



L.E.A.D. Academy Trust

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**L.E.A.D. Teaching School
Hub/L.E.A.D. Professional
Development**

**SAFEGUARDING AND
CHILD PROTECTION
POLICY**

Policy/Procedure management log

Document name	Safeguarding and Child Protection
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Introduction

L.E.A.D. Academy Trust fully recognises its moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. The Trust endeavours to provide a safe and welcoming environment in all its academies, where children are respected and valued.

Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 and the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 require proprietors of independent schools (including academies and city technology colleges) to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. In line with this requirement, L.E.A.D. Academy Trust has systems in place which are designed to:

- Prevent unsuitable people working, or coming into contact, with children within its academies.
- Promote safe practice and challenge poor or unsafe practice.
- Identify children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and take appropriate action at the earliest opportunity, with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and at school.
- Identify children who may be susceptible to messages of violence and radicalisation and take appropriate action to ensure early intervention to challenge extreme ideologies.
- Contribute to effective partnership working between all those involved with providing services for children.

There are three main elements to the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy:

- Prevention – a commitment to early help, identification of unmet needs and vulnerabilities, and partnerships with agencies to promote the welfare of children and keep children safe.
- Protection - all staff and volunteers are trained to recognise and respond to abuse, neglect and exploitation and are expected to be vigilant and act quickly when they suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, harm (in line with local safeguarding partnership procedures).
- Support – recognition of the sensitivity and complex nature of safeguarding and child protection, ensuring that children, staff, and families are supported appropriately.

Aims

- To ensure that all practices of each academy, L.E.A.D. services and its stakeholders contribute towards the safeguarding and promoting of the welfare of all young people – child's welfare is of paramount importance.
- To emphasise how safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all young people is the primary responsibility of all staff, governors, and volunteers.

- To detail the procedures to follow to ensure the safe recruitment of staff, governors, and volunteers to an academy.
- To outline the safe working practices that all staff, governors, and volunteers should undertake when working with young people.
- To communicate clear procedures for identifying, reporting, and recording suspected cases of abuse, extremism, and radicalisation.
- To support the mission, vision and values of the Trust and its member academies.

Who is responsible for the policy?

- The Trust has overall responsibility for the development and effective operation of this policy. The Trust has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy to Director of the L.E.A.D. Professional Development and the L.E.A.D. Professional Development Trust Services Board.
- The AGB and senior leadership team at each Trust academy have specific responsibilities to ensure the fair application of this policy and all are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.
- This policy must be implemented alongside the procedural guidance set out by the local authority in which the academy or school being served is located.

The Trust's commitment

- Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. Hub staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children, and to prevent concerns from escalating.
- The Trust is committed to providing safe, caring, and welcoming environments where every child is able to reach their full potential free from harm, abuse, exploitation and discrimination. All staff and volunteers are expected to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities effectively and recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, peer support and clear lines of communication with trusted adults helps all children, especially those at risk of or suffering abuse, to thrive.
- L.E.A.D. Professional Development will be alert to the signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation and radicalisation and follow procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection, and justice.
- L.E.A.D. Professional Development will work with social care, the police, health services and other services (such as Channel co-ordinators/police practitioners where appropriate) to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

This policy **should** be read alongside:

- statutory guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#), and
- departmental advice - [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners](#)

INTRODUCTION

Policy statement and principles

The vision for L.E.A.D. Professional Development is

“Working in partnership, achieving the highest outcomes for all”:

In a world where education is constantly evolving, the requirement for research-informed, actively inclusive high-quality professional development at every stage of career is paramount. L.E.A.D. Professional Development is proud to offer this through being an ambitious, values driven, partnership-centred organisation. Comprising of a DfE accredited English Hub, DfE Teaching School Hub and a wider offer of CPD services, L.E.A.D. Professional Development provides a universal offer which responds to both national priorities and the local context. We are committed to working equitably with professional partners across all types of settings to inspire, train, develop, and retain a workforce that enhances the life chances, aspirations, and outcomes of all individuals.

Our principles and behaviours

- ***Commitment to the pupils in Lincolnshire and to developing the highest quality teaching.***
- ***Value the work of others, readily engaging with colleagues to harness and maximise the collective impact upon pupils, teachers and leaders.***
- ***Determination to reduce obstacles and to overcome challenging, adverse or uncertain circumstances.***
- ***Knowing ourselves and each other in order to reflect and improve.***
- ***Acting with honesty, transparency and mutual trust, remaining focused on the interests of pupils in Lincolnshire.***
- ***Respecting the rights, views, beliefs and faiths of pupils, colleagues and partners.***
- ***Determination to achieve excellence in every aspect of our work, deploying creative, problem-solving approaches.***

Safeguarding at L.E.A.D Professional Development Lincolnshire

‘Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. ‘Children’ includes everyone under the age of 18. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.’ KCSIE 2025

Key Persons Responsible for Safeguarding at the L.E.A.D. Professional Development

DSLs – Amanda Griffiths, Colette Duggan, Becky Hyder 01522 214459

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals in our academy make sure their approach is child centred. This means that we consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. Through our day-to-day contact with children and direct work with families, staff take notice of indicators of possible abuse or neglect and exploitation and refer them to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub where the school of concern is situated. This will predominantly be Lincolnshire. We recognise that we form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This responsibility also means that we are aware of the behaviour of staff in the academy or school being visited; we maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** where safeguarding is concerned.

In our L.E.A.D. Professional Development, we ensure that:

- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity or marriage, are treated equally and have equal rights to protection.
- All staff or contracted workers act on concerns or disclosures that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- Children, staff, facilitators and contracted personnel involved in safeguarding issues receive appropriate support.
- Staff adhere to the Code of Conduct and understand what to do in the event of any allegations against any adult working in the setting.
- All staff are aware that abuse, neglect and exploitation and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label; they recognise that, in most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.
- Adults understand that children's poor behaviour may be a sign they are suffering harm or that they have been traumatised by abuse.

This policy is available on our website and printed copies of this document are available upon request. We inform all parties contracted to work with the Hub in relation to this policy.

The process followed by L.E.A.D. Professional Development in relation to any Safeguarding concerns can be found on the following page.

Action to be taken by L.E.A.D. Professional Development Employees or anyone contracted on their behalf

Scenario	Action 1 For the Practitioner/Person Reporting the Concern	Action 2 the Practitioner/Person Reporting the Concern	Action for the Deputy/ Director
CHILD			
Concern about a child in line with the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education Policy	Go to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the School immediately and report the concern in full Call L.E.A.D. Professional Development as soon as this has been reported to the DSL to share that this has taken place.	Record the Safeguarding concern in full and email this to the Director and Deputy Director of the TS Hub the same day as the concern occurred amanda@leadtshub.co.uk colette@leadtshub.co.uk	-Phone call to the school within 24 hours of the incident to confirm the action taken by the school -Email sent to the setting with the detail of the discussion and follow up actions, asking for a confirmation email that all has been actioned. -This is kept on file at L.E.A.D. Professional Development in line with GDPR Policy
	If there is no DSL immediately contact: The Multi Academy Trusts Central Team DSL Members Or The Safeguarding Desk: 01522 782111 <i>Note: If the schools is not in Lincolnshire, please call Amanda Griffiths to gain contacts for the most local safeguarding arrangements.</i>		
ADULT			
If there is a concern or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors) harming or posing a risk of harm to children in line with the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education Policy	- This should be referred immediately to the headteacher or principal - Where there is a concern/allegation about the headteacher or principal, this should be referred immediately to the chair of governors, chair of the management committee or proprietor of an independent school - If the concern/allegation about the headteacher, where the headteacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school, or a situation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the headteacher, this should be reported directly to the local authority designated officer(s) (LADOs). - LADO Lincolnshire: 01522 554674 <i>Note: If the schools is not in Lincolnshire, please call Amanda Griffiths to gain contacts for the most local safeguarding arrangements.</i>	Record the Safeguarding concern in full and email this to the Director and Deputy Director of the TS Hub the same day as the concern occurred amanda@leadtshub.co.uk colette@leadtshub.co.uk	-Phone call to the school within 24 hours of the incident to confirm the action taken by the school -Email sent to the setting with the detail of the discussion and follow up actions, asking for a confirmation email that all has been actioned. -This is kept on file at L.E.A.D. Professional Development in line with GDPR Policy

This Child Protection Policy will be reviewed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Amanda Griffiths or in their absence the Deputy DSL, on a regular basis to ensure it remains current and incorporates all revisions made to local or national safeguarding guidance. This policy will be fully reviewed, as a minimum, once a year during the autumn term, and will be provided to the Teaching School Governing Body for approval and sign off at the first autumn term meeting.

Key Staff	
Full name:	L.E.A.D. Professional Development
Contact details	T. 01522 214459 E. admin@leadtshub.co.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Amanda Griffiths E. amanda@leadtshub.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Colette Duggan E. colette@leadtshub.co.uk
Designated Prevent Lead	Amanda Griffiths
Trust central lead for safeguarding	Rebecca Hyder E. rebeccaHyder@leadacademytrust.co.uk

Key External Contacts	
Police	999
Local authority children's social care	https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/safeguarding • Children's safeguarding - 01522 782111 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm) • Adults safeguarding - 01522 782155 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm) • or 01522 782333 (outside office hours)
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	https://www.lincolnshirescp.org.uk/lscp-safeguarding/report-concern-staff-member-volunteer T: 01522 554674 E: Referral Form: https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/xfp/form/696
Channel/Prevent lead	https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/crime-prevention/preventing-extremism T: For advice, call 101 and ask for the Prevent team. For immediate threats, such as a suspicious package or vehicle, always call 999. E: prevent@lincolnshire.gov.uk
Local children's centre	Witham St Hughs Academy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We will endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We will be alert to the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection, and justice at the earliest opportunity.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, contracted workers, and governors of L.E.A.D. Professional Development and are consistent with those of Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Safeguarding children means: The actions we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm are everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

NB Definition: Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The L.E.A.D. Professional Development's approach to safeguarding:

- We understand the importance every visitor, member of staff or contracted worker has through their contact with children, and the particular importance of the roles and relationships they have which places them in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children and promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.
- L.E.A.D. Professional Development has a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- **Any staff member or contracted member** who has **any** concerns about a child's welfare should follow the processes set out in this child protection policy and raise concerns with the designated safeguarding lead or deputy without delay.

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. It also relates to the broader aspects of care and education including:

- Children's health and safety and emotional well-being, and their mental and physical health or development.
- Meeting the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Ensuring reasonable adjustments are provided as informed by the Equality Act for children and young people with disabilities.
- The use of reasonable force.
- Meeting the needs of children with medical conditions.
- Providing first aid.
- Educational visits and off-site education.
- Intimate care and emotional wellbeing.
- On-line safety and associated issues including filtering and monitoring in accordance with DfE monitoring standards.
- Appropriate arrangements to ensure Hub security, taking into account the local context.
- Keeping children safe from risks, harm, exploitation and sexual violence and sexual harassment between children: KCSiE 2025.

Safeguarding can involve a range of potential issues such as:

- Neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse.
- Contextualised abuse, also known as extra-familial abuse.
- Bullying, including online bullying (by text message, on social networking sites), prejudice-based bullying, and being aware of the ease of access to mobile phone networks.
- All aspects of online safety (including AI), including appropriate filtering and monitoring on Hub devices and Hub networks for home use.
- **Going frequently missing and when ‘absent from education’ going ‘missing from care or home’ and the risks this poses on repeat occasions and for prolonged periods.**
- Domestic abuse including teenage relationship abuse.
- Racist, disability-based, homophobic, bi-phobic, or transphobic abuse.
- Gender based violence/violence against women and girls.
- Risk of extremist behaviour and/or radicalisation and susceptibility to being at risk of being drawn into terrorism.
- Child exploitation, human trafficking, modern slavery, sexual or criminal exploitation.
- Being a young carer.
- Mental health needs which have an effect on Hub attendance and progress.
- Special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)).
- Being privately fostered.
- Returning home to their family from care.
- **A family member in prison or being affected by parental offending.**
- Child-on-Child Abuse (broadened by KCSiE 2023 to include children abusing other children, other varying form of bullying including online and sexually harmful behaviour, sexual violence, and sexual harassment (further defined in KCSiE Part Five).
- Harm outside the home - extra familial harm.
- The impact of new technologies, including ‘sexting’, ‘sextortion’ and accessing pornography.
- Issues which may be specific to a local area or population, showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang activity or involvement and associations with organised crime groups or county lines.
- Possession of a knife and or involved in knife crime, youth violence, criminal child exploitation (CCE).
- Family circumstances which present challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse/harm.
- Risk of or suffering from serious violence and violent crime.
- **Persistent absence from education, including persistent absence for part of the school day.**
- **Risk of suspension or permanent exclusion**
- Particular issues affecting children including domestic abuse and violence, female genital mutilation (FGM), and honour-based abuse.
- Being subject to any conduct where the purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats, or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial ‘marriages’ as well as legal marriages (Law change on Forced Marriage, February 2023).
- ‘Upskirting’- The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as Up-skirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. Upskirting is a criminal offence and reportable by all teachers (KCSiE Annex A).

External and extra-familial harm

All staff or contracted workers should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the academy or school and/or can occur between children outside of a school environment.

All our staff or contracted workers have received information and training regarding the risks that can take place outside a child's family. This is known as extra-familial harm and can take a variety of different forms. Children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, sexual abuse, serious youth violence and county lines.

Online risks

At L.E.A.D. Professional Development, we are aware that technology offers many opportunities but is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. Children can also abuse their peers 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.

We are also aware of the risks to children of misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.

All our staff and contracted workers have an understanding of the expectations applicable to their roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring of ICT systems and regular monitoring of our L.E.A.D. Professional Development's equipment and networks.

The approach to online safety, including appropriate filtering and monitoring on devices and networks is reflected in this Child Protection Policy, including awareness of the ease of access to mobile phone networks (see Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 Paragraph 137-8).

Harassment and Abuse

All forms of abuse or harassment will be reported in accordance with national safeguarding guidance, and we will take a 'zero tolerance' approach (meaning appropriate and proportionate action will be taken) to harassment and abuse as informed in KCSiE.

At L.E.A.D. Professional Development, should an incident occur, or a disclosure be made by a child, staff or contracted workers will always reassure the child (victim) that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe, but we recognise that not every victim will view themselves as such. We will also be mindful of the use of other terminology such as '**alleged perpetrator(s)**' or '**perpetrator(s)**' as in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well.

Indicators of abuse and neglect

The four categories of child abuse are as follows:

- 1. Physical Abuse**
- 2. Emotional Abuse**
- 3. Sexual Abuse**
- 4. Neglect**

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting

by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

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

Some of the following signs may be indicators of physical abuse:

- Children with frequent injuries
- Children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones; and
- Children with unexplained
 - Bruises or cuts
 - Burns or scalds; or
 - Bite marks.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK.

FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old; however, it is believed that the majority of cases happen between the ages of 5 and 8.

Risk factors for FGM include:

- low level of integration into UK society
- mother or a sister who has undergone FGM
- girls who are withdrawn from PSHE
- visiting female elder from the country of origin
- being taken on a long holiday to the country of origin
- talk about a 'special' procedure to become a woman

Symptoms of FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out-of-school to visit an 'at-risk' country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM. Staff should not assume that FGM only happens outside the UK.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectation being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as over-protection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong
- Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder'
- Parents or carers blaming their problems on their child; and
- Parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as child-on-child abuse) in education, and **all** staff should be aware of it and of the academy policy and procedures for dealing with it.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual abuse:

- Children who display knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age.
- Children who use sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you would not expect them to have.
- Children who ask others to behave sexually or play sexual games; and
- Children with physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital or anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. The definition of child sexual exploitation is as follows:

'Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.'

Children rarely self-report child sexual exploitation so it is important that practitioners are aware of potential indicators of risk, including:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc without plausible explanation.
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks.
- Exclusion or unexplained absences.
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late.
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls.
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol.
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections.
- Evidence /suspicions of physical or sexual assault.
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups.
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers).
- Frequenting areas known for sex work.
- Concerning use of internet or other social media.
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

Potential vulnerabilities:

Although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited:

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse.
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic abuse or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example).

- Recent bereavement or loss.
- Social isolation or social difficulties.
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality.
- Economic vulnerability.
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status.
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited.
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work.
- Having a physical or learning disability.
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories).
- Sexual identity.

Staff should also remain open to the fact that child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these risk indicators being obviously present. Remember children can be exploited in a number of ways and it can take many forms, including sexual and criminal exploitation. Child exploitation is complex and rarely presents in isolation of other needs and risks of harm (although this may not always be the case).

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

Some of the following signs may be indicators of neglect:

- Children who are living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe
- Children who are left hungry or dirty
- Children who are left without adequate clothing, e.g., not having a winter coat
- Children who are living in dangerous conditions, i.e., around drugs, alcohol or violence
- Children who are often angry, aggressive or self-harm
- Children who fail to receive basic health care; and
- Parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or are injured

Domestic Abuse:

In April 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent and introduced a statutory definition for the first time. Definition: The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (Part 1) defines domestic abuse as any of the following behaviours, either as a pattern of behaviour, or as a single incident, between two people over the age of 16, who are 'personally connected' to each other:

- (a) physical or sexual abuse;
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour;
- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour;
- (d) economic abuse (adverse effect on the victim to acquire, use or maintain money or other property; or obtain goods or services); and
- (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse.

People are 'personally connected' when they are, or have been, married to each other or civil partners; or have agreed to marry or become civil partners. If the two people have been in an intimate relationship with each other, have shared parental responsibility for the same child, or they are relatives.

The definition of Domestic Abuse applies to children if they see or hear or experience the effects of the abuse; and they are related to the abusive person. (The definition can be found here: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/part/1/enacted>)

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

Operation Encompass' aim is to ensure that schools have timely information about all police attended incidents of domestic violence; support school staff to understand how to support the children, and ensure the children receive the support they need. The National Domestic Abuse helpline can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247.

Safeguarding issues: All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk.

Bullying: On and offline bullying including prejudice-based and cyberbullying is also abusive behaviour which will include at least one, if not two, three or all four, of the defined categories of abuse. Further information can be found in the academy behaviour and anti-bullying policy.

Children Missing Education: Knowing where children are during academy hours is an extremely important aspect of safeguarding. Missing school can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns about other safeguarding issues, including the criminal exploitation of children. This aspect is the responsibility of the School/ Academy being visited. If any information is presented in relation to a child missing in education whilst visiting the school, then this must be reported to the DSL immediately.

The Prevent Duty and counter extremism

As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, L.E.A.D. Professional Development has a duty to 'have due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism'. This has become known as the 'Prevent Duty'.

Where our staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalised, they should discuss this with the DSL. The DSL has received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism and is able to support staff with any concerns they may have.

Recognising Extremism

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- 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.
- Evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature.
- Advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups, out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent).
- Secretive behaviour.
- Online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles.
- Intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality.

- Graffiti, artwork or writing that displays extremist themes.
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others.
- Verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views.
- Advocating violence towards others.

Privately Fostered Children

Definition of private fostering:

A private fostering arrangement is a private arrangement for a child under the age of 16 (or 18 if they are disabled) to be cared for by someone who is not a parent or close relative for more than 28 days. The Local Authority is not involved in placing the child or young person in this private arrangement.

A child or young person is privately fostered if they are living with extended family members such as cousins, great aunts, great uncles or a family friend. They may be living outside of their parents' care due to;

- Child or young person being asked to leave the family home.
- Parent being in prison / hospital / homeless.
- avoiding becoming a looked after child.
- Parent has leaving the local area and child remaining to complete academic studies.
- Child leaving the family home due to family dysfunction or because they have been living with parents who have substance misuse problems or other difficulties.
- Parent deciding to place child with extended family member.
- Child being placed with extended family for religious or economic reasons.

Responsibilities

Private foster carers are responsible for providing the day-to-day care of the child in a way which will promote and safeguard the child's welfare. However, the overarching responsibility remains with the person who has parental responsibility for the child.

The Local Authority has legal duties towards private fostered children and must satisfy itself that the welfare of children who are, or will be, privately fostered within their area ensures they are satisfactorily safeguarded.

If L.E.A.D. Professional Development becomes aware of a child or young person living in a private fostering arrangement the DSL of the School and/or Children's Social Care must be notified within one working day.

A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and stepparents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.

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

We have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although we have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the academy. However, it should be clear to our academy who has parental responsibility.

Our L.E.A.D. Professional Development staff should notify the DSL in the setting when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The DSL will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The school or Academy itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements within one working day.

Online Safety and Cyber Security (including remote/blended learning)

L.E.A.D. Professional Development is aware of online safety and cyber security including the four areas of risk:

Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.

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. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (

<https://apwg.org/>).

At L.E.A.D. Professional Development the laptops used are protected from inappropriate content by the Trusts filtering and monitoring systems.

All our staff are aware that 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 their peers 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.

Cyber Security is a growing safeguarding concern, and we recognise the need to have procedures to ensure networks, data and systems are protected against cyber threats and help keep staff and children safe, particularly when using remote learning platforms and remote teaching platforms / delivery styles. We will use the recommended national (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/generative-artificial-intelligence-in-education/generative-artificial-intelligence-ai-in-education>) and local guidelines on staff and children who may need to work remotely.

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Sexually coerced extortion or 'sextortion' is a type of blackmail where someone tries to use intimate, naked or sexual photos or videos of children to make them do things they don't want to do. Sometimes, these photos or videos are taken without the children's knowledge, and the person blackmailing uses them to force them to pay money or do something against their will. Criminals often target children through social media platforms, webcam/live streaming sites or websites related to pornography. They might pretend to be someone else online and become friends with children. Later, they might threaten to share pictures or videos with their family and friends.

Listening to Children

The L.E.A.D. Professional Development ethos demonstrates that the effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by putting children at the centre of a system where we listen and hear what they say. Every individual within L.E.A.D. Professional Development will play their part informing the schools DSL of concerns immediately.

Children with a social worker

At L.E.A.D. Professional Development, we recognise that when a child has a social worker, it is an indicator that the child is more at risk than most children. This may mean that they are more vulnerable to further harm, as well as facing educational barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and poor mental health. We take these needs into account when working in schools, working hard to inform the school of any Safeguarding concerns observed or raised.

Child on Child abuse

L.E.A.D. Professional Development takes a **zero-tolerance** approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse including sexual violence, sexual harassment (SVSH) and harmful sexual behaviour (HSB). We believe that child-on-child abuse is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. It will **never** be passed off as “banter,” “just having a laugh,” “a part of growing up” or “boys being boys.” We will **respond to all signs, reports, and concerns** of child-on-child abuse, including those that have happened outside of the premises, and/or online. We recognise that children are vulnerable to and capable of abusing their peers, we take such abuse as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult. We recognise 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. We acknowledge that children who have allegedly abused their peers or displayed harmful sexual behaviour are themselves vulnerable. We are committed to a whole school approach to ensure the prevention, early identification, and appropriate management of child-on-child abuse within our academy and beyond.

In cases where child-on-child abuse is suspected or identified we will follow the settings procedures and the procedure outlined on p 7, taking a contextual, trauma-informed, and strengths-based approach to support all children who have been affected by the situation including the reporting and reported child.

Child-on-child abuse may include, but is not limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying).
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children, (sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’).
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse).
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (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.
- 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 or semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery).
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm.

- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse, or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element). This may also be an indicator of wider exploitation such as Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and/or Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and/or County Lines.

Safer Recruitment

- L.E.A.D. Professional Development Director, L.E.A.D. Professional Development governing body and L.E.A.D. Academy Trust will ensure that all safer working practices and recruitment procedures are followed in accordance with the guidance set out in KCSiE 2025 Part Three and our academy Safer Recruitment policy.
- Hub leaders, staff and members of the Trust will be appropriately trained in safer working practices and access the safer recruitment training advised by the Trust. This will include as a minimum the Director, Deputy Director and Operations Manager.
- Statutory pre-employment checks and references from previous employers are an essential part of the recruitment process. We will ensure we adopt the appropriate procedures to carry out the checks required and where any concerns arise, we will seek advice and act accordingly. The academy has in place recruitment, selection, and vetting procedures in accordance with KCSiE 2025 Part Three, and maintains a Single Central Record (SCR), which is reviewed regularly and updated in accordance with KCSiE 2025 Part Three paragraphs 206 to 351.
- Staff will have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and will be aware of the Trust Code of Conduct Policy, which includes contact between staff and children outside the work context. Concerns regarding low-level concerns are included in our Code of Conduct and Allegations Management policy in line with KCSiE Part Four Section two. Staff can access a copy of this through their induction and the Operations Manager of the Hub.
- In the event of any complaint or allegation against a member of staff, the Director will be notified immediately. If it relates to the Director or where there is a conflict of interest in reporting to the Director, the chair of governors / Trust safeguarding team (Neil Spencelayh, Helen Tunney, Rebecca Hyder) must be informed without delay. We will respond to all allegations robustly and appropriately in collaboration with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Trust HR Business Partner.
- Staff may find some of the issues relating to child protection and the broader areas of safeguarding upsetting and may need support which should be provided by the academy and the Trust's human resources (HR) team.
- Advice and support will be made available by the Safeguarding Children in Education Officer (SCiEO), LADO and Trust HR team.
- All new employees will be appropriately inducted to their role and a link to the [Induction Checklist for Safer Recruitment](#) can be accessed from HR's guidance section of the HR portal.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff and volunteers

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone in our L.E.A.D. Professional Development who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. All staff and contracted visitors consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of children.

All staff within our Hub are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns at the earliest opportunity and provide help to children to prevent concerns from escalating.

Safeguarding Training – staff and volunteers

All our staff are aware of systems within L.E.A.D. Professional Development which are explained to them as part of staff induction, including our child protection policy; the employee code of conduct and the role of the DSL and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.

Our Hub utilises an induction checklist when staff join the Hub or when they are contracted to work with the Hub which includes the matters identified above together with other policy and procedural information.

All our staff receive safeguarding and child protection training which is updated at least annually. In addition to this training all staff members receive child protection and safeguarding updates when required.

The CPD programme is reviewed to ensure that all the knowledge staff need is included and, perhaps more importantly, that they understand how it is to be implemented.

All our staff are aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 and understand the role they may have in these assessments.

All staff know what to do if a child is raising concerns or makes a disclosure of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation. Staff will maintain appropriate confidentiality whilst liaising with the DSL and children's social care. Staff or contracted workers will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a disclosure or allegation, recognising this may not be in the best interest of the child.

Staff responsibilities

All staff have a key role to play in identifying concerns and providing early help for children. All staff employed by the L.E.A.D. Professional Development will:

- Assess and manage risk appropriately and keep children safe.
- Access up to date and timely safeguarding training and maintaining a register or data base to evidence the training in line with DfE KCSiE 2025
- Staff will have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and will be aware of the Academy Code of Conduct, which includes contact between staff and children outside the work context. Concerns regarding low-level concerns are included in our Code of Conduct and Allegations Management policy in line with KCSiE Part Four Section two. Staff can access a copy of this through the LEAD Policies Shared Drive.
- Ensure safeguarding arrangements and procedures are effectively followed within the school being visited.
- Maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" with regards to safeguarding.
- Record their concerns if they are worried that a child is being abused and report these to the DSL as soon as practical that day. If the DSL is not immediately contactable, a Deputy DSL should be informed. Inform the L.E.A.D. Professional Development Director Immediately as per the grid on page 7.
- Be prepared to refer directly to social care, and the police if appropriate, if there is a risk of significant harm and the DSL or their Deputy is not available.
- Follow the allegations procedures if the disclosure is an allegation against a member of staff.
- Follow the procedures set out by the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Board (or the relevant local Safeguarding Board) and take account of guidance issued by the DfE KCSiE.
- Treat information with confidentiality but never promising to "keep a secret."
- Ensure they know who the DSL and Deputy DSLs are and know how to contact them.
- Have an awareness of the Child Protection systems and processes within the schools being visited.

Senior Leadership Team responsibilities:

- Ensure all L.E.A.D. Professional Development staff and contracted workers are alert to the definitions of abuse and indicators through access to regular training opportunities and updates.
- Carry out tasks delegated by the L.E.A.D. Professional Development's governing body/ Trust such as training of staff and volunteers, safer recruitment and maintaining of a single central register.

- Provide support and advice on all matters pertaining to safeguarding and child protection to all staff regardless of their position within the Hub.
- Treat any information shared by staff or children with respect and follow agreed policies and procedures.
- Ensure that allegations or concerns against staff including low-level concerns are dealt with in accordance with guidance from Department for Education (DfE KCSiE Part Four 'Allegations made against/Concerns raised in relation teachers including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers, and contractors in Sections One and Two).

Teachers and Leaders– Professional Duty

The Teachers Standards 2012 (updated 13 December 2021) remind us that teachers, newly qualified teachers and leaders should safeguard children and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of our professional duties.

The Children and Social Work Act of 2017, places responsibilities for Designated Teacher to have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship, or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

We have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Amanda Griffiths who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding children and child protection and has received appropriate training and support for this role. Amanda Griffiths is the L.E.A.D. Professional Development Director and their responsibilities are explicit in their job description. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to work with school to follow up on concerns raised and seek assurance that the school has followed Safeguarding responsibilities to report or resolve the concerns.

DSL training requirements

- Undertake Formal Designated Safeguarding Lead training every two years, informal training and updating of knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually.
- Be responsible for their own training and obtain access to resources or any relevant refresher training.
- Be responsible for ensuring all other staff with designated safeguarding responsibilities access up to date and timely safeguarding training and maintaining a register or data base to evidence the training.

Availability

- During term time the DSL will always be available (during working hours) for staff in the host school/academy, or the visiting specialist to discuss any safeguarding concerns. In the absence of the DSL (or any Deputy), a member of the senior leadership team will be nominated to provide cover. Appropriate arrangements will also need to be in place all year round for any out of hours' activities in line with the guidance contained in DfE KCSiE 2025 Part Two and Annex C.

Staff Employed or Contracted by the L.E.A.D. Professional Development

- In working with schools, the L.E.A.D. Professional Development and English Hub deploys specialists who fall under three categories.

1: Those who are employed by L.E.A.D. Academy Trust and are on the Trust payroll

2: Those who are contracted to work with the L.E.A.D. Professional Development/English Hub whilst being employed by a School or University.

3: Those who are independently employed and therefore not employed by either L.E.A.D. Academy Trust or a School/University setting.

An overview of the checks and responsibilities undertaken by each party can be seen in **Appendix A at the end of this policy.**

- In cases where specialists are working with the L.E.A.D. Professional Development or English Hub, whilst being employed by a school setting, the L.E.A.D. Professional Development will request and seek assurance from their employer via a 'letter of comfort.' This will be shared with the school receiving the support prior to the specialist beginning the support.
- Specialists who are independently employed and deployed by the L.E.A.D. Professional Development or English Hub will be asked to present documents to demonstrate an enhanced DBS is obtained. Additional checks to seek assurance in relation to Safeguarding will also be conducted. This is outlined in **Appendix A.**
- All employed staff will have an enhanced DBS check and regular/compliant levels of Safeguarding Training.
- Prior to working with a school, Appendix A will be shared with the school receiving the support. Clarity around the type of specialist will be given to the school ahead of the support being provided.

Academy Governing Body and Trust

We recognise our Hub's Governing body and L.E.A.D. Academy Trust has a strategic leadership responsibility for our Hub's safeguarding arrangements and must ensure they comply with their duties under legislation and must have regard to KCSiE 2025, ensuring policies, procedures and training in L.E.A.D. Professional Development are effective and comply with the law at all times.

The Hub's governing body and L.E.A.D. Academy Trust will be collectively responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within the Hub's ethos and reflected in the Hub's day to day safeguarding practices by:

- Ensuring there is an individual member of the Hub governing body to take leadership responsibility for safeguarding and champion child protection issues.
- Ensuring that the Hub has effective policies and procedures in line with statutory guidance (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023) as well as with local safeguarding partnership guidance and monitoring the Hub's compliance with them.
- Ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are in place for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to promote a child's welfare.
- Recognising the importance of information sharing between agencies through the statutory guidance provided within KCSiE 2025 Annex C page 166 to 170 and paragraphs 56 to 57, 115 to 121, 375, to 390, 476, 540 and 543 and page 158, the additional clarification about GDPR and withholding information.
- Ensuring cooperation with the local authority and other safeguarding partners.
- Appointing a Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead from the leadership team to take lead responsibility for child protection/safeguarding and a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and that both are appropriately trained.
- Ensuring that all staff, contracted workers and governors read and fully understand at least KCSiE 2025 Part One and Annex A as a minimum and ensure that there are mechanisms in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as required within the guidance.
- All members of the Hubs governing body undertake safeguarding training to ensure they have the knowledge and information needed to equip them to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place are effective and support the delivery

of robust 'safeguarding arrangements and to act as the 'critical friend'. This training must focus on their strategic role and not on operational procedures.

- The Chair of Governors and named Safeguarding Governor accessing role specific training to enable them to comply and discharge their child protection/ safeguarding responsibilities including should any allegations be made against the Director.
- The Hubs Governing body collectively ensuring there is a training strategy in place for all staff, including the Director, so that child protection training is undertaken is refreshed in line with KCSiE 2025 and local safeguarding partnership guidance.
- Ensuring that staff undergo safeguarding child protection training at induction and that there are arrangements in place for staff to be regularly updated to ensure that safeguarding remains a priority.
- Ensuring that temporary staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the Hub's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities
- Ensuring there are procedures in place to manage allegations against staff and exercise disciplinary functions in respect of any complaint under KCSiE 2025 Part Four Section One.
- Ensuring that arrangements/procedures are in place to manage and provide clarity on the process for sharing 'low level' concerns, which should be referred to within the Hub's Staff Code of Conduct, (Allegations and concerns about a staff member that after initial consideration by the 'case manager' do not meet the criteria for a referral to LADO).
- Ensuring when making a referral to the LADO Service a LADO referral form is fully completed.
- Ensuring a response if there is an allegation against the Director by liaising with the LADO or other appropriate officers within the Trust DSL team.
- Being aware of the issues involving the complexity of serious violence and sexual violence and sexual harassment between children and ensuring the Hub has policies and procedures and staff are trained (including the DSL and Senior Leadership) to recognise and respond to incidents, have resources to manage actions and support for those involved.
- Being alert and responding to harmful online challenges and hoaxes, including providing information and advice to parents and carers and informing them from where to get help and support.
- Being alert to the growing concerns involving knife crime and ensuring the Hub works closely with the police and safeguarding partners to raise awareness of the impact of such crime and adopt proactive practice to address concerns locally and within the community.
- Ensuring appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect children online and children are taught about keeping safe online through the curriculum.
- Giving staff the opportunities to contribute and shape safeguarding arrangements and the child protection policy.
- Ensuring any safeguarding concerns involving outside organisations are addressed through our Hub safeguarding policies and procedures
- Preventing people who pose a risk of harm from working with children by adhering to statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children, making decisions about additional checks and ensuring volunteers are supervised as required.
- Ensuring at least one person on an interview panel has completed safer recruitment training.
- Informing any prospective candidates for employment that our Hub will carry out online /social media checks are completed (KCSiE 2025 Part Three Safer Recruitment).
- Recognising that certain children are more vulnerable than others, such as looked after children and children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Being open to accepting that child abuse and incidents can happen within the Hub and being available to act decisively upon them.

Children with Special Educational Needs

We recognise that children with special educational needs (SEND) and/or disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges on and offline. Children with SEN and/or disabilities are especially vulnerable when

identifying concerns due to their impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening.

All staff are aware that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation for children with SEND and that they may be more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children. They may not always show outward signs and may have communications barriers and difficulties in reporting challenges, especially involving exploitation or incidents involving child-on-child harm, abuse, or harassment and particularly where that harassment or harm is of a sexual nature. Staff's vigilance will be a supporting factor to keeping all children safe.

Our policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in this group of children which 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; and communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming their ability to disclose incidents or the risk of harm they feel subject to,
- addressing individual behaviour concerns and incidents considering the child's SEN and disabilities.

Identifying Concerns

All members of our staff, contracted workers and governors will know how to identify children who may be being harmed and then how to respond to a child who discloses abuse, or where others raise concerns about them. Our staff will be familiar with procedures to be followed.

At L.E.A.D. Professional Development we understand that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition, and that in most cases multiple issues will overlap with each other. Staff who regularly come into contact with children are aware of the DfE guidance [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#)

Our staff recognise the difference between concerns about a child and a child in immediate danger.

If staff have concerns about a child, they will need to decide what action to take. A discussion should take place with the DSL, to agree a course of action.

If a child is in immediate danger or risk of harm a referral will be made immediately to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and/or to the police/LADDO by the DSL or Senior Leader.

If a child chooses to tell a member of Hub staff or contracted worker about alleged abuse, there are a number of actions that staff will undertake to support the child:

- The key facts will be established in language that the child understands, and the child's words will be used in clarifying/expanding what has been said.
- No promises will be made to the child, e.g., to keep secrets.
- Staff will stay calm and be available to listen.
- Staff will actively listen with the utmost care to what the child is saying.
- Where questions are asked, this should be done without pressurising, and only using open questions.
- Leading questions will be avoided as much as possible.
- Questioning should not be extensive or repetitive.
- Staff will not / should not put words in the child's mouth but will subsequently note the main points carefully.
- The staff will keep a full written record duly signed and dated, including the time the conversation with the child took place, an outline what was said, comment on the child's body language etc.

- It is not appropriate for staff to make children write statements about abuse that may have happened to them or get them to sign the staff record.
- Staff will reassure the child and let them know that they were right to inform them and inform the child that this information will now have to be passed on.
- The DSL will be immediately informed unless the disclosure has been made to them.
- Information should be shared with children's social care without delay, either to the child's own social worker or to the MASH. Children's Social Care will liaise with the police where required, which will ensure an appropriate police officer response rather than a uniformed response.
- The Police would only therefore be contacted directly in an emergency or if a child is in immediate risk of harm, abuse, or danger.
- If unsure, the MASH has available a Consultation Phone Line during office hours where a conversation (without naming children) can be used to speak with a qualified social worker. No record of the conversation will be made it is purely an advice line.

Reporting Concerns

All staff and contracted workers are aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification so that support can be put in place. Staff and contracted workers are also aware of the specific safeguarding issues that indicate or inform of concerns or incidents linked to child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation. Staff know to report concerns directly to the DSL or a member of the senior leadership team (should the DSL not be available) and to email the L.E.A.D. Professional Development Director in a timely manner, for any children who may be in need of help or protection. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action will be taken by speaking to the DSL.

We recognise 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. Children may also feel embarrassed, humiliated, or could be being threatened not to tell, so not feel able to share what is happening to them. Alternatively, we recognise children may not want to make a disclosure or talk about what is happening due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child and agreeing a way forward to support the child and determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate good opportunities for communication.

All staff should **always** speak to the DSL, or deputy at the earliest opportunity where they have any concerns about a child and then log their concerns to the DSL and the L.E.A.D. Professional Development Director.

As a Hub we are aware that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, therefore all staff should always be vigilant and always raise any concerns with the DSL.

When adults in the Hub have a concern about a child or young person they should follow the guidance on page 7 of this document.

Records include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, clearly identifying who is recording the concern sent to the DSL and the L.E.A.D. Professional Development Director.

This will then be followed up by the L.E.A.D. Professional Development Director with the school.

If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the DSL (or deputy).

Staff should never attempt to carry out an investigation of suspected child abuse by interviewing the child or any others involved especially if a criminal act is thought to have occurred. The only people who should investigate child abuse and harm are Social Care, Police, or the NSPCC.

Our Hub also ensures that all staff are clear that whilst they should discuss and agree with the DSL any actions to be taken, they are able to escalate their concerns and contact MASH, or social care to seek support for the child if, despite the discussion with the DSL, their concerns remain. Staff are also informed of the Hub's whistle-blowing procedures and the contact details for the Local Authority LADO and NSPCC helpline.

At no time should an individual teacher/member of staff be asked to or consider taking photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child's person; this type of behaviour could lead to the staff member being taken into managing allegations procedures. The body maps should be used in accordance with recording guidance and to support clarity for example of areas of injury, marks and bruising and/or touching.

Any concerns should be reported and recorded without delay to the appropriate safeguarding services e.g., MASH or the child's social worker if already an open case to social care.

Our Hub will ensure all files are available for external scrutiny for example by a regulatory agency or because of a serious case review or audit.

Why recording is important:

Our staff will be encouraged to understand why it is important that recording is comprehensive and accurate and what the messages from serious case reviews are in terms of recording and sharing information. It is often when a chronology of information is pieced together that the level of concern escalates or the whole or wider picture becomes known.

We acknowledge without information being recorded it can be lost. This could be crucial information, the importance of which is not always necessarily apparent at the time. On occasions, this information could be crucial evidence to safeguard a child or be evidence in future criminal prosecutions.

Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential; however, a member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to children; children must not be given promises that any information about an allegation will not be shared.

Where there is a child protection concern it will be passed immediately to the DSL and/or to children's social care. When a child is in immediate danger children's social care/the police will be contacted.

The Director or DSL will disclose personal information about a child to other members of staff, including the level of involvement of other agencies, only on a 'need to know' basis.

Staff have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. The Data Protection Act 1998 should not be a barrier to sharing of information where failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm.

Information Sharing

Effective sharing of information between practitioners and local organisations and agencies is essential for early identification of need, assessment, and service provision to keep children safe. Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) now known as Rapid Reviews (RRs) have highlighted that missed opportunities to record and thereby understand the significance of sharing information in a timely manner can have severe consequences for the safety and welfare and well-being of children (Working Together to Safeguard Children December 2023).

- DfE KCSiE 2025 has several sections which provide clarity on information sharing processes and GDPR including within Annex C which makes clear the powers to hold and use information when promoting children's welfare.
- HM Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 Paragraph 23 to 27 and on pages 20 and 21.
- HM Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents, and carers (which has been updated to reflect the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018).
- Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Policy and Practice Guidance.

All Staff at L.E.A.D. Professional Development will have completed GDPR Information Sharing training.

LOW LEVEL CONCERNS ABOUT STAFF BEHAVIOUR

Allegations or concerns about an adult working in the Hub whether as a teacher, supply teacher, other staff, volunteers or contractors

At L.E.A.D. Professional Development we recognise the possibility that adults working in the Hub or in a school may harm children, including governors, volunteers, supply teachers and agency staff. Any concerns about the conduct of other adults in the Hub should be taken to the headteacher within the school and the Hub Director without delay. Any concerns about the headteacher or where there is a conflict of interest in reporting to the headteacher, should go to the Chair of Governors and Trust DSL team who can be contacted by email or telephone. Any concerns about the Director should go to the Deputy CEO Neil Spencelayah without delay.

Any concerns about the conduct of members of staff, supply teachers, volunteers or contractors should be reported to the headteacher unless there is a conflict of interest in doing so.

Concerns may come from various sources, for example, a suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

The headteacher will decide whether the concern is an allegation or low-level concern. The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Allegations

A concern is an allegation if the person* has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicated they may not be suitable to work with children (including outside of the Hub)

(*Person could be anyone working in the Hub, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors.)

Allegations should be reported to the LADO 'without delay'.

Before contacting the LADO, we will conduct basic enquiries ('fact finding') in line with local procedures to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation.

The LADO's role is not to investigate the allegation, but to ensure that an appropriate investigation is carried out, whether that is by the police, children's social care, our Hub, or a combination of these.

Low-level Concerns

Concerns may be graded low-level if the concern does not meet the criteria for an allegation; but the person* has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. Example behaviours include, but are not limited to:

- Being over friendly with children.
- Having favourites.
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone.
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

At L.E.A.D. Professional Development we:

- Ensure staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others.
- Empower staff to share any low-level safeguarding concerns via the headteacher/DSL.
- Address unprofessional behaviour and support the individual to correct it at an early stage.
- Provide a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised.

If the concern has been raised via a third party, the Director will collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:

- Directly to the person who raised the concern unless it has been raised anonymously.
- To the individual involved and any witnesses.

Reports about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Staff should be encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

Low-level concerns must be recorded in writing and recorded on 'Confide'. This should include:

- name* of individual sharing their concerns
- details of the concern
- context in which the concern arose

- action taken

(* if the individual remains anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible and acted upon accordingly)

Records will be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018. The Hub follows the Trust Records Retention policy to decide how long they retain such information, but it is at least until the individual leaves our employment.

Records will be reviewed regularly so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

If a concerning pattern of behaviour is identified and now meets the criteria for an allegation, then the matter should be referred to the LADO.

The records' review might identify that there are wider cultural issues within our Hub that enabled the behaviour to occur. This might mean that policies or processes should be revised, or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again

Helplines and reporting

- Children can talk to a Child Line counsellor 24 hours a day about anything that is worrying them by ringing 0800 11 11 or in an online chat at <https://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/1-2-1-counsellor-chat/>
- Where staff members feel unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feel they have a genuine concern that is not being addressed we acknowledge they may wish to consider whistleblowing channels. Likewise, if parents and carers are concerned about their child, they can contact the NSPCC Helpline by ringing 0800 028 028 0295, or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk

Connections to other policies

This policy, together with the following, should be read alongside and in conjunction with other policies and statutory guidance regarding the safety and welfare of children. Together, these will make up the suite of policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in this Hub.

- *Accessibility Plan.*
- *Anti-Bullying revised for 2023-2024 (LA template policy in the process of being revised).*
- *Attendance Policy.*
- *Behaviour policy*
- *Equality.*
- *Central Record of Recruitment and Vetting Checks.*
- *Complaints' Procedure Statement.*
- *Online Safety Policy.*
- *Freedom of Information.*
- *Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Guidance*
- *Radicalisation – Prevent Duty-*
- *Health and Safety Disability Equality Action Plan.*
- *Home-school Agreement Document.*

- *Child on Child Abuse revised 2023-2024*
- *Physical intervention/positive handling.*
- *Register of Pupil Attendance.*
- *School Access Policy.*
- *School Behaviour.*
- *Knife Crime Guidance 2022*
- *Mental and Physical Health (KCSiE 2025 Part One, Part Two and Annex A and paragraphs 165, 171 to 187).*
- *Special Educational Needs.*
- *CRB - Use of Reasonable Force Policy/ Guidance.*
- *Staff Behaviour (Code of Conduct policy).*
- *Staff Disciplinary*
- *School information published on a website.*
- *Visitors and VIP Guidance 2023-2024.*
- *Whistleblowing Policy.*
- *RSHE policy.*

Safeguarding Policy Appendix A: Safeguarding Processes and Checks for all Specialists Deployed by the L.E.A.D. Professional Development or English Hub

	Contract/ Employment Type	What is the responsibility of the L.E.A.D. Professional Development/ English Hub	What is the responsibility of the School Employing the Staff Member	What is the responsibility of the School receiving the Specialist into their setting?
1	Specialists who are employed by the L.E.A.D. Professional Development/English Hub as part of the L.E.A.D. Academy Trust Payroll.	<u>Central Record/ Safeguarding Checks</u> As per the most recent DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education legislation, the L.E.A.D. Professional Development LTD (which includes the English Hub) will ensure that an accurate and up to date Single Central Record is kept for all employees with the necessary checks recorded. <u>Safeguarding Training</u> In addition to this, the organisation will hold an accurate and up to date record of Safeguarding Training to ensure that all employed staff are in line with the statutory requirements.	Not Applicable	- The specialist will be expected to present their DBS certificate and a form of ID before entering the school. - The specialist will be expected to follow any other measures identified within the School's Safeguarding Policy and the latest KCSIE guidance. - The level of supervision is to be determined by the setting in relation to their Safeguarding policy and procedures and KCSIE guidance.
2	Specialists who have a contract to carry out work on behalf of the L.E.A.D. Professional Development or English Hub who are also employed by a School or MAT.	<u>Letter of Comfort Requested and Logged on the Central Record</u> The L.E.A.D. Professional Development / English Hub will seek assurance that the relevant Safeguarding checks have taken place in the specialist's base school by requesting a letter of comfort from the school employing the specialist. This will include confirmation of the following documentation: - Identity checked - References checked - UK Resident/Right to work checked - DBS Enhanced Disclosure including DBS number - Barred List check - Section 128 check (where required) - Overseas criminal record checked (where required) - Essential qualifications checked - Professional status (where required) - Ongoing Safeguarding training given, and induction has been completed This DBS number will be logged on the L.E.A.D. Professional Development's Central Record and the letter of comfort will be held centrally. <u>Letter of comfort emailed to the school receiving support</u> This letter will be emailed to any school who is working with this specialist prior to the contracted work beginning.	<u>Letter of Comfort</u> The specialist's base school will be asked to provide a 'letter of comfort' to the L.E.A.D. Professional Development LTD on their headed paper prior to the specialist beginning the work. This should be re-issued every 12 months.	- The specialist will be expected to present their DBS certificate and a form of ID before entering the school. - The specialist will be expected to follow any other measures identified within the School's Safeguarding Policy and the latest KCSIE guidance. - The school will receive the letter of comfort provided by the Hub prior to beginning the contracted work. - The specialist is not directly employed by the L.E.A.D. Professional Development/English Hub. As per KCSIE guidance, the school should seek any additional assurance from the specialist as required in relation to their Safeguarding policy. - The level of supervision is to be determined by the setting in relation to their Safeguarding policy and procedures.
3	Specialists who have a contract to carry out work on behalf of	<u>Assurance/ Checks</u> The L.E.A.D. Professional Development/ English Hub will seek assurance that the relevant Safeguarding checks have taken place.	Not Applicable	The specialist will be expected to present their DBS certificate and a form of ID before entering the school.

	the L.E.A.D. Professional Development or English Hub who are self Employed (not employed by a School or the T.S Hub)	This will be done by requesting that the specialist presents the following aspects to the Operations Manager in person at the Hub: • Their ID using the acceptable methods from the DBS https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-identity-checking-guidelines/id-checking-guidelines-for-standardenhanced-dbs-check-applications-from-1-july-2021 • DBS certificate (Enhanced DBS) • National Insurance Number • Public liability Insurance • Evidence of Safeguarding Training being conducted annually including harassment and prevent. • Sign to say that they have read section 1 of KCSIE annually A record will be kept at the L.E.A.D. Professional Development of the date that these checks have been made and a note of the documents provided. If the specialist fails to present this information, then deployments cannot take place.		• The specialist will be expected to follow any other measures identified within the School's Safeguarding Policy and the latest KCSIE guidance. • The specialist is NOT employed by a school OR the L.E.A.D. Professional Development therefore the school should seek any further assurance needed from the specialist directly. • As per the KCSIE guidance, it is for schools and colleges to determine the level of supervision when onsite, including any further checks to seek assurance in line with the settings policy.
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