CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

EFFECTIVE: SEPTEMBER 2026 | REVIEW: SEPTEMBER 2027

SAFE PEOPLE • POSITIVE PATHWAYS • COMPLIANT PRACTICE | Impact Alternative Learning - commissioned alternative provision.

1 IMMEDIATE ACTION ROUTE

- If a child is in immediate danger or urgent medical need, call 999 and provide first aid as appropriate.
- Otherwise report to DSL Kate Willis or deputy Kirsty Lampkin without delay; do not wait for the next meeting, the end of the day or a manager's return.

2 RECOGNISING ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- Be alert to physical, emotional and sexual abuse, neglect, domestic abuse, child sexual/criminal exploitation, county lines, trafficking, modern slavery, FGM and online harm.
- Consider children with SEND, those absent from education, care-experienced learners and young people who appear to consent to exploitation.

3 LISTENING TO AND RESPONDING TO A CHILD

- Provide a safe setting; listen and avoid leading questions. Say the concern will be shared with people who can protect them.
- Do not seek evidence, interrogate other pupils or promise confidentiality. Preserve the child's own language in the record.

4 RECORDING THE CONCERN

- Make a factual dated record at the earliest safe opportunity: child details, context, words said, observations, injuries where observed, action, time, recipient and next step.
- Use approved safeguarding recording tools. Do not save identifiable content on personal devices or send via unapproved messaging.

5 DSL RESPONSE AND DECISION

- DSL considers immediate protection, child and family context, thresholds, local guidance, consultation with relevant agencies, and whether parents can be informed safely.
- Record decision and rationale even when no external referral is made; allocate review date and verify the child remains safe.

6 CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE AND POLICE REFERRAL

- Make prompt referral where a child is at risk of significant harm; contact the police where a crime or immediate threat is suspected.
- Share relevant facts, prior concerns, chronology, voice of child, protective factors and known professional involvement, not unverified assumptions.

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7 ESCALATION AND PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGE

- If a referral receives no response or the outcome does not address the risk, DSL chases and escalates through local procedures.
- Staff are never barred from direct referral. Document dates, contacts, decisions, escalation and resulting safety plan.

8 ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING ADULTS

- Concerns about a member of staff, tutor, agency worker, volunteer or contractor go to the designated case manager immediately.
- Do not alert an accused adult or investigate internally before advice where a LADO threshold may be met. If Principal implicated, contact safeguarding governor / chair and LADO.

9 LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS

- Use a separate route for conduct inconsistent with the staff code, including boundary issues that may fall below the harm threshold.
- Record details, context, decisions and any patterns; refer to LADO where harm threshold is met or uncertain.

10 CHILD-ON-CHILD HARM

- All sexual violence, harassment, sharing of sexual images, bullying and coercion require a safeguarding assessment rather than dismissal as banter.
- Support the reporting child and others affected; make a proportionate written risk plan and referral as needed. Keep accused and affected pupils' rights and safety under review.

11 CONFIDENTIALITY AND TRANSFER

- Share only what is needed for safety and statutory obligations. Restrict safeguarding record access to DSL/deputy and authorised personnel.
- On transition provide safeguarding information to the receiving DSL securely and promptly; log handover and receipt.

12 PARENTS AND PROFESSIONALS

- Where safe, involve parents/carers and the commissioner; do not share with an unsafe adult or undermine social-care/police enquiries.
- Engage other professionals for coordinated plans, review dates and protective actions. Keep the learner informed in an accessible way.

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13 RESPONSE FOR SEND AND COMMUNICATION NEEDS

- Provide a consistent trusted adult and adaptations for communication, sensory sensitivity, processing time, language and trauma.
- Avoid assumptions about credibility based on disability or distress. Use specialist advice when a child cannot easily communicate a concern.

14 LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

- Each site maintains a checked local contacts sheet for relevant MASH, LADO, police, emergency services and professional escalation pathways.
- Staff access the current contacts sheet at induction and during off-site provision; update whenever authorities change a number or route.

15 MONITORING AND REVIEW

- DSL holds a weekly check of unresolved cases and serious risks; governors review anonymised trends and policy adherence termly.
- After serious incidents review whether recording, sharing, escalation, staffing or training failed; capture actions and owner.

16 FLOW: FROM CONCERN TO PROTECTION

- 1 Recognise / listen. 2 Make immediate protection decision. 3 Report to DSL/deputy without delay. 4 Record exact factual information. 5 DSL refers/consults agencies and makes safety plan. 6 Follow-up and review.
- At each step, state who owns the decision and maintain dated evidence. Staff must not delay urgent action while trying to complete a digital form.

17 SIGNIFICANT HARM, SECTION 17 AND SECTION 47

- The local authority determines statutory children-in-need / child-protection responses under the Children Act; Impact shares facts and participates where appropriate.
- Where a child may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, contact children's social care urgently under local thresholds; call police for immediate danger.

18 FGM, FORCED MARRIAGE AND HONOUR-BASED ABUSE

- Recognise potential indicators and protect confidentiality; report concern immediately to DSL and appropriate statutory agency.
- A regulated teaching professional's specific FGM mandatory reporting duty applies where legal criteria are met; seek urgent competent advice and do not rely only on ordinary internal reporting.

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19 DOMESTIC ABUSE AND OPERATION ENCOMPASS

- Notice the impact of domestic abuse on children even where they are not directly attacked. Respond to shared information sensitively without promising secrecy.
- Follow Operation Encompass procedures where notification is received and record checks with commissioner/other professionals and pastoral protection steps.

20 SELF-HARM, MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE RISK

- Take concerns seriously, ask appropriately about immediate safety, summon urgent medical support where necessary and follow mental health emergency pathways.
- Do not treat mental health support as a substitute for safeguarding. Record referral, family/school communication as safe and crisis safety planning.

21 MISSING CHILDREN AND UNAUTHORISED COLLECTION

- Follow child-specific collection and transport arrangements; if a learner disappears or cannot be safely handed over, activate immediate risk response, contact emergency services where warranted.
- Keep current parental responsibility/restricted collection information in secure records and brief authorised staff only.

22 COMPLEX CASE AND EXPLOITATION MEETINGS

- DSL participates in strategy meetings, child protection conferences, CIN or multi-agency exploitation meetings where invited and contributes verified factual records.
- Record outcomes, actions assigned to Impact and follow-up dates. Verify that a learner's Section F or safety support is not lost during transition.

23 EDUCATION AND SURVIVOR-INFORMED RESPONSE

- Provide opportunities to learn safe boundaries, consent, healthy relationships, online safety and accessing support.
- Do not require disclosures or confrontational re-telling to obtain support; provide a consistent trusted adult and avoid retraumatisation.

24 CASE CLOSURE STANDARD

- A case is closed only when DSL records why immediate risk has reduced, external action is complete or properly transferred, monitoring arrangements are agreed and the child has support.
- Reopen on new information; audit repeatedly low-level concerns as a pattern, rather than treating each event in isolation.

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25 LINKED STATUTORY AND DFE GUIDANCE

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (in force 1 September 2026); Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 (18 March 2026); Information sharing to safeguard children and young people (10 September 2026; duty 30 September 2026) This policy is a provider operational policy; the primary guidance and any commissioner requirements take precedence where applicable.

26 POLICY OWNERSHIP AND REVIEW

- Policy owner: Kate Willis, Principal and Proprietor. Effective date: September 2026. Next review: September 2027, or sooner if legislation, safeguarding guidance, commissioning requirements or provision changes.
- The Principal manages implementation and policy review, with governance oversight where appropriate; relevant staff are informed of updates and confirm understanding.