



LEIGH
Academies Trust

Leigh Academies Trust

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Date written: August 2024

Date of next review: August 2025

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedure.

Key Contacts

	Name
Designated Safeguarding Director / Trust Board Vice Chair	Theresa Davies
Deputy Safeguarding Director / Trust Board Director	Michael Costello
Trust Safeguarding Lead / Academy Director	Emma Elwin
People Director	Richard Taylor
Trust Safeguarding Advisor	Marla England
Trust CIO	Stephane Vernoux

Our Academy Key Contacts

Academy	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Ebbsfleet Academy	Crystal Cardnell
Hundred of Hoo Academy	Lee Webb
Hundred of Hoo Primary Academy	Mike Etheridge
Hundred of Hoo Nursery	Hayley Clark
Leigh Academy Bearsted	Jane Tipple
Leigh Academy Bexley	Phil Wilson
Leigh Academy Blackheath	Carina Lindars
Leigh Academy Cherry Orchard	Julie Forsythe
Leigh Academy Dartford	Jennifer Haywood
Leigh Academy Halley	Rebecca England
Leigh Academy Hartley	Sophie Smith
Leigh Academy High Halstow	Gemma Stangroom
Leigh Academy Horsmonden	Hayley Sharp
Leigh Academy Hugh Christie	Matt Harris
Leigh Academy Langley Park	Sally Brading
Leigh Academy Milestone	Janet Tidmas
Leigh Academy Minster	Peter Mortley
Leigh Academy Longfield	Joy Liasu
Leigh Academy Molehill	Sophie Smith
Leigh Academy Oaks	Luke Coulson
Leigh Academy Paddock Wood	Thomas Moore
Leigh Academy Rainham	Steven Reader
Leigh Stationer's Academy	Joe Spark
Leigh Stationer's Primary Academy	Rebecca England
Leigh Academy Tonbridge	Alex Millward
Leigh Academies Tree Tops	Denise White

Marden Primary Academy	Hannah Penning
Mascalls Academy	Mike Illsley
Peninsula East Primary	Lorna Rimmer
Sir Geoffrey Leigh Academy	Mark Shepherd
Sir JW Mathematical School	Crispin Morris
Snowfields AcademyAcademy	Fi Bradbrook/James Dodddington
Strood Academy	Julie Lindsey
The Leigh UTC	Kathryn Pamphlett
Wilmington Academy	Pete Devlin
LAT Apprenticeship	Polly Butterfield-Tracey

What to do if you have a welfare concern in Leigh Academies Trust

Why are you concerned?

For example:

- Something a child has said – e.g. allegation of harm
- Child's appearance – may include unexplained marks as well as dress
- Behaviour change
- Witnessed concerning behaviour

Act immediately and record your concerns. If urgent, speak to a DSL first.

Follow the academy procedure

- Reassure the child
- Clarify concerns, using open questions if necessary (TED: Tell, Explain, Describe)
- Use child's own words, record facts not opinions
- Record your concern on the academy system
- Seek support for yourself if required from DSL

Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead

(if not available inform another member of the Safeguarding Team/Principal/if no one is available report directly using details below)

Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Consider whether the child is at immediate risk of harm e.g. unsafe to go home
- Access the Medway Safeguarding Procedures <https://www.medwayscp.org.uk/mscb/>
- Refer to other agencies as appropriate e.g. Internal or community services, early help open access, LADO, Police or Request for Support for integrated children's services
- If unsure then consult with the Education Safeguarding Officer Fiona Veitch 01634 331464

If you are unhappy with the response

Staff:

- Follow local escalation procedures
- Follow LAT Whistleblowing procedures

Learners and Parents:

- Follow academy complaints procedure

Record decision making and action taken in the learner's child protection/safeguarding file

Monitor

Be clear about:

- What you are monitoring e.g. behavior trends, appearance etc.
- How long you will monitor
- Where, how and to whom you will feedback and how you will record

Review and request further support (if necessary)

At all stages, the child's circumstances will be kept under review. The DSL/Staff will request further support if required to ensure the **child's safety is paramount**

1. Introduction and Ethos

The Leigh Academies Trust recognises our statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everybody's responsibility and everyone has a role to play. All members of our community (staff, volunteers, governors, leaders, parents/carers, wider family networks, and students) have an important role in safeguarding children and all have an essential role to play in making our community safe and secure

Staff working with children within the Leigh Academies Trust will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff will always act in the best interests of the child and if any member of our community has a safeguarding concern about any child or adult, they should act and act immediately.

This policy applies where there are any child protection concerns regarding children who attend one of our settings but may also apply to other children connected to the Leigh Academies Trust, for example, siblings, or younger members of staff (under 18s) or children on student/work placements.

We believe that the best interests of children always come first. All children (defined as those up to the age of 18) have a right to be heard and to have their wishes and feelings taken into account and all children regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.

In our Trust, children are respected and are encouraged to express themselves openly. We will ensure children's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what safeguarding action to take and what services to provide with an understanding that some children will require additional support or are not always ready to talk.

The Leigh Academies Trust recognises the importance of adopting a trauma informed approach to safeguarding; we understand there is a need to consider the root cause of children's behaviour and consider any underlying trauma.

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- **Prevention** - positive, supportive, safe culture, curriculum and pastoral opportunities for children, safer recruitment procedures.
- **Protection** - following the agreed procedures, ensuring all staff are trained and supported to recognise and respond appropriately and sensitively to safeguarding concerns.
- **Support** - adopt a child centred approach and provide support for all pupils, parents/carers and staff, and where appropriate, implement specific interventions for those who may be at risk of harm.
- **Collaboration** - with both parents where possible, and other agencies to ensure timely, appropriate communications and actions are undertaken when safeguarding concerns arise.

The Leigh Academies Trust expects that if any member of our community has a safeguarding concern about any child or adult, they should **act immediately**.

This policy is implemented in accordance with our compliance with the statutory guidance from the Department for Education, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2024 (KCSIE) which requires individual schools and colleges to have an effective child protection policy.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, including governors, temporary or third-party agency staff and volunteers) and are consistent with those outlined within KCSIE 2024.

2. Policy Context

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and related guidance. This includes:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (KCSIE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (WTSC)
- Ofsted: Education Inspection Framework'
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families 2000
- Early Years and Foundation Stage Framework 2023 (EYFS)
- The Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty)
- The Prevent Duty (2023)

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires school governing bodies, local education authorities and further education institutions to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children who are pupils at a school, or who are students under 18 years of age. Such arrangements will have to have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

We acknowledge that some learners, during the period of the pandemic and subsequently, may have been exposed to a range of adversity and trauma including bereavement, anxiety and in some cases increased welfare and safeguarding risks. We will work with local services (such as health and the local authority) to ensure necessary services and support are in place to support learners.

All staff within Leigh Academies Trust will follow local or national guidance in response to any emergencies. We will amend this policy and our procedures as necessary but regardless of the action required, our safeguarding principles will always remain the same and the welfare of the child is paramount.

3. Definition of Safeguarding

In line with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and **KCSIE 2024**, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy 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
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the child(ren)
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and is defined as activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

The Leigh Academies Trust acknowledges that safeguarding includes a wide range of specific issues including (but not limited to):

Abuse and neglect	Hate
Bullying, including cyberbullying	Homelessness
Children with family members in prison	Human trafficking and modern slavery
Children Missing Education (CME) including children deliberately missing Education.	Mental Health
Child missing from home or care	Nude or semi-nude image sharing, aka youth produced/involved sexual imagery or “Sexting”
Child on child abuse	Online safety
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)	Preventing radicalisation and extremism
Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)	Private fostering
Children and the Court System	Relationship Abuse
Children who are lesbian, gay, or bisexual or children who are perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not).	Serious Violence
Contextual safeguarding (risks outside the family home)	Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment
County lines and gangs	Sexting
Domestic abuse-understanding the effects of what they see, here and experience.	So-Called honour-based abuse including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage
Drugs and alcohol misuse	Upskirting

Fabricated or induced illness	
Faith abuse	
Gender based abuse and violence against women and girls	

(Also see Annex B Further Information within Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024)

4. Related Safeguarding Policies

This policy is one of a series related to safeguarding and should be read and actioned in conjunction with the policies as listed below:

Trust Policies
Staff Code of Conduct
Searching, screening and confiscation
Online Safety
Data protection and Information Sharing Policy
Health and Safety Policy including Risk Assessment Policy
Managing Allegations Against Staff, including Low Level Concerns
Whistleblowing
Safer Recruitment Policy
First Aid Policy

Supporting Guidance (to be read and followed alongside this document)

- “Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People in Education Settings” - [Safer Recruitment Consortium](#)
- “What to do if you are worried a child is being abused” – DfE, March 2015
- Early Years Foundation Stage 2023 Welfare Requirements

5. Policy Compliance, Monitoring and Review

The Leigh Academies Trust will review this policy at least annually. The policy will be revised following any national or local policy updates, in conjunction with the Leigh Academies Trust (LAT) Safeguarding Lead, along with any significant national events, local child protection concerns and/or any changes to our procedures.

All staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) will be provided with a copy of this policy and Annex A of **KCSIE 2024**. This policy can be found on the academy website.

Parents/carers can obtain a copy of this Child Protection Policy and other related policies via the academy website.

The academy Principal will ensure regular reporting on safeguarding activity and systems to the Academy Board. Neither the Academy Board nor individual members will receive details of individual learner situations or identifying features of families as part of their oversight responsibility. The Trust will monitor child protection and safeguarding activity through the commissioning of external reviews, termly DSL forums and regular modular reviews of the academy performance.

6. Key Responsibilities

The Academy Board members will read and will follow **KCSIE 2024**.

All Academy board members will attend the regular safeguarding training they are offered which will equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenges to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding.

The academy has a nominated governor responsible for safeguarding. The nominated governor will support the DSL and have oversight in ensuring that the academy has an effective policy which interlinks with other related policies; that locally agreed procedures are in place and being followed; and that the policies are reviewed at least annually and when required. The academy safeguarding governor will make regular visits to review procedures that are in place and provide reports to the Academy Board. A copy of the Link Governor for Safeguarding roles and responsibilities can be found [here](#).

The Academy Board, LAT Trust Executive, LAT Safeguarding Advisor and academy leadership team will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is supported in their role.

6.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Each Academy within the Leigh Academies Trust has appointed members of the senior leadership team, as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Leigh Academies Trust maintains records of all designated staff for reference and use at Trust level.

The DSL has overall responsibility for the day-to-day oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems (including online safety **and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place**) in school. Whilst the activities of the DSL may be delegated to the deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL and this responsibility will not be delegated. **The details of this role are explicit in the DSL's job description. DSLs have sufficient understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems in place.**

Any deputies are trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead and the role is explicit in their job description.

The DSL (and any deputies) will be more likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and will be the most appropriate person to advise staff on the response to any safeguarding concerns.

It is the role of the DSL to carry out their functions as identified in Annex C of KCSIE 2024. This includes but is not limited to:

- Acting as the central contact point for all staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- Maintaining a confidential recording system for safeguarding and child protection concerns.
- Coordinating safeguarding action for individual children.
- When supporting children with a social worker or looked after children, the DSL should have the details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child, with the DSL liaising closely with the designated teacher.
- Liaising with other agencies and professionals in line with KCSIE and WTSC.
- Ensuring that locally established procedures as put in place by the three safeguarding partners as part of their Local Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership procedures, including referrals, are followed, as necessary.
- Representing, or ensuring the Academy is appropriately represented at multi-agency safeguarding meetings (including child protection conferences).
- Managing and monitoring the Academy role in any multi-agency plan for a child.
- Being available during term time (during school hours) for staff in the Academy to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring adequate and appropriate DSL cover arrangements in response to any closures and any out of hours and/or out of term activities.
- Taking lead responsibility for online safety, including having oversight of the effectiveness of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place. This is accomplished through regular checks which are logged and triangulated to inform further support to children.
- Helping promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and Academy leadership staff.
- The Principal and DSL to ensure that their responsibility for children accessing Alternate Provision is maintained and will ensure that any provision accessed by children is appropriate for their needs and has Safeguarding systems that are of a high standard.
- Ensuring all staff access appropriate safeguarding training and relevant updates in line with the recommendations within KCSIE.
- Liaising with the principal to inform them of any safeguarding issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This includes being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult ([PACE Code C 2019](#)).

The DSL will undergo appropriate and specific training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role. Deputy DSLs will be trained to the same standard as the DSL. The DSLs' training will be updated formally at least every two years, but their knowledge and skills will be updated through a variety of methods at regular intervals and at least annually.

6.2 Members of Staff

Our staff play a particularly important role in safeguarding as they are in a position to observe any changes in a child's behaviour or appearance, identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.

All members of staff have a responsibility to:

- to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- to be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect so that they can identify cases of children who may need help or protection.
- know what to do if a child tells them that they are being abused, neglected, or exploited and understand the impact abuse and neglect can have upon a child.
- to be able to identify and act upon indicators that children are, or at risk of developing mental health issues.
- be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.
- to understand the early help process and their role in it.
- to understand the Academy safeguarding policies and systems.
- undertake regular and appropriate training which is regularly updated.
- be aware of the local process of making referrals to children's social care and statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.
- know how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality and sharing information in accordance with the KCSIE, DPA/GDPR for the purposes of keeping children safe.
- reassure children who report concerns that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- act in line with Teachers' Standards 2012 which state that teachers (including headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

6.3 Children and Young People

Children and young people (learners) have a right to:

- Feel safe, be listened to, and have their wishes and feelings taken into account.
- Contribute to the development of academy safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Receive help from a trusted adult
- Learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online
- Be accompanied by an appropriate adult when involved in police investigations carried out on/in the academy premises.

6.4 Parents and Carers

Parents/carers have a responsibility to:

- Understand and adhere to the relevant academy policies and procedures.
- Talk to their children about safeguarding issues and support the academy in their safeguarding approaches.
- Identify behaviours which could indicate that their child is at risk of harm including online.
- Seek help and support from the academy or other agencies.

7. Recognising Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

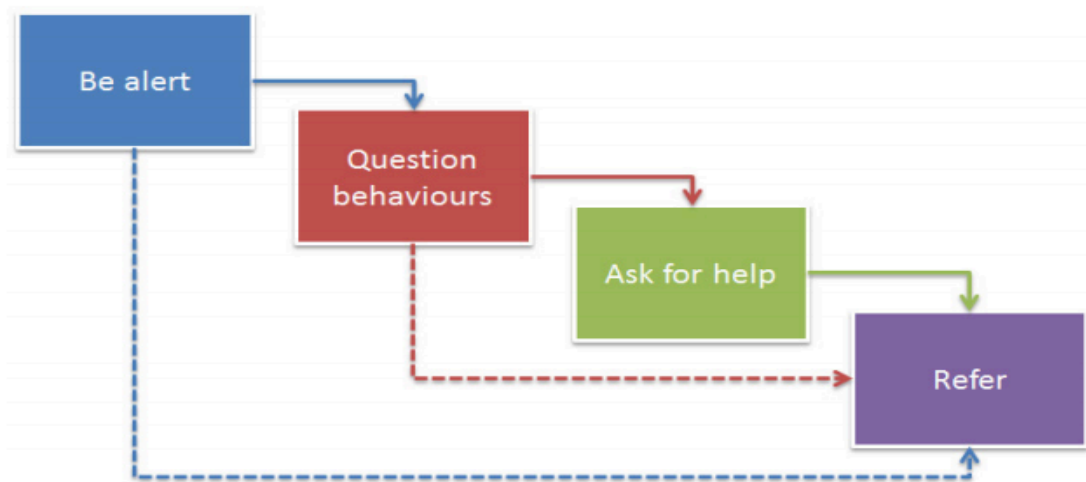
All staff are made aware of the definitions and indicators of abuse and neglect as identified by Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.

The Leigh Academies Trust recognises that when assessing whether a child may be suffering actual or potential harm there are four categories of abuse:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

For additional information see Annex B Further information (KCSIE 2023).

All members of staff are expected to be aware of and follow this approach if they are concerned about a child:



'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' 2015

Members of staff are aware that concerns may arise in many different contexts and can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness. The indicators of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Children develop and mature at different rates, so what appears to be worrying behaviour for a younger child might be normal for an older child.

It is important to recognise that indicators of abuse and neglect do not automatically mean a child is being abused; however all concerns should be taken seriously and explored by the DSL on a case-by-case basis.

The academy recognises that some children have additional or complex needs and may require access to intensive or specialist services to support them.

'Parental behaviours' may also indicate child abuse or neglect, so staff should also be alert to parent-child interactions or concerning parental behaviours; this could include parents who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or if there is a sudden change in their mental health.

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.

Children may report abuse happening to themselves, their peers or their family members. All reports made by children to staff will be taken seriously and will be responded to in line with this

policy. Staff should recognise that children may not feel ready to or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected.

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the academy and/or can occur between children offsite. Children can be 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.

By understanding the indicators of abuse and neglect, we can respond to problems as early as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family.

If deemed necessary by the Principal or by staff authorised by the Principal following a concern about a child's safety or welfare, the searching and screening of children and confiscation of any items, including electronic devices, will be managed in line with the academy 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' Policy and behaviour policy, which is informed by the DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school' guidance.

8. Responding to Child Protection Procedures

All staff are made aware of the definitions and indicators of abuse and neglect as identified by 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'-2023 and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education-2024'.

If staff are made aware of a child protection concern, they are expected to:

- listen carefully to the concern and be non-judgmental;
- only use open questions to clarify information where necessary, e.g. who, what, where, when or Tell, Explain, Describe (TED);
- not promise confidentiality as concerns will have to be shared further, for example, with the DSL and potentially Integrated Children's Services;
- be clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed;
- record the concern in line with the academy record keeping requirements (see section 9);
- inform the DSL (or deputy), immediately via Bromcom and in person if the concern is urgent.

The Leigh Academies Trust ensures that each Academy adheres to the Local Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership procedures. The full LSCMP procedures and additional guidance relating to reporting concerns and specific safeguarding issues can be found on their website: <https://www.kscmp.org.uk/>.

- Medway Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership procedures. The full Medway Safeguarding procedures and additional guidance relating to reporting concerns and specific safeguarding issues can be found on their website: <https://www.medwayscp.org.uk/mscb/>.
- London Child Protection Procedures and London Safeguarding Children Threshold Document (which is found online a <https://www.londoncp.co.uk/>)

The Leigh Academies Trust supports each academy's work with Operation Encompass. This means we work in partnership with Greenwich Metropolitan Police/Kent Police/Bexley Metropolitan Police to provide support to children experiencing domestic abuse.

The academy recognises that in situations where there are immediate child protection concerns identified in line with Support Level Guidance, it is NOT to investigate as a single agency but to act in line with LCMP guidance which may involve multi-agency decision making. The DSL may seek advice or guidance from their Area Education Safeguarding Advisor from the Education Safeguarding Service before deciding next steps. They may also seek advice or guidance from a social worker at the Front Door/Single Point of Access/MASH service who are the first point of contact for Integrated Children's Services (ICS)/Medway Children's Social Care

If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a request for support will be made immediately to Integrated Children's Services/Medway Social Services (Front Door/MASH/SPA) and/or the police in line with KSCMP procedures/LCP/Medway Safeguarding Procedures.

All staff are aware of the process for making requests for support referrals for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

In most cases, a request for support will be made by the DSL or a deputy. However if the DSL or a deputy is not immediately available to discuss an urgent concern, staff will seek advice from another member of the academy leadership team or from the Education Safeguarding Service or via consultation with a social worker from the Front Door/SAP/MASH (depending on academy location.) If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral to external services, they will inform the DSL as soon as possible.

In the event of a request for support to the Front Door/MASH/SPA being necessary, parents/carers will be informed and consent to this will be sought by the DSL in line with guidance provided by KSCMP/LCP/Medway Safeguarding Parents/carers will be informed unless there is a valid reason not to do so, for example, if to do so would put a child at risk of harm or would undermine a criminal investigation.

The DSL will keep all early help cases under constant review and consideration will be given to a request for support to the Front Door/MASH/SPA if the situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

If, after a request for support or any other planned external intervention, a child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL will consider following KSCMP escalation procedures /RBG Escalation Policy /Resolving Professional Differences – Multi-agency Escalation policy to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves. DSLs may request support with this via the Education Safeguarding Service.

DSLs and staff will be mindful of the need for the Academy to ensure any activity or support implemented to support children and/or families is recorded. Support provided by the Academy where families are struggling will be overseen and reviewed by the DSL on a regular basis to ensure activity does not obscure potential safeguarding concerns from the wider professional network. Where the Academy is unsure, advice will be sought from the Education Safeguarding Service.

9. Record Keeping

All safeguarding concerns, discussions and decisions, and reasons for those decisions, will be recorded in writing on the academy safeguarding incident/concern form/system and pass them without delay to the DSL.

Child Protection records will record facts and not personal opinions. A body map will be completed if injuries have been observed and each Academy and recorded on Bromcom. If members of staff are in any doubt about recording requirements, they will discuss their concerns with the DSL or members of the Safeguarding team.

The recording of Incident/Welfare concerns is to be completed factually and promptly via Bromcom. In the absence of a Bromcom login, the concern will be raised verbally or by paper form to the DSL.

Records will be completed as soon as possible after the incident/event, using the child's words and will be logged on Bromcom. If there is an immediate concern the member of staff should consult with a DSL before completing the form as reporting urgent concerns takes priority.

Safeguarding records are kept for individual children and are maintained separately from all other records relating to the child in the academy. Safeguarding records are kept in accordance with data protection legislation and are retained centrally and securely by the DSL. Safeguarding records are shared with staff on a 'need to know' basis only.

All safeguarding records will be transferred in accordance with data protection legislation to the child's subsequent school, under confidential and separate cover. These will be given to the new DSL and a receipt of delivery will be obtained.

In addition to the child protection file, the DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the DSL at the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue to provide support.

10. Multi-Agency Working

The Leigh Academies Trust recognises and is committed to its responsibility to work within the Medway/KSCMP/Greenwich/London multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The leadership team and DSL will work to establish strong and co-operative local relationships with professionals in other agencies in line with statutory guidance, including Virtual schools heads.

The Leigh Academies Trust Recognises the importance of multi-agency working and is committed to working alongside partner agencies to provide a coordinated response to promote children's welfare and protect them from harm. This includes contributing to /Medway/KSCMP/London processes as required. Such as, participation in relevant safeguarding multi-agency plans and meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Strategy Meetings, MARACs, Child in Need meetings or other early help multi-agency meetings. The Trust Safeguarding Lead and Safeguarding Advisor will support the Academy DSL to manage any concerns that arise from these meetings.

11. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

The Leigh Academies Trust recognises our duty to share relevant information with appropriate agencies in matters relating to child protection at the earliest opportunity as per statutory guidance outlined within KCSIE 2023.

KCSIE 2024, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and the DfE "Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners" guidance provides further details regarding information sharing principles and expectations.

Where reasonably possible, the school/college will hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil/student. There is an expectation that contact information will be held for both parents, unless doing so would put a child at risk of harm.

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 must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children (KCSIE 2024).

The members of the Leadership Teams will disclose information about a learner on a 'need to know' basis.

Leigh Academies Trust (LAT) has an appropriately trained Data Protection Officer (DPO) as required by the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) to ensure that the academy is compliant with all matters relating to confidentiality and information sharing requirements. The academy also has appropriately trained staff locally to deal with issues related to GDPR.

All members of staff must be aware that whilst they have duties to keep any information confidential and that they also have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children. All staff are aware they cannot promise confidentiality in situations which might compromise a child's safety or wellbeing.

12. Complaints

All members of the academy community should feel able to raise or report any concerns about children's safety or potential failures in the academy safeguarding regime. The academy has a Complaints Procedure available to parents, learners and members of staff and visitors who wish to report concerns or complaints. This can be found on the academy website.

Whilst we encourage members of our community to report concerns and complaints directly to us, we recognise this may not always be possible. Children, young people, and adults who have experienced abuse at school can contact the NSPCC 'Report Abuse in Education' helpline on 0800 136 663 or via email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Staff can also access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

The leadership team at The Leigh Academies Trust and the Trust Executive Leadership team will take all concerns reported in relation to the academy seriously and all complaints will be considered and responded to in line with the relevant and appropriate process. Anything that constitutes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with in line with section 17 of this policy.

13. Specific Safeguarding Issues

The Leigh Academies Trust is aware of the range of specific safeguarding issues and situations that can put children at greater risk of harm. In addition to Part one, DSLs, Academy leaders

and staff who work directly with children will read Annex B of KCSIE which contains important additional information about the following specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues.

Where staff are unsure how to respond to specific safeguarding issues, they should follow the processes as identified in part 3 of this policy and speak with the DSL or a deputy.

13.1 Child-on-child abuse

All members of staff of The Leigh Academies Trust recognise that children can abuse other children (referred to as child-on-child abuse, previously known as 'peer-on-peer' abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of Academy and online.

- The Leigh Academies Trust recognises that child-on-child abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:
- Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children
- Physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Upskirting (which is a criminal offence), which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

Any allegations of child-on-child abuse will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with in line with this child protection policy and KCSIE (in particular, part two and five).

The Leigh Academies Trust adopts a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse. We believe that abuse is abuse and it will never be tolerated or dismissed as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys"; this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and can create an unsafe environment for children and a culture that normalises abuse, which can prevent children from coming forward to report it.

All staff have a role to play in challenging inappropriate behaviours between children. Staff recognise that some child-on-child abuse issues may be affected by gender, age, ability and culture of those involved. For example, for gender-based abuse, girls are more likely to be victims and boys more likely to be perpetrators.

The Leigh Academies Trust recognises that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse is still likely to be taking place and it may be the case that it is just not being

reported. As such, it is important that staff speak to the DSL (or deputy) about any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse.

In order to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, The Leigh Academies Trust will:

- promote proactive approaches. This could include implementing a robust anti-bullying policy, providing an age/ability appropriate PSHE and RSE curriculum, providing a range of reporting mechanisms, for example, worry boxes, dedicated reporting emails monitored by DSLs, online report forms.
- The Leigh Academies Trust wants children to feel able to confidently report abuse and know their concerns will be treated seriously. All allegations of child-on-child abuse will be reported to the DSL and will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with in line with associated Academy policies, including child protection, anti-bullying, and behaviour. Pupils/students who experience abuse will be offered appropriate support, regardless of where the abuse takes place.
- Concerns about pupils/students' behaviour, including child-on-child abuse taking place offsite will be responded to as part of a partnership approach with pupils/students' and parents/carers. Offsite behaviour concerns will be recorded and responded to in line with existing appropriate policies, for example anti-bullying, acceptable use, behaviour and child protection policies.
- Alleged victims, alleged perpetrators and any other child affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported by:
 - taking reports seriously, listening carefully, avoiding victim blaming, providing appropriate pastoral support, working with parents/carers, reviewing educational approaches, following procedures as identified in other policies, for example, the anti-bullying, behaviour and child protection policy, and where necessary and appropriate, informing the police and/or ICS.

13.2 Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment

- When responding to concerns relating to child-on-child sexual violence or harassment, The Leigh Academies Trust will follow the guidance outlined in Part five of KCSIE.
- The Leigh Academies Trust recognises that sexual violence and sexual abuse can happen anywhere, and all staff will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here.' The Leigh Academies Trust recognises sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children and can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally). Sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable.
- **All** victims of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment, or ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Abuse that occurs online or outside of the Academy will not be dismissed or downplayed and will be treated equally seriously and in line with relevant policies/procedures, for example anti-bullying, behaviour, child protection, online safety.

- The Leigh Academies Trust recognises that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this will be explained in such a way to pupils/students that avoids alarming or distressing them.
- The Leigh Academies Trust recognises that an initial disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported, rather than representative of a singular incident and that trauma can impact memory, so children may not be able to recall all details or timeline of abuse. All staff will be aware certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone, for example because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity, and/or sexual orientation.
- The DSL (or deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and will be the most appropriate person to advise on the initial response.
 - The DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment which will be considered on a case-by-case basis which explores how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator, and any other children involved/impacted, in line with part five of KCSIE and relevant local/national guidance and support.
 - The risk and needs assessment will be recorded and kept under review and will consider the victim (especially their protection and support), the alleged perpetrator, and all other children, adult students and staff and any actions that are required to protect them.
 - Any concerns involving an online element will take place in accordance with relevant local/national guidance and advice.
- Reports will initially be managed internally by the Academy and where necessary will be referred to Front Door/MASH (Early Help and/or Children's Social Work Service) and/or the police. Important considerations which may influence this decision include:
 - the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed.
 - the nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether Harmful Sexual Behavior 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 - sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature.
 - that sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between children.
 - understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents.
 - whether there are any ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students, or Academy staff.
 - any other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.
- The Academy will in most instances engage with both the victim's and alleged perpetrator's parents/carers when there has been a report of sexual violence; this might not be necessary or proportionate in the case of sexual harassment and will depend on a case-by-case basis. The exception to this is if there is a reason to believe informing a

parent/carer will put a child at additional risk. Any information shared with parents/carers will be in line with information sharing expectations, our confidentiality policy, and any data protection requirements, and where they are involved, will be subject to discussion with other agencies (for example Children's Social Work Service and/or the police) to ensure a consistent approach is taken.

- If at any stage the DSL is unsure how to proceed, advice will be sought from the [Education Safeguarding Service](#).

13.3 Nude and/or semi-nude image sharing by children

- The Leigh Academies Trust Recognises that consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as youth produced/involved sexual imagery or "sexting") can be a safeguarding issue; all concerns will be reported to and dealt with by the DSL (or deputy).
- When made aware of concerns involving consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos by children, staff are advised:
 - to report any concerns to the DSL immediately.
 - never to view, copy, print, share, forward, store or save the imagery, or ask a child to share or download it – this may be illegal. If staff have already inadvertently viewed imagery, this will be immediately reported to the DSL.
do not delete the imagery or ask the child to delete it.
 - to avoid saying or doing anything to blame or shame any children involved.
 - to reassure the child(ren) involved and explain that the DSL will be informed so they can receive appropriate support and help. Do not promise confidentiality, as other agencies may need to be informed and be involved.
 - not to investigate or ask the child(ren) involved to disclose information regarding the imagery
 - to not share information about the incident with other members of staff, children/young people, or parents/carers, including the families and child(ren) involved in the incident; this is the responsibility of the DSL.
- DSLs will respond to concerns in line with the non-statutory UKCIS guidance: '[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)' and the local [KSCMP](#) guidance. When made aware of a concern involving consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos:
 - The DSL will hold an initial review meeting to explore the context and ensure appropriate and proportionate safeguarding action is taken in the best interests of any child involved. This may mean speaking with relevant staff and the children involved as appropriate.
 - Parents/carers will be informed at an early stage and be involved in the process to best support children, unless there is good reason to believe that involving them would put a child at risk of harm.
 - All decisions and action taken will be recorded in line with our child protection procedures.
 - A referral will be made to ICS and/or the police immediately if:
 - The incident involves an adult (over 18).
 - There is reason to believe that a child has been coerced, blackmailed, or groomed, or there are concerns about their capacity to consent, for example, age of the child or they have special educational needs.

- the image/videos involve sexual acts and a child under the age of thirteen, depict sexual acts which are unusual for the child's developmental stage, or are violent.
- a child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.
- o The DSL may choose to involve other agencies at any time if further information/concerns are disclosed at a later date.
- o If DSLs are unsure how to proceed, advice will be sought from the [Education Safeguarding Service](#).

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

- The Leigh Academies Trust recognises that both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.
- The Leigh Academies Trust Recognises that children can become trapped in CCE as perpetrators can threaten victims and their families with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. Children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves which can mean their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised (particularly older children) and they are not treated as victims, despite the harm they have experienced. The experience of girls who are criminally exploited can also be very different to that of boys. We also recognise that boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE).
- The Leigh Academies Trust recognises that CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge, for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities and includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited, for example they may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.
- If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of CSE or CCE, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

13.5 Serious violence

- All staff are aware of the indicators which may signal children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include unexplained gifts or new possessions, increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of CCE.
- Any concerns regarding serious violence will be reported and responded to in line with other child protection concerns by speaking with a DSL or deputy. The initial response to

child victims is important and staff will take any allegations seriously and work in ways that support children and keep them safe.

13.6 Modern Slavery

- Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in the Statutory Guidance: [Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims](#).
- If there are concerns that any member of the community is a victim or involved with modern slavery, concerns should be shared with a DSL or deputy and will be responded to in line with this policy.

13.7 So-called Honour Based Abuse (HBA)

- So-called 'honour'-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.
- All forms of HBA are abuse, regardless of the motivation, and concerns will be responded to in line with section 3 of this policy. Staff will report any concerns about HBA to the DSL (or a deputy). If there is an immediate threat, the police will be contacted.
- All staff will speak to the DSL (or deputy) if they have any concerns about forced marriage. Staff can also contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: 020 7008 0151 or fmufcdo.gov.uk
- Whilst all staff will speak to the DSL (or deputy) if they have any concerns about FGM, there is a specific legal reporting duty on teachers.
- Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers in England and Wales, to personally report to the police where they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl.
 - It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils/students, however teachers who do not personally report such concerns may face disciplinary sanctions. Further information on when and how to make a report can be found at: [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#) and [FGM Mandatory reporting Duty Fact Sheet](#).
 - Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they are expected to also discuss any FGM concerns with the DSL (or a deputy), and Kent Integrated Childrens Services should be informed as appropriate.

13.8 Preventing radicalisation

- The Leigh Academies Trust recognises that children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. The Leigh Academies Trust is aware of our duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), to have "due regard to

the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”, also known as the Prevent duty and the [specific obligations](#) placed upon us as an education provider regarding risk assessments, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

- Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.
- All staff have received appropriate training to enable them to be alert to changes in children’s behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection from radicalisation.
- Staff will report any concerns to the DSL (or a deputy), who is aware of the [local procedures](#) to follow for making a Prevent referral. If there is an immediate threat, the police will be contacted via 999.

13.9 Cybercrime

- The Leigh Academies Trust recognises that children with particular skills and interests in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into ‘cyber-enabled’ (crimes that can happen offline but are enabled at scale and at speed online) or ‘cyber dependent’ (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer/internet enabled device) cybercrime.
- If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of becoming involved in cyber-dependent cybercrime, the DSL or a deputy will be informed, and consideration will be given to accessing local support and/or referring into the [Cyber Choices](#) programme, which aims to intervene when young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.
- Where there are concerns about ‘cyber-enabled’ crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs online, child sexual abuse and exploitation, or other areas of concern such as online bullying or general online safety, they will be responded to in line with the child protection policy and other appropriate policies.

13.10 Domestic abuse

The Leigh Academies Trust recognises that:

- Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents.
- Domestic abuse can include, but is not limited to, psychological (including coercive control), physical, sexual, economic, or emotional abuse.
- children can be victims of domestic abuse if they see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse).

- anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.
- Domestic abuse can take place within different types of relationships, including ex-partners and family members.
- there is always a potential for domestic abuse to take place when parents/families separate, or for existing domestic abuse to persist or escalate post separation.
- Domestic abuse can have a detrimental and long-term impact on children's health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.
- domestic abuse concerns will not be looked at in isolation and our response will be considered as part of a holistic approach which takes into account children's lived experiences.
- it is important not to use victim blaming language and to adopt a trauma informed approach when responding to concerns relating to domestic abuse.

If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of seeing, hearing, or experiencing the effects of any form of domestic abuse, or in their own intimate relationships, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

All Academies within the Trust subscribe to [Operation Encompass School](#). This means we work in partnership with Kent Police to provide support to children experiencing the effects of domestic abuse. An Operation Encompass notification is sent to the school when the police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and there are children in the household; the police are expected to inform schools before the child(ren) arrive the following day.

- Operation Encompass notifications help ensure that we have up to date and relevant information about children's circumstances and enables us to put immediate support in place according to the child's needs.
- Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures and where appropriate, a referral to the front door will be made if there are any concerns about a child's welfare.
- Where the school is unsure of how to respond to a notification, advice will be sought from the Education Safeguarding Service or the Operation Encompass helpline which is available 8AM to 1PM, Monday to Friday on 0204 513 9990.

13.11 Mental health

- All staff recognise 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.
- Staff are aware that children's experiences, for example where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.
- Staff 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.
- If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

14. Supporting Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm

Whilst all children should be protected, The Leigh Academies Trust acknowledges that some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm. This can include the following groups:

14.1 Safeguarding children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)

The Leigh Academies Trust acknowledges that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and barriers for recognising abuse and neglect.

The Leigh Academies Trust recognises that children with SEND may face additional communication barriers and experience difficulties in managing or reporting abuse or challenges. Children with SEND will be supported to communicate and ensure that their voice is heard and acted upon.

All members of staff are encouraged to appropriately explore potential indicators of abuse such as behaviour, mood changes or injuries and not to assume that they are related to the child's disability. Staff will be mindful that children with SEND, or certain medical conditions may be disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.

Members of staff are encouraged to be aware that children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by safeguarding concerns, such as exploitation, peer group isolation or bullying including prejudice-based bullying.

To address these additional challenges, our Academies will always consider implementing extra pastoral support and attention for children with SEND. The DSL will work closely with the SENCO to plan support as required.

Our Academies have robust intimate/personal care policies which ensure that the health, safety, independence, and welfare of children is promoted, and their dignity and privacy are respected. Arrangements for intimate and personal care are open and transparent and accompanied by robust recording systems.

14.2 Children requiring mental health support

The Leigh Academies Trust Has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils/students. 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.

Age/ability appropriate education will be provided to our pupils/students to help promote positive health, wellbeing, and resilience.

14.3 Children who are absent from education

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines.

A robust response to children who are absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions will support the identification of such abuse and may help prevent the risk of children going missing in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging and also where children are already known to Children's Social Care and/or have a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

Where possible, the Academy will hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil/student, so we have additional options to make contact with a responsible adult if a child missing education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern (see section 3.5).

Where the school/college have concerns that a child is missing from education, we will respond in line with our statutory duties (DfE: [Children missing education](#)) and local policies. Local support is available via the [PRU, Inclusion and Attendance Service \(PIAS\)](#).

14.4 Elective Home Education (EHE)

Where a parent/carer expresses their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, we will respond in line with [national Elective Home Education guidance](#).

We will work together with parents/carers and other key professionals and organisations to ensure decisions are made in the best interest of the child.

14.5 Children who need a social worker (child in need and child protection plans)

The DSL will hold details of social workers working with children in the Academy so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes.

Where children have a social worker, this will inform Academy decisions about their safety and promoting their welfare, for example, responding to unauthorised absence and provision of pastoral and/or academic support.

14.6 Looked after children, previously looked after children and care leavers

The Leigh Academies Trust recognises the common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect and a previously looked after child also potentially remains vulnerable.

Each Academy has appointed a '[designated teacher who](#) works with local authorities, including the [Virtual School](#) (including the virtual school head), to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked after or who have been previously looked after.

The designated teacher will work with the DSL to ensure appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after them.

Where a child is looked after, the DSL will hold details of the social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

Where the Academy believe a child is being cared for as part of a private fostering arrangement (occurs when a child under 16 or 18 if the child is disabled is cared for and lives with an adult who is not a relative for 28 days or more) there is a duty to recognise these arrangements and inform the Local Authority via the Front Door/MASH.

Where a child is leaving care, the DSL will hold details of the local authority Personal Advisor appointed to guide and support them and will liaise with them as necessary regarding any issues of concern.

14.7 Children who are Lesbian, Gay, Bi, or Trans (LGBT)

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, The Leigh Academies Trust recognises that children who are LGBT or are perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be targeted by other children or others within the wider community.

The Leigh Academies Trust recognises risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. LGBT is included within our Relationships Education/ Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum, and our staff will endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and provide a safe space for children to speak out or share any concerns.

14.8 Children who are privately fostered

[Private fostering](#) occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 for children with a disability) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home. A child is not privately fostered if the person caring for and accommodating them has done so for less than 28 days and does not intend to do so for longer. Such arrangements may come to the attention of our staff through the normal course of their interaction, and promotion of learning activities, with children.

When private fostering arrangements come to the attention of the Academy, we must notify Children' Social Care in line with the local Local Children's Safeguarding Partnership in order to allow the local authority to check if the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child.

15. Online Safety

This section should be read in conjunction with the Trust's Online Safety Policy.

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate material or behaviours online. The Leigh Academies Trust will adopt a whole Academy approach to online safety which will empower, protect, and educate our pupils/students and staff in their use of technology, and establish mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

The Leigh Academies Trust will ensure online safety is considered as a running and interrelated theme when devising and implementing our policies and procedures, and when planning our curriculum, staff training, the role and responsibilities of the DSL and parental engagement.

The Leigh Academies Trust identifies that the breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- **Content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content. For example, pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- **Contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users. For example, peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- **Conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm. For example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (including consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying.
- **Commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

The Leigh Academies Trust recognises that technology and the risks and harms related to it evolve and change rapidly. The Trust supports Academies to carry out an annual review of their approaches to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment, which considers and reflects the current risks our children face online.

The Principal in each Academy will be informed of any online safety concerns by the DSL, as appropriate. The named governor for safeguarding will report on online safety practice and incidents, including outcomes, on a regular basis to the wider governing body.

15.1 Policies and procedures

The DSL has overall responsibility for online safety within the Academy but will liaise with other members of staff, for example the Trust's CIO, IT technicians and curriculum leads as necessary.

The DSL will respond to online safety concerns in line with our child protection and other associated policies, including our Anti-bullying policy, Behaviour policy, Online Safety Policy and Staff Code of Conduct and behaviour policies.

- Internal sanctions and/or support will be implemented as appropriate.
- Where necessary, concerns will be escalated and reported to relevant partner agencies in line with local policies and procedures.

The Leigh Academies Trust uses a wide range of technology. This includes: computers, laptops, tablets and other digital devices, the internet, our learning platform, intranet and email systems.

- All Academy owned devices and systems will be used in accordance with our acceptable use policies and with appropriate safety and security measures in place

The Leigh Academies Trust recognises the specific risks that can be posed by mobile and smart technology, including mobile/smart phones, cameras, wearable technology and any other

electronic devices with imaging and/or sharing capabilities. In accordance with KCSIE and EYFS):

- The Leigh Academies Trust has appropriate Online Safety, BYOD (staff and students) Acceptable Use Templates (AUPs) which are shared and understood by all members of the community.

15.2 Appropriate filtering and monitoring on school/college devices and networks

The Leigh Academies Trust will do all we reasonably can to limit children's exposure to online harms through Academy provided devices and networks and in line with the requirements of the Prevent Duty and KCSIE, we will ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place (Smoothwall and Sophos systems).

When implementing appropriate filtering and monitoring, The Leigh Academies Trust will ensure that "over blocking" does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding.

Whilst filtering and monitoring is an important part of our online safety responsibilities, it is only one part of our approach to online safety and we recognise that we cannot rely on filtering and monitoring alone to safeguard our pupils/students; effective safeguarding practice, robust policies, appropriate classroom/behaviour management and regular education/training about safe and responsible use is essential and expected.

- Pupils/students will use appropriate search tools, apps and online resources as identified by staff, following an informed risk assessment. Amend to include any specific expectations for example, using a child friendly search engine, using child friendly tools.
- Internet use will be supervised by staff as appropriate to pupils/students age, ability and potential risk of harm:

16 Responsibilities-Online Safety/Filtering and Monitoring

The Trust Board alongside the Trust CIO has overall strategic responsibility for our filtering and monitoring approaches, including ensuring that our filtering and monitoring systems are regularly reviewed. The work in close conjunction with the Trust Safeguarding lead, Safeguarding Advisor and Academy DSLs to ensure the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the appropriate filtering and monitoring provisions in place, manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.

A member of the senior leadership team and Safeguarding governor, are responsible for ensuring that our school/college has met the DfE [Filtering and monitoring standards](#) for schools and colleges.

The Academy senior leadership team are responsible for

- procuring filtering and monitoring systems.
- documenting decisions on what is blocked or allowed and why.
- reviewing the effectiveness of our provision.
- overseeing reports.
- ensuring that all staff understand their role, are appropriately trained, follow policies, processes and procedures and act on reports and concerns.
- ensuring the DSL and IT service providers/staff have sufficient time and support to manage their filtering and monitoring responsibilities.

The DSL has lead responsibility for overseeing and acting on:

- any filtering and monitoring reports.
- any child protection or safeguarding concerns identified.
- checks the filtering and monitoring system.

The IT service providers have technical responsibility for:

- maintaining filtering and monitoring systems
- providing filtering and monitoring reports.
- completing technical actions identified following any concerns or checks to systems.
- working with the senior leadership team and DSL to procure systems, identify risks, carry out reviews and carry out checks.

All members of staff are provided with an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring as part of our induction process, and in our child protection staff training.

All staff, pupils/students and parents/carers have a responsibility to follow this policy to report and record any filtering or monitoring concerns.

16.1 Decision making and reviewing our filtering and monitoring provision

When procuring and/or making decisions about our filtering and monitoring provision, Trust Safeguarding Lead and Safeguarding Advisor works closely with the DSL and the IT service providers. Decisions have been recorded (IT helpdesk and web filter audit log) and informed by an approach which ensures our systems meet our Academy Specific needs and circumstances, including but not limited to our pupil/student risk profile and specific technology use.

Any changes to the filtering and monitoring approaches will be assessed by staff with safeguarding, educational and technical experience and, where appropriate, with consent from the leadership team; all changes to the filtering policy are logged and recorded (IT helpdesk and web filter audit log).

Our Academies undertake an at least annual review, in conjunction with relevant Trust leaders of our filtering and monitoring systems to ensure we understand the changing needs and potential risks posed to our community.

In addition, on behalf of the Academies the Trust IT team alongside DSLs undertake regular checks on our filtering and monitoring systems, which are logged and recorded, to ensure our approaches are effective and can provide assurance to the Academy Board that we are meeting our safeguarding obligations.

16.2 Appropriate filtering

Our Filtering is provided through the use of Smoothwall and Sophos as a filtering and monitoring system.

Our Internet provider is a member of [Internet Watch Foundation](#) (IWF).

Smoothwall has signed up to Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit list (CTIRU).

Smoothwall filter is blocking access to illegal content including child sexual abuse material (CSAM).

Smoothwall filter blocks access to sites which could promote or include harmful and/or inappropriate behaviour or material. This includes content which promotes discrimination or extremism, drugs/substance misuse, malware/hacking, gambling, piracy and copyright theft, pro-self-harm, eating disorder and/or suicide content, pornographic content and violent material.

We filter internet use on all Academy owned, or provided, internet enabled devices and networks. This is achieved by:

- Smoothwall filtering and monitoring which is installed on all devices.
- Our filtering systems should allow us to identify device names or IDs, IP addresses, and where possible, individual users, the time and date of attempted access and the search term or content being blocked.

Our filtering system is operational, up to date and is applied to all users, including guest accounts, all Academy owned devices and networks, and all devices using the Academy broadband connection.

We work with our IT service providers/staff to ensure that our filtering policy is continually reviewed to reflect our needs and requirements.

If there is failure in the software or abuse of the system, for example if pupils/students or staff accidentally or deliberately access, witness or suspect unsuitable material has been accessed, they are required to:

- Turn off monitor/screen, use a screen cover widget, report the concern immediately to a member of staff, and report the URL of the site to technical staff/services (using helpdesk ticket system).
- Filtering breaches will be reported to the DSL and technical staff and will be recorded and escalated as appropriate and in line with relevant policies, including our child protection, acceptable use, allegations against staff and behaviour policies.
- Parents/carers will be informed of filtering breaches involving their child.
- Any access to material believed to indicate a risk of significant harm, or that could be illegal, will be reported as soon as it is identified to the appropriate agencies, including but not limited to the [Internet Watch Foundation](#) (where there are concerns about child sexual abuse material), [Kent Police](#), [NCA-CEOP](#) or Children's Social Care/Police.
- If staff are teaching topics which could create unusual activity on the filtering and monitoring logs, or if staff perceive there to be unreasonable restrictions affecting teaching, learning or administration, they will report this to the DSL and/or leadership team who will liaise with IT services.

16.3 Appropriate monitoring

We will appropriately monitor internet use on all Academy provided devices and networks. This is achieved by our Smoothwall and Sophos filtering and monitoring systems (insert if you also use Impero Classroom).

All users will be informed that use of our devices and networks can/will be monitored and that all monitoring is in line with data protection, human rights and privacy legislation.

If a concern is identified via our monitoring approaches:

- Where the concern relates to pupils/students, it will be reported to the DSL and will be recorded and responded to in line with relevant policies, such as child protection, acceptable use, and behaviour policies.
- Where the concern relates to staff, it will be reported to the headteacher (or chair of governors if the concern relates to the headteacher), in line with our staff behavior/allegations policy.
- Where our monitoring approaches detect any immediate risk of harm or illegal activity, this will be reported as soon as possible to the appropriate agencies; including but not limited to, the emergency services via 999, [Kent Police](#) via 101, [NCA-CEOP](#) , LADO or Children's Social Care.

16.4 Information security and access management

The Leigh Academy Trust is responsible for ensuring an appropriate level of security protection procedures are in place, in order to safeguard our systems as well as staff and pupils/students.

The Leigh Academy Trust will review the effectiveness of our procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies.

Responsible for ensuring that our Academy has met the DfE [cyber security standards](#) for schools and colleges. A member of the Academy senior leadership team and Safeguarding Link governor, are response

16.5 Remote/Online learning

Specific guidance for DSLs and SLT regarding remote learning is available at

- DfE: [Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- NSPCC: [Undertaking remote teaching safely](#)
- The Education People: [Remote Learning Guidance for SLT/add our own](#)

The Leigh Academy Trust will ensure any remote sharing of information, communication and use of online learning tools and systems will be in line with privacy and data protection requirements and any local/national guidance.

All communication with pupils/students and parents/carers will take place using Academy provided or approved communication channels; for example, Academy provided email accounts and phone numbers and/or agreed systems: Google Classroom, Microsoft 365 or equivalent.

Any pre-existing relationships or situations which mean this cannot be complied with will be discussed with the DSL.

Staff and pupils/students will engage with remote teaching and learning in line with existing behaviour principles as set out in our Academy behaviour policy/code of conduct and Acceptable Use Policies.

Staff and pupils/students will be encouraged to report issues experienced at home and concerns will be responded to in line with our child protection and other relevant policies.

When delivering remote learning, staff will follow our Remote Learning Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

16.6 Online Safety Training for Staff

The Leigh Academy Trust will ensure that all staff receive online safety training, which, amongst other things, will include providing them with an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and their responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, as part of induction.

Ongoing online safety training and updates for all staff will be integrated, aligned and considered as part of our overarching safeguarding approach.

16.7 Educating pupils/students

The Leigh Academy Trust will ensure a comprehensive whole Academy curriculum response is in place to enable all pupils/students to learn about and manage online risks effectively as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. See section 9 for more information.

16.8 Working with parents/carers

The Leigh Academy Trust will support Academies to build a partnership approach to online safety and will support parents/carers to become aware and alert of the potential benefits and risks and to reinforce the importance of children being safe online.

The Leigh Academy Trust will support Academies to ensure parents and carers understand what systems are used to filter and monitor their children's online use at Academy, what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and who from the Academy (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

Where the Academy is made aware of any potentially harmful risks, challenges and/or hoaxes circulating online, national or locally, we will respond in line with the DfE [‘Harmful online challenges and online hoaxes’](#) guidance to ensure we adopt a proportional and helpful response.

17. Staff Engagement and Expectations

17.1 Staff awareness, induction and training

All members of staff have been provided with a copy of part one or annex A of the current version of ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ 2024 which covers safeguarding information for staff.

Academy leaders, including the DSL and governors/trustees will read KCSIE 2024 in its entirety.

Leaders and all Academy members of staff who work directly with children will read annex B of KCSIE 2024.

All members of staff have signed to confirm that they have read and understood the national guidance shared with them.

It is a requirement that all members of staff have access to this policy and sign to say they have read and understood its contents. All staff are expected to re-read this policy at least annually (and following any updates) to ensure they understand our expectations and requirements.

All new staff and volunteers (including agency and third-party staff) receive safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety, which, amongst other things, will include ensuring an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) to ensure they are aware of the Academy Internal safeguarding processes, as part of their induction. This training is regularly updated and is in line with advice from the local safeguarding partners and explores the Kent processes to follow.

All staff members (including agency and third-party staff) will receive appropriate child protection training (including online safety) that is updated at least annually, to ensure they are aware of a range of safeguarding issues and how to report concerns.

Online safety training for staff will be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole Academy safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning.

In addition to specific child protection training, all staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

The Leigh Academy Trust recognises the expertise staff build by undertaking safeguarding training and from managing safeguarding concerns on a daily basis, and staff are encouraged to contribute to and shape Academy safeguarding arrangements and child protection policies.

All governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) training at induction. This training equips them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to be assured that our safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. This training is regularly updated.

The DSL and Principal will provide an annual report to the Academy Board detailing safeguarding training undertaken by all staff and will maintain an up-to-date record of who has been trained.

17.2 Safer working practice

- Our Academies take steps as outlined in this and other relevant policies to ensure processes are in place for staff that promote continuous vigilance, maintain an environment that deters and prevents abuse and challenges inappropriate behaviour.
- All members of staff are required to work within our clear guidelines on safer working practice as outlined in the Academy code of conduct.
- The DSL will ensure that all staff (including contractors) and volunteers are aware of the Academy expectations regarding safe and professional practice via the staff code of conduct and Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

- Staff will be made aware of the Academy behaviour management and physical intervention policies. Staff will manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment and will have a clear understanding of the needs of all children. Any physical interventions and/or use of reasonable force will be in line with our agreed policy and procedures, and national guidance.
- All staff will be made aware of the professional risks associated with the use of social media and electronic communication (such as email, mobile phones, texting, social networking). Staff will adhere to relevant Academy policies including staff behaviour policy, mobile and smart technology, Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs), and social media.

17.3 Supervision and support

- The induction process will include familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and procedures to be followed if members of staff have any concerns about a child's safety or welfare.
- The Academy will ensure that members of staff who are working as part of the Safeguarding team are provided with appropriate supervision in accordance with the statutory requirements of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.
- Members of staff who have engaged in a Safeguarding issue have the opportunity to receive additional support by the DSL, Principal or access Wellbeing services provided by the Trust.
- Our Academies will ensure that members of staff who are working within the foundation stage are provided with appropriate supervision in accordance with the statutory requirements of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
- The Academes will provide appropriate supervision and support for all members of staff to ensure that:
 - o All staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
 - o All staff are supported by the DSL in their safeguarding role.
 - o All members of staff have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time.
- The DSL will also put staff in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish. Staff can also approach organisations such as their Union, the Education Support Partnership or other similar organisations directly.

18 Safer Recruitment and Allegations Against Staff

18.1 Safer recruitment and safeguarding checks

The Leigh Academy Trust is committed to ensure that we develop a safe culture and that all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with our pupils/students and staff.

The Leigh Academy Trust will follow Part three, 'Safer recruitment' of Keeping Children Safe in Education and relevant guidance from The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

The Academy Board, Trust Executive Leadership and Academy Leadership team are responsible for ensuring that the Academy follows safe recruitment processes as outlined within guidance.

The Academy Board, Trust Executive Leadership and Academy Leadership team will ensure that at least one of the persons who conducts an interview has completed safer recruitment training.

The Academy maintains an accurate Single Central Record (SCR) in line with statutory guidance.

The Leigh Academy Trust is committed to supporting the statutory guidance from the Department for Education on the application of the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 and related obligations under the Childcare Act 2006 in schools.

We advise all staff to disclose any reason that may affect their suitability to work with children including convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands, and warnings.

Where the school/college places a pupil/student with an alternative provision provider, we continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil/student and will need to satisfy ourselves that the provider can meet the needs of the pupil/student.

- The Leigh Academy Trust 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 our school/college would otherwise perform in respect of our own staff.

8.2 Allegations/concerns raised in relation to staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors

Any concerns or allegations about staff will be recorded and dealt with appropriately in line with Part four of KCSIE and the LCB arrangements. In depth information can be found within our 'Managing Allegations against Staff' and/or staff behaviour policy/code of conduct policy.

Any concerns or allegations about staff will be recorded and dealt with appropriately in line with Part four of KCSIE and local guidance. Ensuring concerns are dealt with effectively will protect those working in or on behalf of the Academy From potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

Where Principals are unsure how to respond, for example if the Academy is unsure if a concern meets the harm 'thresholds', advice will be sought via the [Local Authority Designated Officer \(LADO\)](#) Enquiry Line and/or the [Education Safeguarding Service](#).

In all cases where allegations are made against staff or low-level concerns are reported, once proceedings have been concluded, the principal (and if they have been involved the LADO) will consider the facts and determine whether any lessons can be learned and if any improvements can be made.

In the situation that the Academy receives an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using our premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities), we will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.

8.2.1 Concerns that meet the ‘harm threshold’

The Leigh Academy Trust recognises that it is possible for any member of staff, including volunteers, governors, contractors, agency and third-party staff (including supply teachers) and visitors to behave in a way that indicates a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity with children in a school or college. This includes when someone has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Allegations against staff which meet this threshold will be responded to and managed in line with Part four of KCSIE. Allegations that meet the harm threshold will be referred immediately to the principal who will contact the [LADO](#) to agree further action to be taken in respect of the child and staff member. In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the principal, staff are advised that allegations should be reported to the **Academies Director** who will contact the LADO.

8.2.2 Concerns that do not meet the ‘harm threshold’

The Leigh Academy Trust may also need to take action in response to ‘low-level’ concerns about staff. Additional information regarding low-level concerns is contained with our staff code of conduct/low-levels concerns policy – this includes what a low-level concern is, the importance of sharing them and the confidential procedure to follow when sharing them.

- The Leigh Academy Trust has an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the Academy are dealt with promptly and appropriately; this enables us to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early, minimise the risk of abuse and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the Academy are clear about and act within appropriate professional boundaries, and in accordance with our ethos and values.
- A ‘low-level’ concern does not mean that it is insignificant; a low-level concern is any concern that an adult working in or on behalf of the Academy may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with our code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and does not meet the ‘harm threshold’ or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.
- Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example, suspicion, complaints, or allegations made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation, or as a result of vetting checks.

It is crucial that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly, recorded and dealt with appropriately to protect staff from becoming the subject of potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings.

Low-level concerns should be shared confidentially in line with our Code of Conduct to the Principal.

- Where low-level concerns are reported to the Academy, the principal will be informed of all low-level concerns and is the ultimate decision maker in respect of the response to all low-level concerns.
- The principal will share concerns and liaise with the LADO enquiries officer via the [LADO Enquiry Line](#).
- Low-level concerns shared about supply staff and contractors will be shared with their employers so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.
- If the Academy is in any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, we will consult with the LADO.

Low-level concerns will be recorded in writing and reviewed so potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

- Records will be kept confidential and will be held securely and retained and in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and other relevant policies and procedures (for example data retention policies).
- Where a pattern is identified, the Academy will implement appropriate action, for example consulting with [the LADO enquiry line](#) and following our disciplinary procedures.

18.3 Safe Culture

As part of our approach to safeguarding, the Trust has created and embedded a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour as set out in our code of conduct are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) and where all concerns are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Staff are encouraged and should feel confident to self-refer, if they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards. This includes where concerns may be felt to be deliberately invented or malicious; such allegations are extremely rare and as such all concerns should be reported and recorded.

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise any concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the Academy safeguarding regime. The Executive Leadership Team at The Leigh Academy Trust will take all concerns or allegations received seriously.

All members of staff are made aware of the Whistleblowing procedure. It is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk.

Staff can access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

The Leigh Academy Trust has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person.

- If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at our Academy, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the [LADO](#).

19. Opportunities to Teach Safeguarding

The Leigh Academy Trust will ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This will include covering relevant issues through Relationships Education (primary schools)/Relationships and Sex Education (secondary schools) and Health Education (for all state-funded schools).

We recognise that the Trust plays an essential role in helping children to understand and identify the parameters of what is appropriate child and adult behaviour, what is 'safe,' to recognise when they and others close to them are not safe, and how to seek advice and support when they are concerned. The curriculum in our Academies provides opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, social and emotional understanding, assertiveness and decision making so that pupils/students have a range of age-appropriate contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and that of others.

The Leigh Academy Trust recognises the crucial role we have to play in preventative education. Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole school approach which prepares pupils/students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment.

The Leigh Academy Trust has a clear set of values and standards, upheld, and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life which are underpinned by our behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence based RSHE delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum. Our programme is fully inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate.

We recognise that a one size fits all approach will not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach, tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children might be needed, for example children who are victims of abuse and children with SEND.

Our Trust's systems support children to talk to a range of staff. All children will be listened to and heard, and their concerns will always be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate.

20. Physical Safety

20.1 Use of 'reasonable force'

There may be circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force in order to safeguard children from harm. Further information regarding our approach and expectations can be found in our behaviour policy and is in line with the DfE '[Use of reasonable force in schools](#)' guidance.

10.2 The use of Academy premises by other organisations

Where our Academies facilities or premises are rented/hired out to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community

or extra-curricular activities) we will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

- Where those services or activities are provided under the direct supervision or management of our Academy staff, our existing arrangements for child protection, including this policy, will apply.
- Where services or activities are provided separately by another body using the Academy facilities/premises, the principal and Academy Board will seek assurance that the provider concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements in place for the provider to liaise with the Academy on these matters where appropriate. If this assurance is not achieved, an application to use premises will be refused.

Safeguarding requirements will be included in any transfer of control agreement (such as a lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises. Failure to comply with this will lead to termination of the agreement.

20.3 Site security

All members of staff have a responsibility for maintaining awareness of buildings and grounds security and for reporting concerns that may come to light.

Appropriate checks will be undertaken in respect of visitors and volunteers coming into the Academy as outlined within national guidance. Visitors will be expected to sign in and out via the office visitors log and to display a visitor's badge whilst on site.

Any individual who is not known or identifiable on site should be challenged for clarification and reassurance.

The Academy will not accept the behaviour of any individual (parent or other) that threatens Academy security or leads others (child or adult) to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the Academy site.

21. Local Support

All members of staff in The Leigh Academy Trust are made aware of local support available.

- Education Safeguarding Service
 - o Area Safeguarding Advisor
www.theeducationpeople.org/our-expertise/partner-providers/kent-county-council-providers/safeguarding/
 - o Online Safety in the Education Safeguarding Service
03000 423164
onlinesafety@kent.gov.uk (non-urgent issues only)

- **LADO Service**
 - 03000 410888
 - kentchildrenslado@kent.gov.uk

- **Kent Integrated Children's Services/ Children's Social Work Services**
 - Front Door: 03000 411111
 - Out of Hours Number: 03000 419191

- **Early Help**
 - www.kelsi.org.uk/special-education-needs/integrated-childrens-services/early-help-and-preventative-services and www.kelsi.org.uk/special-education-needs/integrated-childrens-services/early-help-contacts

Kent Police

- 101 or 999 if there is an immediate risk of harm

Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP)

- www.kscmp.org.uk
- 03000 421126 or kscmp@kent.gov.uk

Adult Safeguarding

- Adult Social Care via 03000 41 61 61 (text relay 18001 03000 41 61 61) or email social.services@kent.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Categories of Abuse

All 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.

Abuse: 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. It should be noted that abuse can be carried out both on and offline and be perpetrated by men, women, and children.

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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Signs that MAY INDICATE Sexual Abuse

- Sudden changes in behaviour and performance
- Displays of affection which are sexual and age inappropriate
- Self-harm, self-mutilation or attempts at suicide
- Alluding to secrets which they cannot reveal
- Tendency to cling or need constant reassurance
- Regression to younger behaviour for example thumb sucking, playing with discarded toys, acting like a baby
- Distrust of familiar adults, for example, anxiety of being left with relatives, a childminder or lodger
- Unexplained gifts or money
- Depression and withdrawal
- Fear of undressing for PE
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Fire setting

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 or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Signs that MAY INDICATE physical abuse

- Bruises and abrasions around the face
- Damage or injury around the mouth
- Bi-lateral injuries such as two bruised eyes
- Bruising to soft area of the face such as the cheeks
- Fingertip bruising to the front or back of torso
- Bite marks
- Burns or scalds (unusual patterns and spread of injuries)
- Deep contact burns such as cigarette burns
- Injuries suggesting beatings (strap marks, welts)
- Covering arms and legs even when hot
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts.
- Injuries need to be accounted for. Inadequate, inconsistent, or excessively plausible explanations or a delay in seeking treatment should signal concern.

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.

Signs that MAY INDICATE emotional abuse

- Over reaction to mistakes
- Lack of self-confidence/esteem
- Sudden speech disorders

- Self-harming
- Eating Disorders
- Extremes of passivity and/or aggression
- Compulsive stealing
- Drug, alcohol, solvent abuse
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Unwillingness or inability to play
- Excessive need for approval, attention, and affection

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 or carer 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.

Signs that MAY INDICATE neglect.

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Inadequate clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance
- Untreated medical problems
- Poor relationship with peers
- Compulsive stealing and scavenging
- Rocking, hair twisting and thumb sucking
- Running away
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- Low self esteem

Appendix 2: Support Organisations

NSPCC 'Report Abuse in Education' Helpline

- **0800 136 663 or help@nspcc.org.uk**

National Organisations

- **NSPCC:** www.nspcc.org.uk
- **Barnardo's:** www.barnardos.org.uk
- **Action for Children:** www.actionforchildren.org.uk
- **Children's Society:** www.childrenssociety.org.uk
- **Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse:** www.csacentre.org.uk

Support for Staff

- **Education Support Partnership:** www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk
- **Professional Online Safety Helpline:** www.saferinternet.org.uk/helpline
- **Harmful Sexual Behaviour Support Service:**
<https://swgfl.org.uk/harmful-sexual-behaviour-support-service>

Support for pupils/students

- ChildLine: www.childline.org.uk
- Papyrus: www.papyrus-uk.org
- The Mix: www.themix.org.uk
- Shout: www.giveusashout.org
- Fearless: www.fearless.org
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk

Support for Adults

- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Crime Stoppers: www.crimestoppers-uk.org
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- The Samaritans: www.samaritans.org
- NAPAC (National Association for People Abused in Childhood): www.napac.org.uk
- MOSAC: www.mosac.org.uk
- Action Fraud: www.actionfraud.police.uk
- Shout: www.giveusashout.org
- Advice now: www.advicenow.org.uk

Support for Learning Disabilities

- Respond: www.respond.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Council for Disabled Children: <https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk>

Contextual Safeguarding Network

- <https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/>

Kent Resilience Hub

- <https://kentresiliencehub.org.uk/>

Children with Family Members in Prison

- National information Centre on Children of Offenders (NICCO): www.nicco.org.uk/

Substance Misuse

- We are with you (formerly Addaction): www.wearewithyou.org.uk/services/kent-for-young-people/
- Talk to Frank: www.talktofrank.com

Domestic Abuse

- Domestic abuse services: www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk
- Refuge: www.refuge.org.uk
- Women's Aid: www.womensaid.org.uk
- Men's Advice Line: www.mensadviceline.org.uk
- Mankind: www.mankindcounselling.org.uk
- National Domestic Abuse Helpline: www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk
- Respect Phonenumber: <https://respectphonenumber.org.uk>

Criminal and Sexual Exploitation

- National Crime Agency: www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/who-we-are
- It's not okay: www.itsnotokay.co.uk

- NWG Network: www.nwgnetwork.org
- County Lines Toolkit for Professionals: www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/professionals/resources/county-lines-toolkit
- Multi-agency practice principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm: <https://tce.researchinpractice.org.uk/>

Honour Based Abuse

- Karma Nirvana: <https://karmanirvana.org.uk>
- Forced Marriage Unit: www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage
- FGM Factsheet: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/496415/6_1639_HO_SP_FGM_mandatory_reporting_Fact_sheet_Web.pdf
- Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information: www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information
- The right to choose - government guidance on forced marriage: www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-right-to-choose-government-guidance-on-forced-marriage

Child-on-Child abuse, including bullying, sexual violence and harassment

- Rape Crisis: <https://rapecrisis.org.uk>
- Brook: www.brook.org.uk
- Disrespect Nobody: www.disrespectnobody.co.uk
- Upskirting – know your rights: www.gov.uk/government/news/upskirting-know-your-rights
- Lucy Faithfull Foundation: www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk
- Stop it Now! www.stopitnow.org.uk
- Parents Protect: www.parentsprotect.co.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Diana Award: www.antibullyingpro.com
- Bullying UK: www.bullying.co.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- Centre of expertise on Child Sexual Abuse: www.csacentre.org.uk

Online Safety

- NCA-CEOP: www.ceop.police.uk and www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- Internet Watch Foundation (IWF): www.iwf.org.uk
- Childnet: www.childnet.com
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- Report Harmful Content: <https://reportharmfulcontent.com>
- Marie Collins Foundation: www.mariecollinsfoundation.org.uk
- Internet Matters: www.internetmatters.org
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety
- Get Safe Online: www.getsafeonline.org
- Parents Protect: www.parentsprotect.co.uk
- CyberChoices: <https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/what-we-do/crime-threats/cyber-crime/cyberchoices>

- National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC): www.ncsc.gov.uk

Mental Health

- Mind: www.mind.org.uk
- Moodspark: <https://moodspark.org.uk>
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- We are with you: www.wearewithyou.org.uk/services/kent-for-young-people/
- Anna Freud: www.annafreud.org/schools-and-colleges/

Radicalisation and hate

- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com
- Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit: www.gov.uk/report-terrorism
- True Vision: www.report-it.org.uk