and sexual harassment, significant mental ill health concerns, caring responsibilities and/or other familial concerns. It must not be seen as an isolated concern.

Absence from education may increase known safeguarding risks.

HEdT have a separate attendance policy in place (which includes protocols for children missing education and elective home education) which references statutory guidance [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) (WTTISA) and [Children Missing Education](#) (CME).

The Academy Attendance Champion is Summer Ali.

The academy attendance team are given access to role specific safeguarding training and the academy will ensure all staff understand the safeguarding implications behind poor or non-attendance.

Academy leads and governors ensure that attendance data, particularly for identified vulnerable groups is closely and regularly monitored identifying trends or patterns which may indicate safeguarding concerns.

Where appropriate, social workers and Local Authority SEND Caseworkers will be involved, informed and updated about attendance issues.

### **8.1 Children Missing Education (CME)**

Children who go missing from education are at significant risk. Children who are already known to children's social care, who are on a child in need or child protection plan or in the care of the Local Authority (Child in care) are additionally vulnerable and in need of additional protection.

The DSL will ensure the academy response to identifying children missing from education supports identifying potential abuse or exploitation and also prevents them going missing in the future.

The academy will ensure compliance with the guidance and regulations contained in the appropriate sections of KCSIE and WTTISA.

### **8.2 Elective Home Education (EHE)**

We will follow the protocols laid out in our [Attendance Policy](#).

### **8.3 Children with Medical Conditions Who Cannot Attend School**

8.3.1 We will follow the protocols laid out in our Attendance Policy.

## **8.4 Alternative Provision**

- 8.4.1 Where the academy places a child with an alternative provision provider, we continue to be responsible for their safeguarding.
- 8.4.2 We will follow the DfE statutory guidance for Alternative Provision and for Education where children with health needs who cannot attend school
- 8.4.3 We will ensure that a robust and continuing due diligence and review process is in place which includes:
- Ensuring the placement meets the child's needs
  - Assessing any additional risks of harm that the child may be vulnerable to due to any complexity of need
  - obtain written information from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on all individuals working at their establishment and assurance that the provider will notify the academy of any staffing changes
  - obtain written information from the provider of any arrangements which may put a child at risk
  - Obtaining records of the address of the provider and any subcontracted provision or satellite sites the child may attend and ensure that we know where the child is based during the school day
  - At least half termly review the provision, including obtaining the child's authentic voice to ensure the placement continues to meet needs
  - Obtain daily attendance information from the provider
- 8.4.4 Ensuring that when safeguarding concerns arise the placement is immediately reviewed and terminated, if necessary, unless or until concerns have been satisfactorily address.



## **9.0 Recruitment of Staff & Volunteers (title)**

- 9.1.1 The academy will ensure that Safer Recruitment practices always follow KCSIE and will be adhered to by staff.
- 9.1.2 Every interview panel will have at least one member who has a current certificate in safer recruitment. These certificates will be updated every two years. We will check on the identity of candidates, follow up references with referees and scrutinise applications for gaps in employment. We will record the answers to safeguarding questions asked during the interview process on staff personnel files. We will ensure that safeguarding considerations are at the centre of each stage of the recruitment process including carrying out an online search as part of due diligence on shortlisted candidates.
- 9.1.3 As part of our due diligence, we will carry out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify, through publicly available information, any incidents or issues which can be explored at interview.
- 9.1.4 We will ensure that agencies and third parties supplying staff provide us with evidence that they have made the appropriate level of safeguarding checks on individuals working in our academy.
- 9.1.5 We will ensure that any alternative provision facility, contractor or agency working with the academy provide us with evidence that they have made the appropriate level of safeguarding checks on individuals working in their provision.
- 9.1.6 Every job description and person specification will have a clear statement about the safeguarding responsibilities of the post holder.
- 9.1.7 We will ensure that all staff involved in recruitment are aware of government guidance on safer recruitment and that its recommendations are followed.
- 9.1.8 The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) helps employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children. The academy will ensure the correct level of DBS certificate is sought and ensure a prohibition check is undertaken.
- 9.1.9 The types of checks undertaken will be in accordance with the guidance given by KCSIE.
- 9.1.10 Any offer of appointment made to a successful candidate (including one who has lived or worked abroad) will be conditional on satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks as required in the guidance given in KCSIE.
- 9.1.11 Where an enhanced DBS Certificate is required, it will be obtained from the candidate before or as soon as is practicable after the person is appointed.
- 9.1.12 The academy will always ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete. References will be sought on all shortlisted candidates, including internal ones, before interview (unless the candidate has expressly denied permission for the employer to approach their referees). Where references have been sought, any issues or concerns they raise can be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview.



- 9.1.13 The academy will keep a single central record in accordance with the regulations given in KCSIE.
- 9.1.14 Recruitment and/or deployment checks will be undertaken as stated in KCSIE.
- 9.1.15 The academy will carry out all relevant checks if there are concerns about an existing member of staff and refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult.
- 9.1.16 The academy will obtain written confirmation from the alternative provision provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff. This includes written confirmation that the alternative provider will inform the commissioning school of any arrangements that may put the child at risk (i.e. staff changes), so that the commissioning school can ensure itself that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on new staff.

## 10.0 WHISTLEBLOWING

- 10.1 This section should be read in conjunction with the trust's [Whistleblowing Policy](#) which includes full details of the procedures to be followed in relation to allegations against staff.
- 10.2 All staff are required to report whistleblowing matters to the headteacher. If the headteacher is absent or if the whistle blow relates to the headteacher, staff are required to report directly to the CEO or Chair of Trustees.
- 10.3 Whistleblowers must be reassured that a disclosure made in good faith will never lead to a detrimental position for their employment. A knowingly false disclosure however could lead to disciplinary action. All guidance stated in part 4 of KCSIE (2025) regarding the management and record keeping of whistleblowing allegations must be followed.
- 10.4 Allegations against staff (including agency and supply staff)  
This section should be read in conjunction with the [Low Level Allegations Against Staff Policy](#).
- 10.5 HEdT has procedures for dealing with allegations against staff (including agency/supply) and this is outlined in our policies and follows the DfE guidance found in KCSIE.
- 10.6 Where any member of the academy staff or any volunteer has concerns that a person has caused harm or poses a future risk of harm to children they must act in accordance with this academy policy.
- 10.7 Where a child makes an allegation against a staff member, supply teacher or volunteer, the allegation will be taken seriously and acted upon immediately Parents will be contacted as soon as reasonably possible.
- 10.8 The child will be offered support, and their wishes will be carefully considered before any actions are carried out.
- 10.9 The Local Authority has designated an officer, or team of officers, to be involved in the management and oversight of allegations against people that work with children (Designated Officer(s) also known as LADO).
- 10.10 The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) contact information is **LADO@cambridgeshire.gov.uk** and **01223 727 967**. The designated officer(s)/LADO must be informed immediately and in any event within one working day of all allegations against staff (including supply), Trustees and volunteers that come to the academy's attention and meet the criteria of placing pupils at risk of harm.
- 10.11 Any safeguarding allegation against staff must be alerted to the Director of Safeguarding and Attendance and the Director of Operations.
- 10.12 Detailed guidance and training is regularly given to staff, Trustees and volunteers to ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a child.

- 10.13 All staff, governors, volunteers and visitors will be made aware what constitutes a low level concern and to ensure that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the headteacher or DSL, recorded and dealt with appropriately. (See [Low Level Allegations Against Staff Policy](#). Policy for further details.)

## 11.0 TRAINING

- 11.1 All staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, will be provided with induction training (and annual refresher training) that includes:
- The Staff Code of Conduct including the Whistleblowing policy, Staff Acceptable Use of ICT Policy and the Behaviour Policy.
  - Role of the DSL, their contact details together with the contact details of all DDSs.
  - Safeguarding procedures in response to children who are absent from school
  - A copy of part 1 and annex B of KCSIE (2025).
  - Prevent online module (Home office/National College) – Contracted staff only.
  - Autism/SEMH awareness Training
  - ADHD awareness training
  - Specific Learning Difficulties training, dyslexia and dyscalculia
  - Managing low level behaviours and de-escalation training
  - Adaptive teaching training – Contracted staff only.
- 11.2 Staff members who may support with intimate care, must confirm they have read and understood the Intimate Care Policy and attend appropriate training before providing support.
- 11.3 Contracted staff will complete face to face Child Protection and Safeguarding training to understand context of setting and contextual safeguarding issues. Training will be annual and include guidance on the duties of staff in relation to both children in need and children at risk of harm.
- 11.4 In addition to all staff Safeguarding and Child Protection training, the DSL will deliver regular updates via email, staff meetings, newsletters, briefings etc. to keep staff skills and knowledge up to date.
- 11.5 Staff development will also include training on Prevent, online safety (which includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) and the requirement to ensure children are taught about safeguarding (including online safety).
- 11.6 Relevant staff involved in recruitment will undertake Safer Recruitment Training every two years to ensure robust recruitment procedures are in place.
- 11.7 Additionally, the academy will make an assessment of the appropriate level and focus for staff training and responsiveness to specific safeguarding concerns such as: radicalisation; child sexual exploitation; criminal exploitation including through 'County Lines'; female genital mutilation; cyberbullying, child on child abuse (including sexual violence and sexual harassment), trauma informed practice and mental health.
- 11.8 All members of the HEdT Central Team, Governors and Trustees will undertake appropriate training annually to enable them to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.
- 11.9 Academy-based staff will access behaviour management and de-escalation including the appropriate use of restrictive physical intervention through Cambridgeshire Therapeutic Thinking.

## **12.0 CONFIDENTIALITY & SHARING INFORMATION**

- 12.1 The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information will not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.
- 12.2 The academy will use the DfE Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers (May 2024) to inform and support their approach to information sharing.
- 12.3 All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the child and staff involved but also to ensure that anything being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.
- 12.4 Child protection files must be transferred to a new school or academy within 5 days for in year transfers or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term.

### **12.5 Storage & Handling of Records**

- 12.6 Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the principles set out in the Data Protection Act 1998 and the UK GDPR (2018) and the academy's Data Protection Policy.
- 12.7 The academy will use the DfE Data Protection in Schools (April 2024) to inform and support their approach to information sharing.
- 12.8 Any paper record of concern forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility accessed only by the headteacher and designated safeguarding lead. Any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals. Every effort will be made to prevent unauthorised access. Sensitive information will not be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen.
- 12.9 Child protection information will be stored separately from the child's academy file and the academy file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held. If such records need to be sent to a new academy or school they will be sent separately from the child's file and under a confidential cover or in an encrypted electronic file.
- 12.10 Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a child or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Data Protection Act does not prevent academy staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.
- 12.11 We will ensure that relevant staff have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share (and withhold) personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UKGDPR.
- 12.12 When unsure, we will contact our person with significant responsibility for the trust, who may refer this to our Data Protection Officer.

### **13.0 USE OF SCHOOL PREMISES FOR NON-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

- 13.1 Where the academy premises are hired or rented out, the leadership will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.
- 13.2 The academy policies will apply where the services or activities are provided by the academy and are under the direct supervision or management of academy staff.
- 13.3 Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the governors and academy leadership will seek written assurance that the body concerned has appropriate child protection and safeguarding policies in place (including inspecting these as needed) and ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with the academy on these matters where appropriate.
- 13.4 This applies whether or not the children or young people who attend any of these services or activities are pupils on the academy roll.
- 13.5 Safeguarding arrangements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement) as a condition of use and occupation of the premises per the HEdT Lettings Policy; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.
- 13.6 The guidance found in [Keeping Children Safe in Out-of-School Settings](#) details the safeguarding arrangements that the academy should expect these providers to have in place.