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THE ACADEMY OF ST NICHOLAS

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Review Period	Annually
Person Responsible for Policy	Headteacher
Governing Committee	LAC
Date of Governor Approval	September 2025
Date for Review	September 2026

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Our Safeguarding Team

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Aims

1. Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in keeping them safe. To fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals must ensure their approach is child centred. This means that they must always consider what is in the best interests of the child.
2. These procedures are for all staff, parents, governors, volunteers, and the wider school community. They form part of the safeguarding arrangements for our school. They should be read in conjunction with the trust's policies on safeguarding, safer recruitment and selection, staff code of conduct, health and safety and acceptable use of ICT, and the school's policies on behaviour (including the anti-bullying strategy and approach to physical intervention) and educational visits policy. They should also be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe in Education (Department for Education). Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 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 the 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
    - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Expectations

3. All staff and volunteers must sign to confirm they have read and agree to these procedures before they start working with us, and whenever these procedures change. All children and their families will be provided with these procedures before enrolment. It is important for families to be aware of actions staff may take if there are any concerns for a child's safety, and for them to understand that they might not be consulted before action is taken. Knowing about child protection procedures ahead of time helps parents to engage better in the process, meaning that change is more likely to take place.
4. All adults working in our school who have contact with pupils are in positions of trust. Staff and volunteers should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils, including through early help. This means that staff and volunteers:
    a. are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and must avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation or intentions
    b. must work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way
    c. must acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded
    d. must discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern
    e. must apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief, or sexual orientation
    f. must not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for children
    g. must be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct prohibition from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).

Family Help Hubs

5. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later.

6. At The Academy of St Nicholas early help will be offered whenever the school and/or the family believe early intervention can support to improve outcomes for children or prevent escalation of need or risk.

What support do we offer?	In school, our Safeguarding team are available to support and advise families. We can signpost or refer families to relevant services or agencies for further help and can offer support to the children in school. Where necessary, the school can open an FHA / CAF (common assessment framework) which will help our families to access the help they need; whether from a Family Support Practitioner, from Social Services or other external agencies.
What sort of concerns could we support you with?	At The Academy of St Nicholas, we can offer support and advice on a range of issues, including domestic violence, family break ups, school attendance, housing concerns, financial worries and debts, abuse or neglect, behaviour management and parenting, bereavement, and loss, bullying and online safety. We will aim to help as much as we can with any issue you feel is having a negative impact on your child. Always come and speak to us if you are concerned.
When should you contact the school with your concerns?	Contact us when you feel a concern is having a negative impact on your child. We will always try to meet with you or give you a call quickly, to find out what the problem in and arrange what we can do to support with your concern.
How will safeguarding procedures be effective in supporting	The Safeguarding team have all received training to deal with varying issues and concerns. As described in this document and in our Safeguarding policy, the school has clear procedures to follow if we feel that a child is in danger. Where there are concerns raised, the school will follow our reporting procedures and the team with work with the families and all relevant agencies.
Who might the school refer to?	Children and Young People's Services The School Nurse Speech and Language Therapist Educational Psychologist Education Welfare Office (Attendance) School based Counsellor YPAS CAHMS Benefit Maximisation Service Family Help Assessment Hubs including Level 3
Who might the school signpost families to?	The Citizens Advice Bureau Your GP or Health Visitor The Food Bank Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Children's Centres Loan Shark's
Supporting Policies	The policies below may give you further information regarding your concern. These are available on our website, or you can request a paper copy from the school office. Safeguarding Policy Special Needs Policy Behaviour Policy

What to look out for (recognising children who are experiencing or at risk of harm)

7. Children can be harmed in several ways; abuse can by physical, sexual, emotional or it can take the form of neglect (see Part one of Keeping children safe in education). Children sometimes suffer more than one type of abuse at a time. Children as well as adults can be abusers; child on child abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter," "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up" (see Part five of Keeping children safe in education). Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of our wider safeguarding duties (see The prevent duty: for schools and childcare providers), and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse..
8. All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or be being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from

having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

Online Safety

9. It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. We adopt whole school approaches to online safety to protect and educate pupils, students, and staff in their use of technology and establish mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate concerns as appropriate.
10. Staying safe online is taught through the computing curriculum and Curriculum for Life to all year groups. Students explore the dangers of the online world and how to keep themselves safe.
11. An annual on-line safety audit is completed. Actions arising from this self-evaluation process is shared with Governors and Trust

How to respond

12. If you have a concern about a child's wellbeing, based on:
    a. something the child or their parent has told you
    b. something another child has told you
    c. something you have noticed about the child's behaviour, health, or appearance
    d. something another professional said or did

    Pass all concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL if they are not available.

13. Even if you think your concern is minor, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) may have more information that, together with what you know, represents a more serious worry about a child. It is never your decision alone how to respond to concerns – but it is always your responsibility to share concerns, no matter how small.

    a. **Do not investigate** but decide whether you need to clarify your concerns by asking the child or parent open questions (beginning with words like who, how, why, what, where and when) and being careful not to lead them. **Do not discuss your concerns with the parent(s) if this may increase the risk to the child.**
    b. If you have heard a disclosure of abuse or are talking with a child or parent about your concerns, let them know what you will do next. For example, 'I am worried about your bruise, and I need to tell Mrs Smith (the DSL) so that she can help us think about how to keep you safe.'
    c. **Inform the DSL immediately.** If the DSL is not available, inform a Deputy DSL. If none of the designated safeguarding staff or headteacher are available, you must make the referral yourself. Details of how to do this are at the end of these procedures.
    d. As soon as possible after the event, make a written record following the school's procedures: Safeguarding concerns should be recorded on CPOMS, if the matter is urgent, you must have a conversation with the DSL if they are not available, inform a Deputy DSL or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. If there was a disclosure, record the words of the child or parent rather than your interpretation. Include analysis of what you saw or heard and why it is a cause for concern.

14. Any member of staff is entitled to report a safeguarding concern directly to the local authority if they do not feel able to refer the matter to the DSL. Details of how to do this are at the end of these procedures.

Who to pass concerns on to

15. Names, photos and contact details for the DSL, Deputy DSL(s), Designated Teacher for looked-after and previously looked after children, Safeguarding Governor, Headteacher, Chair of the local governing body and relevant trust Director of Education are provided at the beginning of these procedures. Details of how to make a referral to the local authority are at the end.

Concerns about another adult in the school

16. Safeguarding concerns about another adult in the school that may meet the harms threshold set out below, must be referred to the Headteacher (or whoever is fulfilling the role in their absence) without delay. If the concerns are about the Headteacher (or a relative of the Headteacher working at the school) they must be referred to the relevant trust Director of Education. They will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day in respect of all cases that may meet the harms threshold, i.e. in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:
    a. Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
    b. Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
    c. Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children; or
    d. Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

    If you feel your concern has not been responded to appropriately, please contact the Trust Lead on Safeguarding (williamss@allsaintsmat.org)

17. Low level concerns that do not meet the harms threshold set out above, should also be reported to the Headteacher. If they are about the Headteacher (or a relative of the Headteacher working at the school), they should be reported to the Director of Education. If they are about a member of the trust central team, they should be reported to the Chief Executive Officer. All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing by the person to whom they are reported. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, action taken and the rationale for decisions.

18. The term 'low level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a nagging doubt – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff (and persons in a position of trust) code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, but that does not meet the harms threshold for referral to the LADO. Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:
    - being over friendly with children;
    - having favourites;
    - taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;
    - engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
    - humiliating pupils.

    Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that might look inappropriate but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse. Sharing, recording, and dealing with low level concerns appropriately not only keeps children safe but also protects those working in or on behalf of schools.

Whistleblowing

19. If you are concerned about poor or unsafe practice or potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime, these should be raised with the Headteacher or the Chair of the local governing body, in the first instance. Please refer to the Trust's whistleblowing policy.

20. The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line is available for those who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. You can call: 0800 028 0285. This line is available from 8:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday or email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Reviewing these procedures

21. These procedures are reviewed at least annually and approved by the local governing body. Copies of these procedures and supporting materials, such as Keeping Children Safe in Education (Department for Education), are available in the staffroom and on the school's website. Hard copies may be requested from the school office.

Contact details for the local authority

22. To seek advice before making a referral to Liverpool CASS – Liverpool Children's Advice and Support Service contact a Family Help Hub and ask to speak to a consultant social worker.

23. To make a referral to the local authority contact Liverpool CASS – Liverpool Children's Advice and Support Service on 0151 – 459 2606, and then complete an online MARF – Multi Agency Referral Form