Witton Park Academy

Safeguarding Policy 2026 - 2027

Version 1

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Control Sheet

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Policy owner	Jodie Milburn

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Key Safeguarding Contacts

Witton Park Academy	
Headteacher	Martin Knowles
Location of office	Back of Reception
Contact details	mknowles@wittonpark.org.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):	Jodie Milburn
Location of office:	Behind reception / Embrace area
Contact details:	jmilburn@wittonpark.org.uk
Alternative DSLs / DDSL's:	Stacey Marks / Michelle Dagger / Reyanne Buckley-Anderson / Martin Knowles
Location of office:	Embrace Centre
Contact details:	smarks@wittonpark.org.uk / mdagger@wittonpark.org.uk
Chair of Academy Governors:	Alison Gormally
Other safeguarding / DSL trained staff:	Martin Knowles (Headteacher) / Jen Sidebottom (Senior Deputy Head)
Safeguarding Governor:	Lisa Banks

Social Care	
Blackburn and Darwen	Monday to Friday: 8.45am to 5pm telephone: 01254 666400 Emergency out-of-hours (evenings and weekends) telephone: 01254 587547

LADO - Elissa Harper	Telephone Number
Blackburn and Darwen	**01254 506915** Lado@blackburn.gov.uk

Police department/Station	Telephone Number
Blackburn (Greenbank) Police Station Whitebirk Dr, Blackburn BB1 3HP	101 01772 614444
Counter Terrorism Policing North West – Local Authority Prevent team - concern@lancashire.pnn.police.uk	101 01772 413398
Anti -terrorist hotline	0800789321
Blackburn with Darwen Prevent Education Officer: Leanne Romney	leanne.romney@blackburn.gov.uk 01254 585270

Education Department	Telephone Number
Children Missing in Education Team	https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-attendance/children-missing-education
Education team	https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/schools-and-education
Blackburn with Darwen Principle Inclusion Officer (CME/ EHE): Catherine Salt	catherine.salt@blackburn.gov.uk 01254 666756

Other	Telephone Number
NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline	0800 028 0285
Childline	0800 1111
Disclosure and Barring Service Address: PO Box 3961, Royal Wootton Bassett, SN4 4HF customerservices@dbs.gov	03000 200190
Teacher Regulation Agency (TRA) Address: Cheylesmore House, 5 Quinton Rd, Coventry CV1 2WT misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk	0207 593 5393
OFSTED	0300 1233 155

NSPCC FGM helpline 8am-8pm Monday to Friday and 9am-6pm at the weekend. help@NSPCC.org.uk	0800 028 3550
DfE Prevent helpline counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov. uk	020 7340 7264
Anti-Terrorist Hotline	0800 789 321
Attendance support services	https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-attendance

1. Purpose and aims

1.1 Witton Park Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its students. The purpose of the Academy's Safeguarding Policy is to ensure every child who is a registered student at the Academy is safe and protected from harm. This means the Academy will always work to:

- provide help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
- protect children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online;
- prevent impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensure children at the Academy grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- promote the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children;
- take action to enable children and young people at the Academy to have the best outcomes.

1.2 This policy will give clear direction to staff, volunteers, visitors and parents and carers about expected behaviour and the legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children at the Academy. This policy makes it clear that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

1.3 The Academy fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children from harm and aims to support and promote the welfare of all children who are registered students at the Academy. The elements of this policy are prevention, protection and support.

1.3 The Academy recognises child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of 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 Academy recognises its responsibility to work together with partner agencies to protect children from harm.

1.4 The Academy recognises that its safeguarding responsibilities are clearly linked to its responsibilities for ensuring that appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for children who are absent from the Academy or who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. The attendance lead will liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at the weekly inclusion meeting to discuss all persistently absent students, and those who go missing, to identify the risk of abuse / neglect and what next steps will be taken to help support the safety of the student, this can include home visits.

1.5 This policy applies to all students, staff, parents and carers, governors, volunteers and visitors.

1.6 Prior to implementing this policy, the Academy has considered a range of factors to help identify and focus on the key issues for the Academy and community. The Academy has considered local context and local issues, in addition to discussion with the Academy governors.

2. Our Ethos

2.1 The child's welfare is of paramount importance. The Academy will establish and maintain an ethos where students feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and are safe. Children at the Academy will be able to speak out or share their concerns to any member of staff. The Academy will ensure that children receive the right help, at the right time to address risk and prevent issues from escalating. Research and serious case reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action.

2.2 Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. The Academy recognises that staff play a particularly important role as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children to prevent concerns from escalating. All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members must always act in the best interests of the child.

2.3 All staff and regular visitors will, through training and induction, know how to recognise indicators of concern, how to respond to a disclosure from a child and how to record and report this information. Staff will not make promises to any child and will not keep secrets. The adult will make it clear to the child what they will have to do with any information they have chosen to disclose. The Academy support staff to seek advice when unsure.

2.4 Throughout the curriculum, the Academy will provide activities and opportunities for children to develop the skills they need to identify risks and stay safe. This will also be extended to include material that will encourage children to develop essential life skills including the promotion of mental health and well-being. These skills are predominately taught and explored through the PSHE curriculum.

2.5 At all times, the Academy will work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE), Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE) and local safeguarding partners procedures. The Academy will protect and support our vulnerable children, children who need support through early help, children in need, children who have a child protection plan and children who are in the care of the local authority. The Academy will usually endeavour to discuss all concerns with parents or carers about their child or children. However, there may be exceptional circumstances when the Academy will discuss concerns with social care and/or the police without parental knowledge, if doing so is the safest option for the child.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 It is the responsibility of every member of staff, volunteer and regular visitor to the Academy to ensure that they carry out the requirements of this policy and, at all times, work in a way that will safeguard and promote the welfare of all of the students at the Academy. This includes the responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

3.2 All regular visitors, temporary staff and volunteers to the Academy are expected to familiarise themselves with the Academy safeguarding procedures. Reception

staff must issue visitors with this information; they will be informed who the DSL and Deputy DSLs are and what the recording and reporting system is.

3.3 Academy Governors

The Academy Governors are responsible for ensuring:

- The Academy follows the safeguarding policy, that the policy is appropriately contextualised and that it reflects local practice (local authority guidance and the requirements of the safeguarding partners' policies and procedures);
- the appointment of a safeguarding link representative;
- they understand the safeguarding policy to support the Academy with cross referencing policy and practice for assurance purposes;
- compliance checks are completed with the Academy to ensure the safeguarding CPD requirement for staff, regular visitors and governors are up to date and in- line with the policy;
- they oversee that any weakness in regard to safeguarding arrangements are remedied immediately once they are brought to attention;
- they receive annual safeguarding summary reports from the Academy, discuss trends, strategies and review the Academy's approach to managing safeguarding;
- they undertake a range of 'safeguarding visits' over the year to monitor compliance within the safeguarding agenda;
- they are able to explain who has oversight of the SCR and what the review cycle consists of;
- escalation of any concern about safeguarding arrangements in the Academy to the CEO.

3.4 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring:

- the effective implementation of the full remit of safeguarding policies, procedures and curriculum, which promotes safer working practices, student wellbeing and development;
- The safeguarding policy is contextualised and available publicly via the Academy website.
- the Academy contributes to inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE);
- a senior member of staff from the leadership team (with qualified teacher status) is designated to take the lead responsibility for safeguarding and that there is at least one deputy DSL who is appropriately trained to deal with any issues in the absence of the DSL.
- There will always be cover for this role;

- the Academy holds more than one emergency contact number for each student (where reasonably possible);
- ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are noted by the Academy governors;
- the culture of safeguarding in the Academy is such that staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and such concerns are addressed sensitively in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing procedures;
- they liaise with the local authority designated officer (LADO) in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff;
- they have oversight of all low-level concerns submitted for the Academy and the subsequent required actions;
- the Academy undertakes all safeguarding practices and procedures required by the trust / the local authority;
- they complete a full SCR audit every term;
- a suitable programme of staff CPD is delivered to staff ensuring that contextualised safeguarding risks are covered;
- the Academy governors receive an annual safeguarding report from the DSL that will include staff safeguarding CPD, a summary of all safeguarding activity and will inform the Academy governors how the Academy meets its statutory requirements;
- the Academy governors undertake a range of 'safeguarding visits' over the year to monitor compliance within the safeguarding agenda;
- The taught curriculum and the wider offer for students is contextualised to the local area and promotes children to acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to manage their lives, recognise what is safe and unsafe and support critical thinking and safe decision making.

3.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL's will:

- carry out their role in accordance with the responsibilities outlined in Annex C of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' DfE;
- will provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters. Any concern for a child's safety or welfare will be recorded in a timely fashion in CPOMs. If this resource is not readily available at the time, then a paper record (on a blue form) should be made and then scanned into CPOMS as soon as is practical;
- support the headteacher in ensuring safeguarding policy is contextualised and available publicly via the Academy website.
- the Academy contributes to inter- agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE);
- The DSL or DDSL will be available (during Academy hours) for staff in the Academy to discuss any safeguarding concerns. If, in exceptional circumstances, a DSL is not available on the Academy site in person, they will be available via telephone or other means of communication;
- Manage referrals and will; refer cases of suspected abuse to children's social care, refer cases to the Channel programme if there is a radicalisation concern, to refer relevant cases to the disclosure and barring service, and to the Police where a crime may have been committed;

- oversee written records in CPOMS, including child protection files, ensuring that they are kept confidential and are stored securely. Quality assure the recording on CPOMS and provide support to staff where required;
- be responsible for ensuring that all staff members and volunteers are aware of the policy and the procedures they need to follow. They will ensure that all staff, volunteers and regular visitors have received appropriate safeguarding information during induction;
- liaise with safeguarding partners and other agencies where necessary;
- be aware of the requirement for children to have an 'appropriate adult'. All children should have an 'appropriate adult' to support them if they are arrested and at a police station or are being interviewed by police. The DSL / DDSL will liaise with parents/carers to ensure this is in place for students and will ensure parents/carers are aware that Academy staff cannot be the 'appropriate adult' for students who are a suspect of a crime;
- through regular training, knowledge and experience, be equipped to attend and contribute to child protection conferences, strategy discussions and other interagency meetings;
- be responsible for delivering the first line of induction training within the Academy;
- help promote education outcomes by sharing information about the issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with the teacher and leadership staff;
- understand the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place, as part of lead responsibility for online safety and support staff in their understanding of the processes;
- request support from the Headteacher for complex safeguarding concerns where the next steps are unclear.

4. Training and induction

4.1 When new staff join the Academy, they will be informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place during their initial induction process. They will be given a copy of the Academy's safeguarding policy along with the staff code of conduct, Part One of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' DfE; and informed who the DSL and deputy DSLs are. All staff are expected to read these key documents and fully understand their responsibility. They will also be informed of the Academy's recording and reporting procedures.

4.2 New members of staff and volunteers are provided with safeguarding training, which includes information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, how to accurately record concerns/information and the role of the DSL. The induction includes information about whistle-blowing in respect of concerns about another adult's behaviour and suitability to work with children. The induction covers what constitutes a low-level concern and how these can be reported. The induction also covers the Academy's monitoring and filtering systems and how they safeguard students from being exposed to inappropriate harmful material through the internet.

4.3 The DSL, DDSLs and any other senior member of staff who may be in a position of making referrals or attending child protection conferences or core groups will attend appropriate training. In addition to formal training, the DSL and DDSLs will ensure that they update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals, but at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

4.4 The Academy governors will undertake appropriate training on induction, and then at regular intervals (annual or as required with regard to changes in KCSiE), to ensure they are able to carry out their duty to safeguard children.

4.5 The Academy actively encourages all staff to keep up-to-date with the most recent local and national safeguarding awareness, advice and guidance. A record will be kept by the business manager of staff access to safeguarding CPD. In addition, throughout the Academy year the Academy will brief staff on key issues identified within KCSiE,

4.6 Staff safeguarding training summary table:

	Safeguarding KCSiE induction / annual update	**Accredited safeguarding training**	**Prevent extremism and radicalisation training**	**Accredited Safer recruitment training**	**Accredited DSL and DSL refresher**
All staff	Required as part of induction / the annual September refresher	Required as part of induction / the annual September refresher	Included in induction / annual safeguarding update and accredited safeguarding training.		
Business Manager / Office Manager	Required as part of induction / the annual September refresher	Required as part of induction / the annual September refresher	Included in induction / annual safeguarding update and accredited safeguarding training.	Required and must be refreshed every two years.	
Headteacher	Required as part of induction / the annual September refresher	Required as part of induction / the annual September refresher	Included in induction / annual safeguarding update and accredited safeguarding training.	Required and must be refreshed every two years. Must ensure staff who are part of interview panels complete the training.	Required and must be refreshed every two years.
Academy DSL / DDSL	Required as part of induction / the annual September refresher	Required as part of induction / the annual September refresher	Included in induction / annual safeguarding update and accredited safeguarding training. The DSL will lead on annual greater depth specialist training as part of staff CPD.		Required and must be refreshed every two years.
Academy Gov's	Required as part of induction / the annual September refresher	Required as part of induction / the annual September refresher	Included in induction / annual safeguarding update and accredited safeguarding training.	Where applicable.	

5. Procedures for managing safeguarding concerns

5.1 All staff must follow the Academy procedures which are consistent with DfE Working Together to Safeguard Children and KCSiE.

5.2 All staff, have a duty to recognise concerns and maintain an open mind. All concerns regarding the welfare of students will be recorded and discussed with the DSL (or the deputy DSL in the absence of the DSL) prior to any discussion with parents/carers. It is not the responsibility of the Academy staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation.

5.3 Adults in the Academy are well placed to observe any physical, emotional or behavioural signs which indicate that a child may be suffering significant harm. The relationships between staff, students, parents/carers and the public which foster respect, confidence and trust can lead to disclosures of abuse, and/or Academy staff being alerted to concerns.

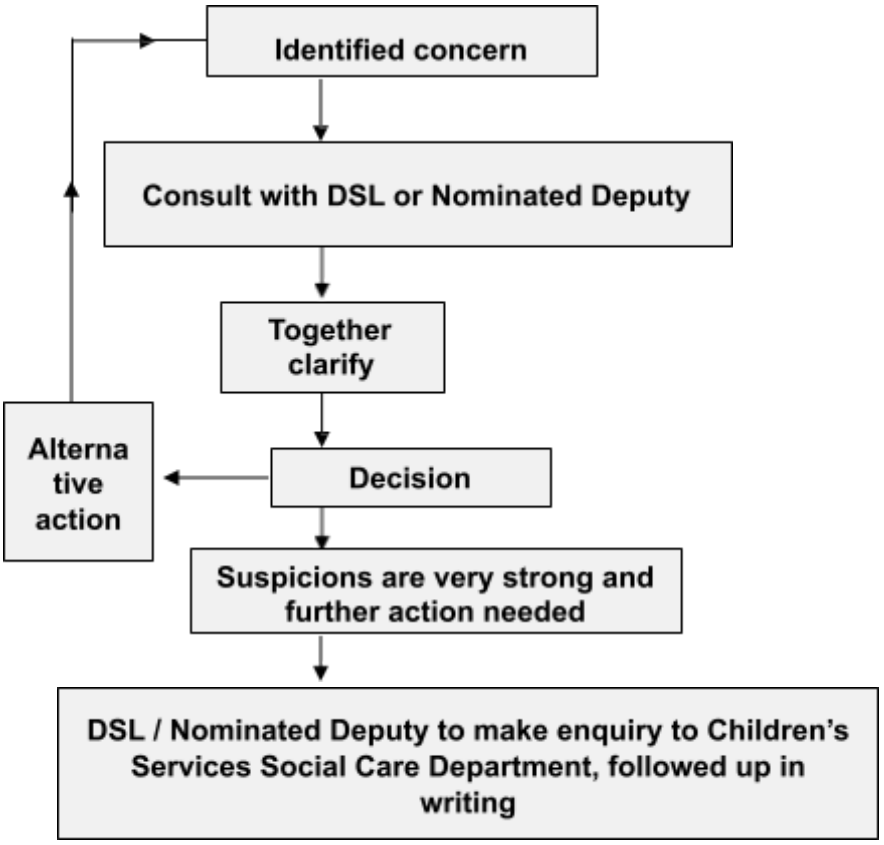
Knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse, staff are then able to identify cases of children who may need help or protection. The most common indicators for abuse include:

- a change in a child's behaviour
- physical indicators
- a disclosure
- low school attendance.

5.4 The DSL should be used as a first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern in the Academy. Any member of staff or visitor to the Academy who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that a child is at risk of harm must report it immediately to the DSL or, if unavailable, to the deputy DSLs. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child and have a responsibility to act as outlined in this policy.

5.5 Reporting and responding

Channels of communication should be quick and clear:



Any member of staff who is unhappy with the decision made with the DSL can consult with the headteacher, a member of SLT, or seek advice from key staff within the local authority.

Staff must immediately report:

- any suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way which is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play / everyday, normal activities;
- any explanation given which appears inconsistent or suspicious;
- any behaviours which give rise to suspicions that a child may have suffered harm (e.g. worrying drawings, play or actions);
- any concerns that a child may be suffering from inadequate care, ill treatment, or emotional maltreatment;
- any concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect;
- any significant changes in a child's presentation, including non-attendance;
- any hint or disclosure of abuse from any person;
- any concerns regarding person(s) who may pose a risk to children (e.g. living in a household with children present).
- any discovery that an act of female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 places a duty upon teachers to report to police where they discover (either by disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Teachers must personally report to police cases where they discover that an act of

FGM appears to have been carried out. Staff must also notify the DSL, who will support the member of staff to speak to the Police.

Staff are encouraged to actively consider children who might be more vulnerable to abuse. Examples include children living with SEND, children who have a history of abuse/neglect, children who are often absent from school or if there is a history of domestic abuse etc.

Disclosures or information may be received from students, parents/carers or other members of the public. The Academy recognises that those who disclose such information may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Accordingly, all staff will handle disclosures with sensitivity. Such information cannot remain confidential and staff will immediately communicate what they have been told to the DSL.

Staff will not investigate but will, wherever possible, elicit enough information to pass on to the DSL in order that they can make an informed decision of what to do next.

Staff will:

- listen to and take seriously any disclosure or information that a child may be at risk of harm;
- try to ensure that the person disclosing does not have to speak to another member of Academy staff;
- clarify the information;
- try to keep questions to a minimum and of an 'open' nature e.g. 'Can you tell me what happened?' rather than 'Did x hit you?';
- try not to show signs of shock, horror or surprise;
- not express feelings or judgments regarding any person alleged to have harmed the child;
- explain sensitively to the person that they have a responsibility to refer the information to the senior designated person;
- reassure and support the person as far as possible;
- explain that only those who 'need to know' will be told;
- explain what will happen next and that the person will be involved as appropriate;
- record the concern on CPOMs or with a lilac form if appropriate.

5.6 The Academy adheres to child protection procedures that have been agreed locally through the local safeguarding partners. Where children and families in need of support are identified, the Academy will carry out its responsibilities in accordance with local threshold guidance.

5.7 It is crucial that all staff record and pass on concerns in accordance with this policy to allow the DSL to build up a picture and access support for the child at the earliest opportunity. All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation of language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child.

5.8 Following receipt of any information that raises concern, the DSL will consider what action to take and will seek advice from children's services as required. All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented. The Academy understands that The Data Protection Act and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the DSL (or a deputy). Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

5.9 All referrals will be made in line with local children's services procedures.

5.10 If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's services and/or the police immediately. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for reconsideration by raising concerns again with the DSL and/or the Headteacher. Concerns should always lead to help for the child.

5.11 Staff should always follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy in the first instance. However, they may also share information directly with children's services, or the police if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated safeguarding lead, their alternative and the Headteacher are all unavailable;
- They are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the student's safety.

5.12 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 report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. The DSL will provide guidance and support to staff on this requirement. Further information on when and how to make a report can be found in the following Home Office guidance: 'Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation - procedural information' (October 2015) or Female Genital Mutilation

5.13 Child and Family Assessment

If a Child and family assessment is appropriate, the DSL / DDSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment, as appropriate. Any child may benefit from a CAF, but all Academy staff are particularly alert to the potential need for Early Help for any children identified in KCSiE.
Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an Child and Family assessment and, in some cases, where education is the fundamental factor, acting as the lead practitioner where appropriate. Child and Family assessments should be kept under review and referred to social care for assessment if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

5.14 **Low-Level Concerns:**
Concerns about conduct which do not meet the harm threshold must still be referred to the school DSL/ headteacher in a timely manner. Low level concerns should be recorded in accordance with the School Low Level Concerns Policy. All referrals are recorded here: Low Level Concerns link and further guidance can be found here Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

6. Recognising and responding to forms of abuse

6.1 Abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, therefore staff should always be vigilant and always raise any concerns with the DSL. Academy staff are well placed to recognise the signs of abuse due to knowing the patterns in a child's behaviour and being able to recognise when there are changes.

6.2 Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and

misogynistic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.

In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL.

6.3 Summary table of types of abuse / safeguarding concerns and their indicators. These are examples, not a definitive list:

Type of abuse / safeguarding concern	Definition	Indicators (these are examples and not a definitive list)
Physical abuse	Physical abuse is when someone hurts a child or young person on purpose e.g. hitting, slapping, shaking or throwing.	• unexplained recurrent injuries, marks or burns • covering injuries with clothing even in hot weather • aggressive or withdrawn • not being able to recall how they got the injury
Emotional abuse	Emotional abuse happens in many different ways. It can affect how a young person or child feels about themselves, or how they fit in with friends, at school, or where they live e.g. being made to feel inadequate, worthless or unloved, being unfairly blamed, bullied etc.	• inappropriate response to pain, e.g. 'I deserve this' • reduced physical, mental and emotional development • continual self-depreciation, e.g. 'I'm stupid', 'I'm ugly', 'I'm worthless'
Sexual abuse	Sexual abuse is when a child is enticed or forced to take part in sexual activities. This kind of abuse does not always involve a high level of violence and the child may or may not be aware of what is happening. There are two types of sexual abuse: Contact – which is any contact including penetrative acts Non-contact – which is looking or showing sexual images or persuading children to perform sexual acts online.	• extreme reactions such as depression, self-harm, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses or anorexia • medical problems such as chronic itching, pain, bruising in the genitals or venereal diseases • blood in urine or faeces • age inappropriate sexual play, bizarre or sophisticated sexualised language • unexplained change in behaviour, overtly sexualise language
Neglect	Neglect is when a child or young person's basic needs are persistently not being met by their parent or guardian.	• persistent hunger or tiredness • poor personal hygiene • poor condition and cleanliness of clothing • untreated medical problems • poor school attendance • severe nappy rash / persistent skin disorder • parental substance misuse •
Domestic abuse	Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between people who are, or who have been in a relationship, regardless of gender or sexuality. It can also happen between adults who are related to one another and can include physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse. Being exposed to domestic abuse in childhood is child abuse. **We are an 'Operation Encompass' Academy** Operation Encompass operates in the majority of police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead) in Academy before the child or children arrive at Academy the following day. This ensures that the	• poor school attendance • fearful of leaving their parent • aggressive behaviour • a parent with physical injuries • parent / child afraid or anxious to please the other parent / partner • tired / withdrawn

	Academy has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable support to be given to the child according to their needs. the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024 has placed a formal statutory duty on all territorial police forces to implement Operation Encompass, providing a stronger legislative foundation for these notifications.	
So called "Honour based abuse" (HBA)	HBA is crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including: • female genital mutilation; • forced marriage; • breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse.	• sudden decline in their performance, aspirations or motivation • subject to excessive restrictions and control at home; • may not be allowed to attend any extra-curricular or after-Academy activities; • girls and young women may be accompanied to and from the Academy • some students may stop attending the Academy • homework is incomplete or appears rushed; this may be the result of being actively discouraged from doing it by family members; • no longer take part in PE
Female genital mutilation (FGM)	FGM involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.	• prolonged absence from the Academy and other activities, holiday request forms for a long period of time "celebration for becoming a woman" • behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as being withdrawn and appearing subdued • bladder or menstrual problems • finding it difficult to sit still and looking uncomfortable • reporting pain between the legs • mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about • secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the group • reluctance to take part in physical activity.
Radicalisation	Radicalisation is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence. 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. Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.	• underachievement • being in possession of extremist literature • religious conversion • fundamental change in behaviour • extremist influences • conflict with family over lifestyle • confused identify • rejection by peers, family, social groups or faith • becoming withdrawn in class • rebelling against Academy rules • attendance – change in pattern • showing sympathy for extremist causes • glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures • making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside of the Academy • non-violent extremism, including certain divisive or intolerant narratives which can reasonably be linked to terrorism e.g. incel subculture • graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes

Children 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. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing from education in the future. Being absent from	• being absent / missing from education

	education could increase known safeguarding risks for the child.	
Elective Home Education (EHE)	Many home educated children have a positive learning experience. However, this is not the case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs. EHE can mean that some children are not in receipt of suitable education.	• EHE • long standing attendance issues • lack of parental engagement with the Academy to promote school attendance
Homelessness	Lacking stable and functional housing Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. Indicators are household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property.	• poor school attendance • arriving without the correct uniform • tired • staying with family / friends • withdrawn / aggressive • hungry • social isolation
Private fosterin g	A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (that is to say without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or immediate relative. If the arrangement is to last, or has lasted, for 28 days or more it is private fostering. The Children Act 1989 defines an immediate relative as a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership), or a step parent.	• children who need alternative care because of parental illness / work / prison • unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children • teenagers who stay with friends (or other non-relatives) because they have fallen out with their parents/carers • children staying with families while attending an Academy away from their home area
Self-harm	Self-harm refers to a person's harming their own body on purpose.	• wearing long sleeves / trousers to hide self-harm marks • withdrawn • cuts / burns/ bruises • hair pulling
Contextual safeguarding / extra familial harm	Extra-familial harm, also known as contextual safeguarding, is significant harm beyond the family and home. Some young people may be more at risk because they have more unmet needs that exploiters will use to manipulate and control them.	• acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc without plausible explanation • gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks • exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work • leaving home/care/school without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late • returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol;

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)	CCE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity. It can occur both online or offline.	• evidence of/suspicions of physical assault • links with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups • unexplained money, new clothes, multiple mobile phones • being seen in cars not belonging to a parent / carer / family member • in possession of drugs / scales / drugs paraphernalia
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)	CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any sexual activity. It can occur both online or offline.	• evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault; • links with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups; • self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being; • being seen in cars not belonging to a parent / carer / family member

County lines	County lines is a form of child exploitation, within county lines a child can experience many forms of exploitation, CCE, CSE, modern day slavery and trafficking. County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.	• go missing and found in areas away from their home • have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime) • are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs • are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection • are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a 'trap house or cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity
Child Financial Exploitation (CFE)	Child Financial Exploitation, sometimes referred to as 'money muling', is the term used to describe the action of using a young person's bank account to move money obtained from illegal sources.	• withdrawn • secretive use of mobile devices • tentative questions about banking • being blocked from their bank account
Child trafficking	Trafficking is where children and young people tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes and are moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. Child trafficking and modern slavery are child abuse. Many children and young people are trafficked into the UK from other countries like Vietnam, Albania and Romania. Children are also trafficked around the UK.	• increased absence from Academy • spend a lot of time doing household chores • rarely leave their house or have no time for playing • living apart from their family • live in low-standard accommodation • be unsure which country, city or town they're in
Serious violent crime	Violent crime covers a variety of offences – ranging from common assault to murder. It also encompasses the use of weapons such as firearms, knives and corrosive substances like acid. Any concern, suspicion, or report of a pupil carrying—or intending to carry—a weapon must be reported immediately and urgently to the DSL.	• increased absence from Academy • change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups • significant decline in performance • signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing • signs of assault or unexplained injuries

Child-on-child abuse	Child-on-child abuse is behaviour by an individual or group, intending to physically, sexually or emotionally harm others. It can happen to children of a similar age or stage of development and can be harmful to the children who display it as well as those who experience it. It can happen both inside and outside of school online and offline. Examples include: • bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice- based and discriminatory bullying) • abuse in intimate personal relationships • physical abuse • sexual violence - such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence) • sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse	• poor school attendance • disengaging from lessons, or struggling to carry out school related tasks to the standard ordinarily expected • physical injuries • experiencing difficulties with mental health and/or emotional wellbeing • becoming withdrawn and/or shy; experiencing headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and/or panic attacks; suffering from nightmares or lack of sleep or sleeping too much • broader changes in behaviour including alcohol or substance misuse • changes in appearance and/or starting to act in a way that is not appropriate for the child's age • abusive behaviour towards others
	• causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party • consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos • Upskirting. The Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 which amends the Sexual Offences Act 2003 to make upskirting a specific offence of voyeurism. The Act came into force on 12 April 2019. • initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.	
Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)	Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour displayed by children and young people which is harmful or abusive.	• attempts to coerce others into sexual activity • intrusive behaviour / misuse of power • sexual violence • no consent
Sexting	The action or practice of sending sexually explicit photographs or messages via a range of technology e.g. mobile phone, emails, websites, messaging apps. Sexting is often referred to as “nudes” or “semi-nudes”.	• embarrassment / shame • secretive use of mobile devices • social isolation • sharp changes in mood

6.4 Academy specific contextual safeguarding

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to children's experiences of significant harm beyond their family and home. Staff should be considering the context within such incidents and/or behaviours. This will be done through assessing the wider environmental factors that are present in a child’s life that are a threat to their safety and welfare.

Geographical factors	Academy Response
We have busy roads and travel links with different parts of the Town and the rest of the country. We are close to the large town of Blackburn.	Road safety to be delivered as part of the curriculum throughout the year to ensure students safety on the road and public transport County Lines training to staff to look for key signs that students may be involved. County lines education through PSHE curriculum taught to students to provide information on risks and where they can find support
Social and economic factors	**Academy Response**
• Local Shops and Blackburn Centre	• We teach students about personal safety and making the right decisions about their behaviour beyond the Academy. Students are also taught about anti-social behaviour and the consequences of criminal damage and trespassing. • We work closely with the police and report any concerns
Peer Group factors	**Academy Response**
• Students increased use of social media can cause issues both in the Academy and at home	• Our curriculum teaches students about the issue of 'peer pressure'. Students engage in different scenarios and are given choices to make through role play. Students are taught to be confident and assertive. We also engage in 'anti- bullying' activities and we high profile this within our Academy community.
Home factors	**Academy Response**
• Lots of our students are connected to the internet at home and regularly use gaming devices to engage in online games with their friends.	• Through our computing curriculum, students are taught about online safety. Every student has signed our 'Acceptable Use' contract. This proactive and responsive approach allows us to target certain groups of students or individuals and gives us the flexibility to respond to Academy incidents. • When working on school appliances 24/7 monitoring systems are in place and support and additional online safety sessions given to relative students where applicable

6.5 **Child-on-Child abuse**

The Academy recognises that children are also vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional abuse by their peers or siblings (abuse). This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including online bullying), gender-based violence/sexual assaults, sexting and initiation/hazing type violence and ritual. Abuse perpetrated by children can be just as harmful as that perpetrated by an adult. It is important to remember the impact on the victim of the abuse as well as to focus on the support for the child or young person exhibiting the harmful behaviour. Such abuse will always be taken as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult, and the same safeguarding children procedures will apply in respect of any child who is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm; staff must never tolerate or dismiss concerns relating to child-on-child abuse.

6.6 The Academy takes the following steps to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse:

- ensures staff are aware of the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and how

to identify them
- addresses inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively minor)
- has clear robust policies for dealing with key issues of behaviour such as cyber bullying
- ensures staff and students are aware of the policies
- ensures robust supervision and awareness of potentially risky areas in the Academy and carefully monitors any incidents in said risky areas
- increases supervision during key times
- takes steps to prevent isolation
- separates children if needed
- where risk is identified, an individual student safety plan is put in place.

The following systems are in place to enable children to confidently report any abuse:

- All children know who they can report to in the Academy
- Assemblies signposting children to key actions / people

Each alleged incident will be recorded, investigated and dealt with on an individual basis based on the following principles:

- all information will be recorded in writing using the agreed procedures (CPOMS or by completing a blue cause for concern form).
- all children involved (victim and alleged perpetrator) in the Academy will be spoken to separately by the DSL
- where the incident also involves a child at a different establishment the DSL will ensure effective liaison and information sharing
- all children involved (victim and alleged perpetrator) will be appropriately supported throughout the process
- the DSL will balance the child's wishes against their duty to protect the child and other children
- the Academy will work with our local safeguarding partners where appropriate
- the DSL may need to go against the victim's wishes and make a referral to children's social care or the police. This will be handled sensitively, the reasons explained to the victim and appropriate support made available
- parents/carers will be informed of the incident and how their child will be dealt with and supported (unless this would put a child at greater risk).

Victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported in the following ways:

- support will be tailored on a case-by-case basis
- all children involved will be supported by an allocated member of staff
- the needs and wishes of the victim will be considered, along with protecting the child.
- wherever possible, the victim and witnesses will be able to continue their normal routine
- the victim will never be made to feel they are the problem for making a report or made to feel ashamed for making a report
- all reasonable steps will be taken to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment
- adequate measures will be put in place to protect the children involved and keep them safe
- a needs and risk assessment will be made and a safety plan put in place when required
- perpetrators will be supported in line with the Expectations for Learning policy
- early help, children's social care and other agencies will be asked to support where appropriate.

6.7 Child-on-child sexual violence and harassment

The Academy follows the statutory guidance contained in Part five of KCSiE as to how it should respond to all signs, reports and concerns of sexual violence and sexual harassment, including those that have happened outside of the Academy premises, and/or online. All staff including volunteers working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'**.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two or more children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into college. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face-to-face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. All staff must be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. It should never be passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh", "a part of growing up" or "boys being boys". Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.
- recognising, acknowledging, and understanding the scale of harassment and abuse, and that, even if there are no reports, it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported
- challenging physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras, popping shirt buttons and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
- In cases of sexual violence and sexual harassment immediate consideration should be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) (and any other children involved/impacted).
- Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment wherever it happens, may find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same Academy or college. Whilst any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously, staff should be aware that it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys. Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are also three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Ultimately, it is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- Any child will likely experience stress as a result of being the subject of allegations and/or negative reactions by their peers to the allegations against them. Support and sanctions must be considered on a case-by-case basis. The Academy should seek advice as appropriate from the local authority children's social care, specialist sexual violence services and the police.

6.8 **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

The Academy recognises that children with SEND can face additional safeguarding challenges. These are discussed in staff training. These additional barriers can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying - without outwardly showing any signs;
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Staff will support children in expressing any concerns they may have and will be particularly vigilant to any signs or symptoms of abuse. The DSL and SENDCO will work together when dealing with reports of abuse involving children with SEND.

6.9 **Radicalisation and extremism**

The Academy recognises that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is no different to safeguarding against any other vulnerability in today's society. Safeguarding children from all risks of harm is an important part of an Academy's work and protecting them from extremism is one aspect of that.

In March 2015, statutory duties were placed on academies by the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.The Prevent Duty states the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

The Academy will ensure that:

- through training, staff, volunteers and Academy governors will understand what radicalisation and extremism is, why staff in the Academy need to be vigilant and how to respond when concerns arise, and what the local concerns are
- there are systems in place for keeping students safe from extremist material when accessing the internet in the Academy by using effective filtering, monitoring and usage systems and policies
- the DSL has received 'Prevent' training and will act as the point of contact within the Academy for any concerns relating to radicalisation and extremism
- the DSL will make referrals in accordance with local 'Channel' procedures and will represent the Academy at channel meetings as required
- the Academy will promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students through the curriculum
- in addition to preparing students for life in modern Britain, by promoting these shared values, the curriculum can help build resilience to radicalisation and extremism
- there is a Prevent risk assessment completed to represent local risks and what measures are in place to protect the Academy community
- the DSL will support staff to understand the local risks students face to extremism and will ensure the Academy prevent risk assessment is up to date and available on the Academy website

6.10 It is the role of all staff to reduce permissive environments. Acting to limit the potential harm and influence of radicalisers, as well as extremist narratives and content which can reasonably be linked to terrorism, can help reduce the risk of people from becoming terrorists or from supporting terrorism.

Staff and visitors to the Academy must speak to the DSL to refer to all concerns about students who show signs of susceptibility of radicalisation. When there are significant concerns about a student, the DSL or deputy DSL will refer to the appropriate body in line with the local safeguarding procedures, including 'Channel'.

6.11 Prevent referrals may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to in order to determine whether they are susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from the Academy or college may be asked to attend the 'Channel' panel to help with this assessment. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. An individual will be required to provide their consent before any support delivered through the programme is provided. Guidance can be found Radicalisation, Terrorist and Extremist Ideology and The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation - GOV.UK

6.13 **Sharing nudes / semi-nudes**

Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos. The term 'sharing nudes and semi-nudes' is used to mean the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by children under the age of 18 online. The term 'nudes' is used as it is most commonly recognised by children and more appropriately covers all types of image sharing incidents.

The motivations for taking and sharing nude and semi-nude images, videos and live streams are not always sexually or criminally motivated. Such images may be created and shared consensually by children who are in relationships, as well as between those who are not in a relationship. It is also possible for a child in a consensual relationship to be coerced into sharing an image with their partner.

Incidents may also occur where:

- children find nudes and semi-nudes online and share them claiming to be from a peer
- children digitally manipulate an image of a child into an existing nude online
- Images created or shared are used to abuse peers e.g. by selling images online or obtaining images to share more widely without consent to publicly shame
- children and young people create and share a nude or semi-nude with an adult who has presented themselves as someone under the age of 18 to groom, sexually abuse / blackmail them.

The sharing of nudes and semi-nudes can happen publicly online, in 1:1 messaging or via group chats and closed social media accounts. Nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams may include more than one child. This advice does not apply to adults sharing nudes or semi-nudes of under 18-year olds. This is a form of child sexual abuse and must be referred to the police as a matter of urgency. Guidance: Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident (overview) (updated March 2024) - GOV.UK

[1] . Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being susceptible to being drawn into terrorism.

6.14 Creating and sharing nudes and semi-nudes of under-18s (including those created and shared with consent) is illegal which makes responding to incidents involving children complex. There are also a range of risks which need careful management from those working in education settings.

6.15 When an incident involving nudes and semi-nudes comes to the attention of any member of staff:

✔ DO	X DO NOT
• Refer the incident to the DSL (or deputy) as soon as possible. • Explain to those involved that you need to report the incident to the DSL. • The DSL will hold an initial review meeting to gather information with the staff who were made aware of the concerns and members of the safeguarding senior leadership team. • There will be subsequent interviews with the children involved (if appropriate). • Parents and carers will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process in order to best support the child unless there is good reason to believe that involving them would put the child at risk of harm. • A referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately if there is a concern that a child has been harmed or is at risk of immediate harm at any point in the process	• Do not end or print the image • Do not move the material from one place to another • Do not share or download • Do not view the image outside of the safeguarding protocols • Do not delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it without the direction of the DSL • Do not say or do anything to blame if shame any young person involved • Do not ask the child/children or young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL (or equivalent). • Do not share information about the incident with other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers. This should only be done with the guidance of the DSL.

6.16 A disclosure may not be a single event and the child may share further information at a later stage. Any direct disclosure by a child should be taken seriously. A child who discloses they are the subject of an incident of sharing nudes and semi-nudes is likely to be embarrassed and worried about the consequences. It is likely that disclosure in the Academy is a last resort, and they may have already tried to resolve the issue themselves.

6.17 The initial review meeting will consider the available evidence and aim to establish:

- whether there is an immediate risk to any child
- if a referral should be made to the police and/or children's social care
- if it is necessary to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the child – **in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed**
- what further information is required to decide on the best response
- whether the image(s) has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms as this may be unknown
- Who has created the nude or semi-nude? E.g. is it AI-generated image shared by another child
- whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services
- any relevant facts about the children involved which would influence risk assessment
- if there is a need to contact another education, setting or individual
- whether to contact parents or carers of the children involved - in most cases they should be involved

The circumstances of incidents can vary widely. It might be necessary for the DSL (or equivalent) to conduct a further review (including an interview with any child involved) to establish the facts and assess the risks.

6.18 An immediate referral to police and/or children's social care through the multiagency safeguarding hub (MASH) or equivalent will be made if:

- The incident involves an adult.
- 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, owing to special educational needs).
- What is known about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent.
- The images involve sexual acts and any child in the images or videos is under 13.
- You have reason to believe a child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, for example, they are presenting as suicidal or self-harming.

If none of the above apply, the DSL may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. They can still choose to escalate the incident at any time if further information/concerns are disclosed at a later date.

The decision to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care will only be made in cases where the DSL is confident that they have enough information to assess the risks to any child involved and the risks can be managed within the Academy's support and disciplinary framework and, if appropriate, their local network of support. The decision with rationale must be recorded on CPOMS.

6.19 When assessing the risks and determining whether a referral is needed, the following should be also considered:

- Why was the nude or semi-nude shared? Was it consensual or was the child put under pressure or coerced?
- Has the nude or semi-nude been shared beyond its intended recipient? Was it shared without the consent of the child who produced the image?
- Has the nude or semi-nude been shared on social media or anywhere else online? If so, what steps have been taken to contain the spread?
- How old are the children involved?
- Did the child send the nude or semi-nude to more than one person?
- Do you have any concerns about the child's vulnerability?
- Are there additional concerns if the parents or carers are informed?

The DSL will decide whether a child is at risk of harm. If a child is at risk of harm a referral will be appropriate. The DSL will also decide whether additional information or support is needed from other agencies or whether the Academy can manage the incident and support the child or young person directly. The DSL will always use their professional judgement in conjunction with that of their colleagues to assess incidents. If the incident requires being referred to the police, the DSL must ensure any crime reference number provided is recorded on CPOMS.

6.20 The DSL or another member of staff (who the child feels more comfortable talking to) will discuss future actions and support with the child. This discussion will consider the views of the child as well as balancing what are considered to be appropriate actions for responding to the incident.

The purpose of the discussion is to:

- Identify, **without viewing wherever possible**, what the image contains and whether anyone else has been involved.
- Find out whether the image has been shared between two people or shared further. This may be speculative information as images or videos may have been shared more widely than the child or young person is aware of.
- Discuss what actions and support might be needed, including preventing further distribution.

6.21 When discussing the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, the DSL/member of staff will:

- Reassure the child that they are not alone, and the Academy will do everything that they can to help and support them. They should also be reassured that they will be kept informed throughout the process.
- Recognise the pressures that children can be under to take part in sharing an image and, if relevant, support their parents and carers to understand the wider issues and motivations around this.
- Remain solution-focused and avoid any victim-blaming questions such as 'why have you done this?' as this may prevent the child from talking about what has happened. For example, they will use questions such as 'describe what happened' or 'explain to me who was involved'.
- Help the child to understand what has happened by discussing the wider pressures that they may face and the motivations of the person that sent on the image(s).
- Discuss issues of consent and trust within healthy relationships. Explain that it is not okay for someone to make them feel uncomfortable, to pressure them into doing things that they do not want to do, or to show them things that they are unhappy about. Let them know that they can speak to the DSL or equivalent if this ever happens.
- Explain the law on the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes. It is important to highlight that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them and should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them
- Signpost to the IWF (Internet Watch Foundation) and Childline's Report Remove tool. Report Remove helps children and young people to report an image shared online and to see if it is possible to get the image removed. This must be done as soon as possible in order to minimise the number of people that have seen the picture.

6.22 Parents or carers will be informed and involved in the process at an early stage unless informing them will put a child or young person at risk of harm. Any decision not to inform the parents or carers will be made in conjunction with other services such as children's social care and/or the police, who would take the lead in deciding when they should be informed.

6.23 Children and young people can be involved in an incident in several different ways. They may lose control of their own image, receive an image of someone else or share an image of another person. In any of these situations, parents and carers may find it difficult to know how to deal with the knowledge that their child has been involved in an incident and may display differing emotions.

6.24 Whatever their feelings, it is important that we listen to the child's concerns and take them seriously. We will also help to reassure parents and carers by explaining that it is normal for young people to be curious about sex.

6.25 In all situations, parents or carers will be:

- Given information about the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, what they can expect to happen next, and who will be their link person within the Academy.
- Given support to deal with their own feelings of upset and concern including signposting to further resources that can help them to understand the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes or support services they can contact, where appropriate.
- Given support on how to speak to their child about the incident.
- Advised on the law around the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.
- Keep updated about any actions that have been taken or any support that their child is accessing, unless the child involved has specifically asked for this not to happen and is judged to be old enough to make that informed decision.
- Informed about sources of support for their child, in case they are feeling anxious or depressed about what has happened. This could include speaking to a Childline. counsellor online or on 0800 11 11, in house counselling services where available, or a GP. If they are concerned that their child is suicidal, they should contact 999.
- Directed to NCA-CEOP if the child discloses any further details to them that may suggest they are being groomed or sexually exploited.

6.26 Staff and parents or carers **must not intentionally view** any nudes and semi-nudes unless there is good and clear reason to do so as outlined below. Wherever possible, responses to incidents will be based on what DSLs have been told about the content of the imagery.

The decision to view any imagery will be based on the professional judgement of the DSL. Imagery will never be viewed if the act of viewing will cause significant distress or harm to any child or young person involved.

If a decision is made to view imagery, the DSL would need to be satisfied that viewing is:

- The only way to decide whether to involve other agencies because it is not possible to establish the facts from any child involved.
- Necessary to report it to a website, app or suitable reporting agency (such as the IWF) to have it taken down, or to support the child or parent or carer in making a report.
- Unavoidable because a child has presented it directly to a staff member or nudes or semi-nudes have been found on an education setting's device or network.

If it is necessary to view the imagery, then the DSL will:

- Never copy, print, share, store or save them; this is illegal. If this has already happened, we will contact the local police for advice and to explain the circumstances.
- Discuss the decision with the Headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team.
- Ensure viewing is undertaken by the DSL or another member of the safeguarding team with delegated authority from the Headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team.
- Ensure viewing takes place with another member of staff present in the room, ideally the Headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team. This staff member does not need to view the images.
- Wherever possible, make sure viewing takes place on the Academy premises, ideally in the Headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team's office.
- Ensure wherever possible that they are viewed by a staff member of the same sex as the child or young person in the images.
- Record how and why the decision was made to view the imagery in the safeguarding or child protection records, including who was present, why the nudes or semi-nudes were viewed and any subsequent actions. This will be signed and dated.
- If any devices need to be taken and passed onto the police, the device(s) will be confiscated and the police will be called. The device will be disconnected from Wi-Fi and data, and turned off immediately to avoid imagery being removed from the device remotely through a cloud storage service. The device will be placed in a secure place, in a locked cupboard until the police are able to come and collect it.

If nudes or semi-nudes have been viewed by a member of staff, either following a disclosure from a child or young person or as a result of a member of staff undertaking their daily role (such as IT staff monitoring Academy systems), the DSL will make sure that the staff member is provided with appropriate support. Viewing nudes and semi-nudes can be distressing for both children and adults and appropriate emotional support may be required.

6.27 In most cases, children and young people will be asked to delete the imagery and to confirm that they have deleted them. They will be given a deadline for deletion across all devices, online storage or social media sites. They will be reminded that possession of nudes and semi-nudes is illegal. They will be informed that if they refuse or it is later discovered they did not delete the imagery, they are continuing to commit a criminal offence and the police may become involved.

All incidents relating to nudes and semi-nudes being shared will be recorded using the Academy's procedures. Copies of imagery **should not** be taken.

6.28 It is important that children and young people understand the Academy's policy towards nudes and semi-nudes. The content of this policy and the protocols the Academy will follow in the event of an incident will be explored as part of teaching and learning. This will reinforce the inappropriate nature of abusive behaviours and reassure children that the Academy will support them if they experience difficulties or have concerns.

All students are taught in an age appropriate way about the law and the possible implications of sharing personal images as part of the PSHE curriculum. These themes are also discussed more widely as part of the Academy's approach to helping students understand acceptable behaviours within a healthy relationship, with consent as a central theme.

For more information: Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (updated March 2024)-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

6.29 **Online safety**

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. An effective whole Academy approach to online safety empowers an Academy to protect and educate students, and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate. The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving, 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**: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying, and
- **commerce**: - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

The Academy governors ensure online safety is a running and interrelated theme whilst devising and implementing the whole Academy approach to safeguarding and related policies and procedures. This includes considering how online safety is reflected, as required in all relevant policies and considering online safety whilst planning the curriculum, any teacher training, the role and responsibilities of the DSL (and deputies) and any parental engagement.

6.30 **Filtering and monitoring procedures** have been carefully considered in the Academy's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn. The Academy has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and regularly reviews their effectiveness. The leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively, including how to log and escalate concerns when identified.

All users accessing the internet are subject to age appropriate levels of filtering. This protects students and staff in real time against accessing inappropriate and potentially dangerous websites and applications. There are alert notifications for key staff, the alerts are scored to help inform what level of reaction is needed to keep our students and staff safe. The filtering and monitoring software is regularly tested, reports compiled and shared appropriately for quality assurance.

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

6.32 Children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime. If there are concerns about a child in this area, the DSL (or a deputy), should consider referring into the **Cyber Choices** programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests. The school's Data Protection Officer (DPO) is integrated into safeguarding governance, particularly concerning filtering & monitoring checks, AI risk assessments, and Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs).

https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/education-skills/cyber-security-schools

https://saferinternet.org.uk/

6.33 **Mental Health**

Academy staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. However, our Academy 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. The Academy can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies.

If a child does not have a diagnosed mental health condition, you must be very careful with the language you use and **not** use the language of diagnosis. We can be clear about what we see without making a judgement of what you think that means e.g. "Dan was crying at lunch time and said he felt really sad" not "Dan looked depressed today".

If there is a concern about a student's safety due to their mental health concern or due to self-harm the DSL must be informed and a safety plan should be put in place to support the student to safely engage in their Academy life by increasing safety and reducing any barriers to learning in accordance with the expectation for learning policy. The DSL / DDSL will consider appropriate signposting and partner agency support. If a student's mental health or self-harm suggests they are at immediate risk, staff must bypass standard scheduling and seek emergency medical assistance (999 or A&E) immediately.

6.34 Supporting Gender-Questioning Pupils

Witton Park academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils. Requests or disclosures relating to gender identity are approached through a child-centered safeguarding lens, in line with statutory guidance (Keeping Children Safe in Education).

Our priority is to ensure the emotional and physical safety of the pupil, uphold accurate record-keeping, and balance the rights and privacy of the broader school community.

Managing Disclosures and Requests (Social Transition)
Social transition refers to actions such as changing a pupil's preferred name, pronouns, uniform, or access to single-sex spaces.
If a pupil confides in a member of staff about gender questioning but does not request operational changes at school, staff will offer pastoral support. Confidentiality is maintained unless there is a safeguarding concern.
School staff will not initiate social transition. If a pupil or parent requests steps towards social transition, staff must report the request to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Parental Involvement
Parents and carers play a central role in their children's lives.
There is a general presumption that parents will be fully informed and involved in decisions regarding gender-questioning pupils.
In rare cases where involving parents would create a demonstrable risk of significant harm to the pupil (e.g., severe physical or emotional abuse), the DSL may decide to withhold or delay notification. This decision must be formally risk-assessed, recorded, and reviewed regularly.

Assessment and Decision-Making Process
When a request for social transition is made, the DSL will lead a structured assessment considering:
1. The age, maturity, and understanding of the child (exercising extreme caution with primary-aged pupils).
2. The views and wishes of parents/carers.
3. Any underlying medical, mental health, or special educational needs (SEN/neurodiversity).
4. Potential impacts on the pupil and the wider school community.
5. Clinical or professional guidance, where appropriate.

Record-Keeping and Single-Sex Provision
The school will accurately record a pupil's legal name and biological sex on official systems for legal and safeguarding requirements.
Toilets, changing rooms, and residential accommodation will remain designated by biological sex. Where a pupil does not wish to use facilities designated for their biological sex, the school will offer reasonable alternative provisions (e.g., accessible or private individual facilities) where practical, without compromising single-sex spaces for others.

Participation in sports will be managed safely and fairly, taking into account age, physical differences, and the nature of the sport (e.g., contact vs. non-contact).

AI-Generated Harm and "Deepfakes"

Witton Park Academy adopts a strict **harm-focused approach**: the intent and emotional or legal impact on the victim determines the severity of the incident, regardless of whether media was created using automated software or traditional physical methods. Synthetic abuse is treated with the same weight as physical or non-synthetic abuse.

6.35 Definitions & Categorization of AI-Generated Harms

For the purposes of this safeguarding policy, AI-generated harms are categorized across the statutory framework:

Deepfakes & Synthetic Media: The digital alteration, generation, or synthesis of imagery, audio, or video using machine learning algorithms (such as generative adversarial networks or diffusion models) to create realistic representations of individuals doing or saying things they did not.

Image-Based Sexual Abuse (IBSA): The creation, distribution, or possession of non-consensual intimate imagery, including "nudification" applications or sexualized deepfakes. Under statutory guidance, this is defined as a form of child sexual exploitation and abuse (CSAE) and peer-on-peer sexual violence/harassment.

AI Contact & Grooming Risks: Interactive, highly manipulative AI systems (e.g., automated roleplay chatbots, synthetic voice cloning) used to simulate human relationships, manipulate pupils, or facilitate online grooming and sextortion.

Impersonation & Defamation: The use of synthetic voice models, deepfake video, or automated text bots to impersonate staff or pupils for the purpose of bullying, fraud, extortion, or character assassination.

The following actions are strictly prohibited on school premises, using school/college IT infrastructure, or off-site where the conduct directly impacts members of the school community:

1. Creating, downloading, soliciting, sharing, or possessing AI-generated intimate, sexualized, or defamatory images/media involving pupils or staff.
2. Utilizing "nudification" or generative AI software to manipulate photos of any individual without explicit, written consent.
3. Deploying synthetic audio/video to impersonate peers, teachers, or administrators to deceive, harass, or extort others.
4. Inputting personal data, sensitive photos, or identifying information of pupils or staff into public, unsecured, or non-approved third-party AI models (violating UK GDPR/Data Protection Act).

Staff must **never** download, screenshot, forward, or copy suspected AI-generated intimate images of a child. Doing so may constitute a criminal

offense under child protection laws, even if performed as part of an internal investigation. Containment must be managed via device isolation and URL/platform logging only.

The DSL will determine if the incident meets the threshold for statutory referral (e.g., Police, Children's Social Care, or the Local Authority Designated Officer if staff are involved).

The school will actively assist victims in removing synthetic media using accredited escalation tools (e.g., *Take It Down*, *Internet Watch Foundation*, or *Report Harmful Content*).

Public Media Guidelines: High-resolution, direct-facing individual portraits of pupils will not be published on public-facing platforms or social media. Group shots, lower-resolution files, or angled imagery should be prioritized.

Filtering & Monitoring: The school's IT network must maintain filtering systems capable of blocking known generative AI "nudification" services, unauthorised synthetic media generation sites, and unvetted AI chat engines.

Curriculum Integration: Digital literacy education will explicitly cover the ethics of synthetic media, consent, copyright, the legal ramifications of deepfake distribution, and how to critically evaluate visual mis/disinformation.

6.36 Misogyny and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Witton Park academy operates a strict zero-tolerance approach to misogyny, harmful sexual behavior, and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in all forms. Sexist language, gender-based bullying, harassment, and misogynistic ideologies—whether expressed verbally, physically, or online—will not be dismissed as "banter," "growing up," or "boys being boys."

All instances of misogynistic abuse and VAWG are recognized as child protection concerns, potential criminal behavior, or breaches of the School Code of Conduct. They will be met with immediate, robust safeguarding and disciplinary procedures.

Misogyny & Sexist Culture: Attitudes, language, or behaviors that degrade, objectify, or express contempt for girls and female staff. This includes casual sexist jokes, rating girls on appearance, slurs, anti-women internet subculture rhetoric (e.g., "Manosphere" / Andrew Tate influences), and active resistance to female authority.

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG): In a school setting, VAWG includes peer-on-peer sexual harassment, sexual violence, stalking, domestic abuse within teenage relationships, upskirting, non-consensual sharing of intimate images (nudes/semi-nudes), and coercive or controlling behavior.

6.37 Private fostering

There is a mandatory duty on the Academy to inform the local authority of a private fostering arrangement. The local authority has a duty to check that the young person is being properly cared for and that the arrangement is satisfactory.

6.38 Children who are absent from education for prolonged periods/repeated occasions

The Academy recognises its unique position in having a high level of oversight of children. The DSL will liaise with appropriate staff to analyse attendance data. Staff may complete home visits to establish the safety of students when their whereabouts and wellbeing are unknown and in the aim of encouraging increased school attendance for the overall safety and wellbeing of the student.

The Academy will follow the statutory guidance Working Together to Improve School attendance (DfE) for students where attendance is a concern. For students who are persistently absent (miss 10% or more of school), the Academy will work together with the local authority for additional targeted support. For students who are severely absent (those missing 50% or more of school), where all avenues of support have been facilitated by the Academy, local authority and relevant partner agencies but severe absence continues, a referral should be made to the local authority due to neglect concerns. The referral should be made by the DSL / DDSL with the aim of a full children's social care assessment being completed. For more information, please refer to the Attendance and Punctuality Policy.

For safeguarding concerns where the DSL and Headteacher would like further support, they can contact the **trust Inclusion and Safeguarding Lead** who will be able to provide further guidance and support to navigate the appropriate next steps in safeguarding a child / member of the Academy community.

7. Records and information sharing

7.1 If staff are concerned about the welfare or safety of any child at the Academy, they will record their concern on the Academy's CPOMs system (or a lilac form). Any concerns should be passed to the DSL without delay.

7.2 Each record should include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of each action taken, discussions, decisions reached (rationale) and the outcome
- Information from a child written verbatim
- Date and signature / record of who completed the record

The CPOMS recording template should be used by all staff where appropriate:

Full name and role of those involved in the entry –
Reason for entry - (What has happened? What are we worried about? Date / time of correspondence. Which DSL did you speak to? What safety factors are already in place?)
Actions – (What needs to happen? Who needs to do it? When do they need to do it? Does a safety plan need to be reviewed?)

If there is any doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the DSL.

7.3 Any safeguarding information about a student will be saved within CPOMS, not in the child's academic file. These records will be the responsibility of the DSL. Child protection information will only be shared within the Academy on the basis of 'need to know in the child's interests' and on the understanding that it remains strictly confidential.

7.4 Safeguarding information will only be stored within CPOMs and this file will be kept up-to-date. Records of concern, copies of referrals, multiagency meeting minutes and child protection reports will be recorded within CPOMs.

7.5 When a child leaves the Academy, the DSL will contact the DSL at the new school and will ensure that the child protection file is forwarded to the receiving school in an appropriately agreed manner. The Academy will retain evidence to demonstrate that it has acted accordingly when dealing with safeguarding matters and how the file has been transferred; this may be in the form of electronic records via CPOMS audit features or a written confirmation of receipt from the receiving school and/or evidence of recorded delivery. Where a parent elects to remove their child from the Academy roll to home educate, the Academy will share any safeguarding concerns to the local authority.

8. Working with parents and carers

8.1 The Academy is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to support them to understand statutory responsibilities in this area.

8.2 When new students join the Academy, parents and carers will be informed that there is a safeguarding policy. A copy will be provided to parents/carers on request and is available on the Academy website.

8.3 The Academy is committed to working with parents and carers positively, openly and honestly and will ensure that all are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. The Academy respects parents'/carers rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless granted permission, or where it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard a child from harm.

8.4 The Academy will seek to share with parents/carers any concerns about their child unless doing so may place a child at increased risk of harm. A lack of parental engagement or agreement regarding the concerns the Academy has about a child will not prevent the DSL making a referral to children's services in those circumstances where it is appropriate to do so.

8.5 In order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them, the Academy requires parents/carers to provide accurate and up-to-date information regarding:

- full names and contact details of all adults with whom the child normally lives;
- full names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above);
- emergency contact details (if different from above);
- full details of any other adult authorised by the parent to collect the child from the Academy (if different from the above).

The Academy will retain this information on the student file and wherever possible will hold more than once emergency contact for each child. The Academy will only share information about students with adults who have parental responsibility for a student or where a parent has given permission and the Academy has been supplied with the adult's full details in writing.

8.6 If a parent / carer has concerns for the safety of a child or concerns with regards to a member of staff, they can share their concerns with the Academy DSL or the Academy Headteacher. The DSL / Headteacher will support by exploring the appropriate next steps.

9. Child protection conferences

Children's services will convene a child protection conference once a child protection enquiry under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 has been undertaken and the child is assessed to be at continuing risk of significant harm. A review conference will take place once a child has been made the subject of a child protection plan in order to monitor the safety of the child and the required reduction in risk.

9.1 Staff members may be asked to attend a child protection conference or core group meetings on behalf of the Academy in respect of individual children. Usually the person representing the Academy at these meetings will be the Headteacher, DSL or other appropriate member of staff. In any event, the person attending will need to have as much relevant up to date information about the child as possible; any member of staff may be required to contribute to this process.

9.2 All reports for child protection conferences will be prepared in advance using the guidance and template report provided by the local authority. The report should be quality assured by a senior member of staff. The information contained in the report will be shared with parents/carers before the conference as appropriate and will include information relating to the child's physical, emotional and intellectual development and the child's presentation at the Academy. In order to complete such reports, all relevant information will be sought from staff working with the child in the Academy. All staff should be prepared to contribute to the report writing process.

9.3 The Academy will work in an open and honest way with any parent whose child has been referred to children's services or whose child is subject to a child protection plan. It is the responsibility of the Academy to promote the protection and welfare of all children, and the aim is to achieve this in partnership with parents.

10. Safer working practice

10.1 The Academy follows the Recruitment and Selection Policy, which are in accordance with KCSiE. The procedures and practice are embedded and effective.

10.2 All adults who come into contact with children have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. There is a legal duty placed upon the Academy to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of children are competent, confident and safe to do so.

10.3 All staff will be provided with a copy of the Academy's code of conduct at induction. They will be expected to know the Academy's code of conduct and the positive handling and restraint policy and to carry out their duties in accordance with this advice. There will be occasions when some form of physical contact is inevitable, for example if a child has an accident or is hurt or is in a situation of danger to themselves or others around them. However, at all times the agreed policy for positive handling must be adhered to.

10.4 The Academy has clear protocols for visitors to ensure they are suitable and supervised as appropriate. All adults working at or visiting the Academy will wear a lanyard at all times. A black lanyard indicates an employee who has been DBS cleared, a green lanyard indicates others who have been DBS cleared and a red lanyard indicates anyone who has not been DBS cleared. **Those wearing a red lanyard must be supervised at all times.**

10.5 Where appropriate visitors will be expected to confirm that they have an appropriate DBS and will be asked to show photo ID on arrival. The Academy will keep a record of all visitors. Staff are expected to challenge anyone on the premises who is not wearing an appropriate lanyard or identification badge. Visitors will be required to present valid photo identification. Details of the ID (e.g., name, organisation, ID type, and serial number) will be recorded in the visitor log for safeguarding and security purposes. Where appropriate, a copy of the ID may be taken and stored securely in accordance with data protection legislation and will be retained only for as long as necessary to ensure site safety and compliance. In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance, all staff have a duty to remain vigilant regarding the identity and purpose of anyone on site. Staff should ensure that visitors are supervised as appropriate, and any concerns about a visitor's behaviour, credentials, or purpose should be reported immediately to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or a member of the **safeguarding team**.

10.6 Visitors will be expected to understand that the Academy promotes British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Visitors are required to uphold these during their visit.

10.7 Where material will be presented to students, the Academy will request a copy of the material to be used to assess its content and relevance to the age group.

10.8 If during the visit the supervising member of staff deems the visitor or the content being delivered to be inappropriate, they will stop the visitor and discuss an alternative approach.

11. Managing allegations against staff and volunteers

11.1 The Academy aims to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the wellbeing and very best outcomes for the children. The Academy recognises that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.

11.2 The Academy will always ensure that the procedures outlined in the local authority arrangements for managing allegations and Part 4 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', DfE are adhered to and where appropriate, the Academy will seek advice from the LADO. All concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the Academy (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) will be dealt with promptly and appropriately.

11.3 Please see the table below re. who to report an allegation to depending on the role of person about whom the allegation is about:

Role of individual about whom allegation has been raised:	**Who to report the allegation to:**
Member of staff	Headteacher
Headteacher	CEO

Allegations about a supply teacher or contractor should be reported to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will notify the employer so that any patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

11.4 **A low-level concern** is any concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a nagging doubt. An adult working in or on behalf of the Academy may have acted in a way that does not meet the expectation in the staff code of conduct, including conduct outside of Academy

and does not meet the allegations criteria or is not considered serious enough to refer to the LADO. Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum; examples could include, but are not limited to:

- Being over friendly with children

- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Using inappropriate language

11.5 **Organisation or individuals using Academy premises** - Academies may receive an allegation relating to an incident which happened when an individual or organisation was using their Academy premises for the purposes of running activities for children. We ensure appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place, including liaising with LADO.

12. Relevant Statutory Framework

12.1 **The Human Rights Act 1998**

Safeguarding policy and practice draw upon fundamental tenants of the Human Rights Act 1998:

The Human Rights Act 1998 sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to and contains the Articles and protocols of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) (the Convention) that are deemed to apply in the UK. It compels public organisations to respect and protect an individual's human rights when they make individual decisions about them. Under the HRA, it is unlawful for schools and colleges to act in a way that is incompatible with the Convention. The specific convention rights applying to schools and colleges are:

- Article 3: the right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment (an absolute right)
- Article 8: the right to respect for private and family life (a qualified right) includes a duty to protect individuals' physical and psychological integrity
- Article 14: requires that all of the rights and freedoms set out in the Act must be protected and applied without discrimination, and
- Protocol 1, Article 2: protects the right to education.

Being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of these rights, depending on the nature of the conduct and the circumstances.

12.2 **Equality Act 2010**

This policy has been devised in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Schools and colleges have obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

According to the Equality Act, schools and colleges must not unlawfully discriminate against students because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics). Whilst all of the above protections are important, in the context of safeguarding, this guidance, and the legal duties placed on schools and colleges in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, governing bodies and proprietors should carefully consider how they are supporting their students and students with regard to particular protected characteristics - including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race. Provisions within the Equality Act allow schools and colleges to take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with particular disadvantages affecting students with a particular protected characteristic in order to meet their specific need, this includes a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and young people. An Academy or college, could, for example, consider taking positive action to support girls if there was evidence they were being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment.

12.3 **The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED**)

Compliance with the PSED is a legal requirement for state-funded schools and colleges. The PSED places a general duty on schools and colleges to have, in the exercise of their functions, due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation (and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act), to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not. The duty applies to all protected characteristics and means that whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, specific consideration must be given to the equality implications of these such as, for example, the need to eliminate unlawful behaviours that relate to them such as sexual violence and sexual harassment, misogyny/misandry and racism. This is one reason why good record-keeping and monitoring of all forms of abuse and harassment is essential. The PSED helps schools and colleges (which are subject to it) to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve student outcomes. Some students may be more at risk of harm from specific issues such as sexual violence, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or racial discrimination.

Such concerns will differ between education settings, but it is important schools and colleges are conscious of disproportionate vulnerabilities and integrate this into their safeguarding policies and procedures.

12.4 Statutory framework

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (updated DfE 2026);
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2026);
- Local Safeguarding procedures;
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (DfE March 2015);
- Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (DfE July 2018);
- The Prevent Duty guidance: Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales (DfE 2023);
- Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – procedural information (Home Office October 2015).
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010.
- Behaviour in schools Advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE 2022)
- Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges (DfE 2023)
- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE 2014)
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (DfE 2015)
- Working together to improve school attendance - Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (DfE 2024)
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (updated March 2024)
- Searching, screening and confiscation – Advice for School (DfE 2022)
- Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges – Guidance (DfE 2026).

Appendices

Appendix A: Safeguarding incident cause for concern recording sheet

MUST BE PRINTED ON BLUE PAPER

Once completed this form must be passed to the designated person with responsibility for child protection or the Headteacher. The completed form must be scanned into CPOMS.

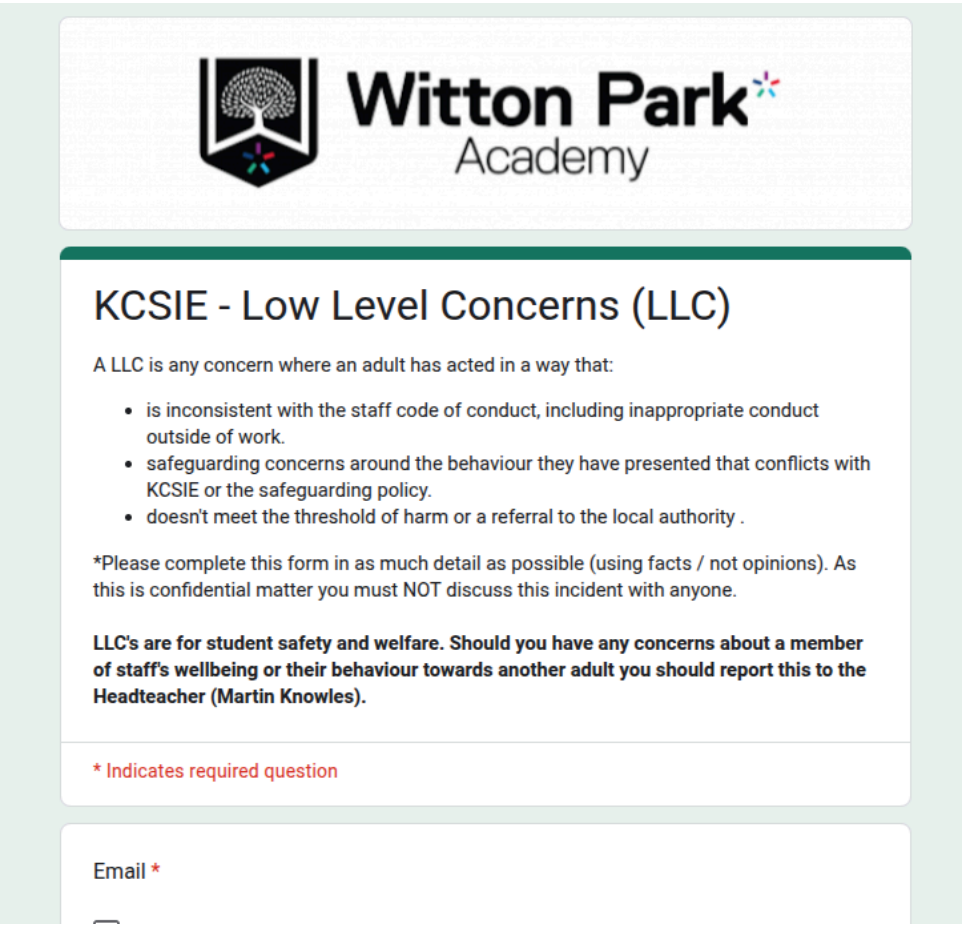
Full name of young person:	
Date of birth:	
Year and tutor group:	
Home address:	
Date of incident (day/month/year):	
Time of incident (24-hour clock):	
Location of incident:	
Observed by (full name and position):	
Detailed observation:	
Concerns:	
Have you spoken to the young person?	

What was said (please record in the young person's own words)?	
Have you spoken to parents / carers?	
What was said (include full name of parent/carer spoken to)?	
Referred to:	
Your name:	
Your position:	
Signed:	
Date and time of record:	

Appendix B: Low Level Concerns recording document

The link to the document can be found here: Low Level Concerns link

This is how the form appears:



Are you completing this form by yourself or with someone else?

- ◯ By myself
- ◯ with another person (please state below)

Name - please include your role e.g. Stacey O'Connor (DH / DSL) *

Your answer

State the date the incident occurred or concern was raised? *

Date

dd/mm/yyyy

Name of the individual / member of staff who the concerns is about. Please add any useful information you have e.g. department based in, temporary or part-time (not in Fridays) *

Your answer

Please write the concerns being raised (be specific in as much detail as *

Please write the concerns being raised (be specific in as much detail as possible). you should include: *
-Date / dates and time e.g. 12/09/25 at 11:05am
-Location e.g. The coridoor in Maths leading to Canteen
-What happened? (in timeline order)
-Any witnesses (students and staff)

Your answer

Confidentiality - I understand this incident should not be discussed with anyone and tick below to agree to this.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

Send me a copy of my responses.

Submit

Clear form

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

Appendix C: Safeguarding posters / team

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

Meet The Witton Park Academy Safeguarding Team



Mr Knowles
Headteacher
Mknowles@witton.atctrust.org.uk



Mrs Sidebottom
Senior Deputy Headteacher
Jsidebottom@witton.atctrust.org.uk



Miss Milburn
Senior Assistant Headteacher
DSL
Jmilburn@witton.atctrust.org.uk



Miss Anderson
Senior Assistant Headteacher
DDSL
Rbuckley-anderson@witton.atctrust.org.uk



Mrs Marks
Child Protection Officer
DDSL
Smarks@witton.atctrust.org.uk



Miss Dagger
Child Protection Officer
DDSL
Mdagger@witton.atctrust.org.uk

If you have any concerns about the welfare of any child, please contact the **Designated Safeguarding Lead** (DSL) or DDSL immediately in person.

LADO - LADO@blackburn.gov.uk or 01254 585 184