

# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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Policy Owner	Deputy Principal Inclusion and Student Experience
Approval Level (committee)	LGB and Trust Board
Applies To (job roles relevant to)	All staff members
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Equality Impact Assessment	Date

## Policy Purpose:

The Lighthouse Learning Trust (LLT) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults, and recognises that they have fundamental right to be protected from harm and exploitation. The Trust expects all staff, volunteers and partners to endorse and practise this commitment at all times.

The Trust regards each learner as a unique individual, and therefore seeks to support learner development in ways which will foster security, confidence, and independence. The Trust recognises that learners need to feel safe and secure in order to learn and that high self-esteem, support, clear communication, and a safe and secure college environment enables students to succeed. These are regarded as central to the wellbeing of the individual and are therefore seen to be an intrinsic part of all aspects of the curriculum and ethos of the College.

The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults by:

- The provision of a safe environment in which students can learn
- Fulfilling our statutory responsibilities to identify students who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm
- Working to protect students from maltreatment, to prevent the impairment of students' mental and physical health or development
- Always taking action to enable all students to have the best outcomes
- Having robust procedures for the effective management of safeguarding and child protection

- Taking any concerns or allegations seriously and undertaken thorough review, support and if appropriate, referral to specialist services.

In accordance with relevant law and guidance, the policy sets out our expectations for safeguarding and child protection. It applies to all Lighthouse Learning staff (trust wide and college-based), governance and board members, external colleagues who interact on college sites and volunteers. It should be used in conjunction with Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedure and supplementary documents / literature to support staff's knowledge of these key issues.

This Safeguarding and Child Protection policy takes into consideration that our colleges may host young students aged between 14-16 as well as vulnerable adults and so this policy also applies to them. This policy is intended for use across the Lighthouse Learning Trust and applies to all partner institutions.

## **1. Scope**

This policy applies to the entire college community. This includes:

- All learners, particularly children, young people, and vulnerable adults.
- All governors, staff, volunteers, partners, and visitors at all Trust sites, other external facilities, in the workplace or who study by distance learning

This policy sets out to ensure the Trust meets its duties in legislation and set out in key government and local authority guidance, including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, updated September (2025), DfE
- Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Education (2025), DfE
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), DfE
- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England & Wales (2023) Home Office
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice in Education Settings (2022), Safer Recruitment Consortium
- Multi-agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation (2020), HM Government
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (2018), DfE
- Education for a Connected World (2018), UKCCIS
- Protection of Freedoms Act (2012)
- Teacher Standards (2011)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Act (2006)
- Children Act (1989 and 2004)
- Education Act (2002)

## **2. Principles**

This policy sets out the principles and commitments of the Trust to safeguard our college communities. In doing so, it aims to safeguard all learners, particularly children, young people and vulnerable adults, as well as safeguarding college governors, staff, volunteers, and partners in carrying out their duties in teaching, supervising, and supporting learners at all college sites, other external facilities, both in the workplace and by distance learning.

### 3. Policy Statement

#### 3.1 Definitions

**Safeguarding** is defined as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes;

**Child Protection** refers to the situation in which a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, and action is required to protect that child.

#### 3.2 Overall Aims

This policy will contribute to the safeguarding of students studying at any institution within the Trust by:

- Clarifying standards of behaviour for staff and students
- Contributing to the establishment of a safe, resilient and robust safeguarding ethos in the college, built on mutual respect, and shared values
- Teaching students about safeguarding, including online safety, through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum
- Alerting staff to the signs and indicators of safeguarding issues including abuse and neglect
- Developing staff awareness of the causes and consequences of abuse and neglect
- Developing staff awareness of the risks and vulnerabilities their students face by addressing concerns at the earliest possible stage
- Reducing the potential risks students face of being exposed to violence, extremism, exploitation, or victimisation
- Working in partnership with students, parents, guardians, and agencies.

This policy will contribute to supporting LLT students by:

- Identifying and protecting the most vulnerable
- Taking a contextual safeguarding approach to understanding the risks presenting to children outside the family home, taking into consideration extra familial harm
- Taking seriously the risks presented to children by children, with particular vigilance for child-on-child sexual harassment and sexual violence or abuse

- Working in a Trauma Informed way and assessing individual needs where possible
- Designing plans to meet those needs

### 3.3 Organisational Expectations

The Trust maintains a **zero-tolerance approach to all forms of abuse**, including physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect. Abuse will never be dismissed or minimised as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up”, or “boys being boys”. Such attitudes contribute to a culture of unacceptable behaviour and risk creating an unsafe environment for children and young people. Child-on-child abuse is taken as seriously as abuse by adults, further information on the Trust’s processes around this can be found in the Safeguarding Procedures.

All staff, regardless of role or seniority, have a **critical responsibility** in identifying, reporting, and preventing abuse. This includes:

- Remaining vigilant to signs of abuse, including child-on-child abuse and online harm.
- Responding promptly and appropriately to disclosures or concerns.
- Recording concerns accurately and securely using designated systems (e.g. My Concern).
- Escalating concerns in accordance with the Trust’s safeguarding procedures.

Staff must understand that **safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility**, and failure to act may result in harm to a child and breach of statutory duties. The Trust provides regular safeguarding training and updates to ensure all staff are confident in their role and responsibilities.

The Trust is committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognises children and families’ diverse circumstances. With regards to safeguarding the College will consider its duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to making reasonable adjustments, non-discrimination, and the Trust’s Public Sector Equality Duty.

The Trust has a culture that safeguards and promotes the welfare of students. There are robust recruitment procedures that deter or prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults from applying or securing employment with the College, this includes volunteers who may work in the College.

The Trust pays due regard to the safer recruitment practices detailed in ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ (KCSIE 2025). This includes maintaining a Single Central Record of relevant pre-employment checks.

The Trust is committed to supporting students to stay safe when using technology, both within and beyond the classroom. This includes recognising that safeguarding extends to the digital environment and that online safety is an integral part of our safeguarding responsibilities.

All colleges within the Trust have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place to protect students when accessing the internet using Trust-provided technology. These systems are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain effective and proportionate. The Trustees have oversight of the Trust's filtering and monitoring policies and processes and provide scrutiny and challenge. The Trust Safeguarding Panel review this information alongside the Trust's Safeguarding Governor who also has responsibility for filtering and monitoring.

The Trust also acknowledges the increasing use of mobile phones and personal devices by students. Each college has clear expectations and procedures in place to manage the use of such devices, ensuring that students are supported to use technology safely and responsibly. Through the tutorial programme, students are supported to understand the risks in the digital world and how they can keep themselves safe.

The Trust pays due regard to government guidance on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in schools and colleges, ensuring students have the right balance of access, guidance, and support when engaging with this evolving technology. All staff members receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training on induction and receive refresher training at least every three years. The content of this training is refreshed at least annually, taking into account current key learning points and trends from serious case reviews as well as local current and emerging issues. In addition, all staff receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings, online training sessions) as required, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard students effectively. Safeguarding training includes whistleblowing procedures so that staff know what to do if they have concerns relating to safeguarding practice within the College. Online and internet safety training for staff is integrated, aligned, and considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach.

Trustees and members of each college Local Committee are trained in safeguarding and Prevent and there is an identified Safeguarding Governor. The Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies are provided with regular safeguarding updates by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The Safeguarding Governor meets regularly with the DSL and has a higher level of safeguarding training.

The Trust ensures it has a Designated Safeguarding Lead who, with the help of a team of deputies, performs the duties set out in KCSIE 2025.

The stressful and traumatic nature of safeguarding and child protection work is recognised. The Trust supports staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL, or wider safeguarding team, and to seek further support as appropriate. External supervision is accessible to the DSL and members of the safeguarding team in accordance with best practice.

The Trust ensures staff can identify students who have or had a social worker. This includes ensuring that staff:

- know who these students are;

- understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort;
- are supported to identify the challenges that students in this group might face; and
- make reasonable adjustments so that they act to best support these students.

The Trust ensures that, where possible, more than one emergency contact telephone number is recorded for each student on a Study Programme and this is reviewed on a regular basis. The Trust contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance (see Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023).

The Trust incorporates education in relation to safeguarding topics, including online safety, in the tutorial programme. It has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to support work online, but these do not act as an unreasonable restriction.

All policies which address issues of power and potential harm, for example anti-bullying, equality and diversity, use of reasonable force, and positive behaviour are linked to ensure we have a whole college approach.

Where facilities or premises are hired to organisations or individuals. The Trust will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep students safe this will include seeking assurances that there are appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these if needed), liaising with Trust staff as appropriate. These arrangements will be included in any lease or hire agreement.

The Trust commits to remedying any safeguarding deficiencies or weaknesses brought to its attention without delay and operates an ongoing process of reviewing its safeguarding practices and procedures.

### **3.4 Staff Expectations / Shared Responsibility**

All Trust staff have a duty and responsibility to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults attending a partner College, irrespective of their role.

All staff are responsible for identifying concerns early and providing help for children, young people, and vulnerable adults to prevent concerns from escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989; i.e. Section 17 (Children in Need) and Section 47 (a child suffering harm, or likely to suffer significant harm). These concerns are discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of their deputies.

All staff must know how to contact the DSL and any deputies, the Chair of Trust Board, and the Governor responsible for safeguarding. All staff are trained in the process and principles for sharing information within the College which supports

safeguarding and how to raise concerns. All staff are trained in the local early help process, understand their role within it and have a responsibility to contribute to the Early Help Assessment and Plan as requested. They will be involved, where appropriate, in the implementation of individual education programmes, integrated support plans, child in need plans and inter-agency child protection plans.

All staff are aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the College and/or can occur between young people and vulnerable adults outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the DSL, Deputy DSLs and wider safeguarding team consider whether young people and vulnerable adults are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside the home. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and students can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

All staff are alert to signs and indicators of possible abuse and neglect or at risk of harm and be able to identify vulnerable learners and take action to keep them safe. Information or concerns about children will be shared with the safeguarding team where it includes those:

- who need a social worker and may be experiencing abuse or neglect;
- requiring mental health support;
- who may benefit from early help;
- where there is a radicalisation concern;
- where a crime may have been committed; or
- where there is the potential for child on child abuse or sexual harassment or sexual violence.

All staff are familiar with this safeguarding policy and accompanying procedures and guidance. In addition to this, all staff are aware of the systems in place which support safeguarding including reading: the Behaviour Policy and the Code of Conduct for Staff. All staff are required to read and understand Part 1 of statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025). Those working directly with children will also read Annex B. Additionally, within the Trust, Trustees, Governors, Members of the Senior Leadership Team and DSLs will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety.

Staff will also:

- Report any concerns or allegations of a safeguarding nature to the DSL and Safeguarding Team.
- Be clear as to the Trust's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse, children missing education, children who have low and persistent absence, and children requiring mental health support.
- Record concerns appropriately and in a timely manner by using Trust systems.
- Be aware of the need to raise to the senior leadership team any concerns they have about safeguarding practices within the Trust.

- Have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children, previously looked after children, and vulnerable children and young people safe.
- Be aware of signs of abuse or neglect and the additional barriers to recognising abuse and neglect in children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and those with relevant health conditions.
- Be aware of their legal responsibility to report cases of female genital mutilation (FGM) to the police. Whilst all staff should speak to the DSL or DDSL with regard to any concerns about FGM, there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police in liaison with the DSL.
- Report their concerns to the DSL if they think a student may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism.
- Be aware of the College whistleblowing procedures and policy;
- Promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.
- Maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a student, staff members should always act in the best interests of the learner.

#### **4. Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements**

There may be safeguarding issues that are specific to the local area or population that need to be identified in partnership with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) and or other agencies such as gang membership, FGM, Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE including Child Sexual Exploitation), extremism and the safeguarding of vulnerable adults.

Staff at our colleges are made aware of specific issues relating to the locality that could impact the safety of students at the college through comprehensive staff training and bulletin updates.

We will also ensure that our students are kept informed of issues within their safeguarding curriculum, acknowledging and recognising that the risk will present differently between different students with different personal situations, meaning some students are more vulnerable than others.

#### **5. Data Protection and Sharing Safeguarding Information – UK GDPR**

The UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 does **not** prohibit information about students being shared with specific authorities if it is for the purposes of safeguarding students and individuals at risk.

Information that could be relevant to keeping a student safe will be shared so that informed decisions can be made about a student's welfare. We recognise that we have a duty of care for our students and safeguarding is of the utmost importance to us.

UK GDPR does not override safeguarding. The sharing of safeguarding data is necessary for the protection of students. Therefore, consent is not needed for the effective sharing of safeguarding information between a college and relevant authorities. However, the college will ensure compliance with our legal obligation to which the Lighthouse Learning Trust is subject.

## **6. Safeguarding pupils who are vulnerable to extremism; The Prevent Duty**

The Prevent strategy aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. While it remains rare for children to become involved in terrorist activity, the college recognises some, from an early age can be exposed to terrorist and extremist influences or prejudiced views. As with other forms of safeguarding strategies, early intervention is always preferable.

The Trust is aware there have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

Within classrooms and learning spaces, pupils and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions where it does not discriminate or curtail the rights of others. Inappropriate language and offensive and discriminatory expressed thoughts should be explored with the student or staff member to ascertain whether there is an educational need or a concern around extremism.

The Trust will make appropriate provision within the tutorial curriculum to ensure British Values, fundamental Human Rights, and democracy; its place and importance, E-safety and the dangers of extremism are taught as part of their curriculum provision.

The Trust will ensure that there is visible signage to students surrounding issues related to extremism and appropriate support is signposted for them within the college and website for students to access.

The Trust is committed to working with the local authority and other local partners, families and communities to play a key role in ensuring young people and our communities are safe from the threat of:

- **Extremism** – such as 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.
- **Radicalisation** – such as the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- **Terrorism** – Defined as 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.

All college staff will be alert to changes in student behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

The college will identify a Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPoC) who will be the lead within the college for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism: this will normally be the Designated Safeguarding lead. If there is a concern that a young person is being radicalised or at a risk of being drawn into terrorism refer to Children's Services as with any other safeguarding concern.

The trust will ensure that the DSL and SPoC (if different) will complete training on Prevent to be cascaded to all staff.

Due diligence checks should be undertaken by the college on any organisation that uses its facilities. This should include:

- An internet search on the organisation
- Checks with local groups
- MASA and local police checks
- Local Authority checks

## 7. Monitoring and Review

The Trust Board, through the Local Committees, will receive regular updates and an annual report on safeguarding and child protection to an agreed schedule. The report will contain a review of the progress in implementing the policy and include progress against college targets and recommendations of the policy where appropriate.

This Policy will be updated annually by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and agreed at the Trust Board. The Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures will be reviewed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead annually.

**Links to other policies:**

- Safeguarding And Child Protection Procedure
- Procedure for Record Keeping in Relation to Safeguarding Information
- Attendance, Punctuality, and Engagement Policy and Procedure
- Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy
- Behaviour Policy and Procedure
- Freedom of Speech and Expression Policy
- Procedure for Learners who Identify as a Different Gender than Assigned at Birth
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy and Procedure
- Visible Identification Policy and Procedure
- E-Safety Policy

## Document History

Version	Purpose/Change	Author	Date
1.1	New document	AGR	04.04.23
1.2	Removal of procedures	AGR	17.04.23
1.3	Updated in line with KCSiE 2023	TYO	11.10.23
1.4	Updated in line with KCSiE 2024	TYO	16.07.24
1.5	Updated in line with KCSiE 2025 and addressed areas for improvement from the safeguarding audit	TYO	13.08.25