



Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd

LAFS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY	
<p>1. The Purpose and Aims of our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy</p>	<p>Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. 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.</p> <p>No single practitioner 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.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our policy and procedures aim to ensure that all staff and volunteers in our establishment act in accordance with the principles, guidance and regulations set out in guidance published by DFE, HMI, Leicestershire CC, Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership, in order that learners are protected and safeguarded. 2. Our policy and procedures are designed to link in with the policies, practices and duties of the organisations who commission places from us and to ensure that there is clarity about lines of responsibility and certainty that actions will be taken when needed. 3. Our policy and procedures are designed to ensure that we comply with the statutory guidance issued by the DFE in Keeping Children Safe in education 2025
<p>2. Scope of the Policy</p>	<p>The Policy is applicable to all who own, lead and / or work in our organisation, both directly with learners and in administration. It applies to volunteers and those who act as supporters and/or members. The term “staff” is used throughout the policy to apply to all these groups. The majority of our learners are placed with us by schools or Partnerships. These organisations are described as “commissioners” in this policy.</p>

3. Reviews of the Policy	This policy will be kept under review and will be revised annually as a minimum. The policy and its review will be subject to audit annually by LEBC. A successful audit is required before our organisation can be listed on the LEBC database and therefore accessible to schools and Partnerships.	
4. Date of Last review	Jan 2026	
5. Date of next review	Jan 2027	
6. Who is responsible for carrying out reviews, keeping policy up to date and ensuring that its provisions are implemented? Is there a role for Governors or Trustees or others to ensure that the policy is working?	The Director will carry out reviews of the policy annually and ensure that all staff are fully aware of the policy and implementing it in full.	
7. Key Roles in the operation of the Policy		
Role	Name	Contact Details
Manager/ Professional Lead/ Proprietor	Dave Churchward Director	littleacornsfs@gmail.com
DSL	Dan Halford	littleacornsfs@gmail.com
Deputy DSL	Kate Morison	littleacornsfs@gmail.com
Leicester and the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnerships Procedures Manual	Report Your Concerns about a Child or Young Person	LCC report neglect or abuse
LA Safeguarding Children in Education Officer	Charlotte Davis	0116 305 6314
LA Child Protection Contact/LADO	CFS-LADO@leics.gov.uk LADO service is available office hours	Allegations Line: 0116 3054141 Outside of office hours, contact the Leicestershire First

	only: Monday-Thursday, 8.30am - 5.00 pm and Friday, 8.30am - 4.30pm	Response Children's Duty Team: 0116 305 0005
First Response	For urgent concerns about a child who needs a social worker or police officer today	0116 305 0005
Police (to report a crime and immediate risk of harm or abuse to child)		Police (to report a crime and immediate risk of harm or abuse to child)
NSPCC help/whistleblowing line		
Always alert the Leicestershire Secondary Education and Inclusion Partnership Coordinator of any concerns in addition to any direct action you take – or the school if directly commissioned.		https://www.leicsseips.org/about_us
8. Child Protection and Safeguarding Statement	<p>Little Acorns Forest Schools (LAFS) is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for children in which to be cared for and educated. We believe that it is always unacceptable for a child to experience abuse of any kind and we recognise it is everyone's responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children, by a commitment to practise which protects them.</p> <p>This policy applies to all staff including students, volunteers and parents/carers. These must be over the age of 18 years otherwise an alternative policy and procedure is followed.</p>	
9. Key principles of our approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding, child protection and promoting the welfare of our learners is the responsibility of all staff. • Our approach is child centred and always considers what is in the best interests of the child. • Our approach is in line with the Equality Act 2010 in ensuring that no child or group of children is treated less favourably than others. • We are only one part of the network of practitioners and organisations working with each of our learners and are committed to working collectively. 	
10. The Guidance and Advice that we work to	Our Duty to safeguard our learners is set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 particularly in para 57-62. Our Policy is based on Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.	
11. Our definition of safeguarding and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting children from maltreatment. • Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development. 	

<p>promoting the welfare of children (all under 18)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
<p>12. Approach we take</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that every member of staff understands how their role places them in a position to identify and concerns at an early stage and knows how to report concerns and to whom.
<p>13. How do we do this</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALL staff have read Part One of KCSiE 2025 and signed to acknowledge this. All staff know, understand, and can implement the key principles of this. • Senior Staff have read “Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023” and ALL staff understand the key responsibilities set out in the guidance.
<p>14. Staff Code of Conduct</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAFS ensures that every member of staff understands their responsibility to act as a role model for learners and that their own adherence to professional standards is a vital component in making learners feel safe. There is a Staff Code of Conduct which all staff have read and understand.
<p>15. How do we do this</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff are asked to read and sign a copy of the Staff Code of Conduct. Concerns regarding low-level concerns will be included in our Code of Conduct from 1 September 2023 in line with KCSiE Part Four Section two. We refer to the Guidance for Safer Working Practices for those working with children and young people in education settings at https://www.leicsseips.org/draft-policies-and-documents-for-ap
<p>16. Environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a safe environment for our learners
<p>17. How do we do this</p>	<p>a. Valuing them, listening to and respecting them, also using methods to ensure that children feel safe and the children are safe.</p> <p>b. Adopting child protection guidelines and statutory requirements through detailed procedures outlined in this policy</p> <p>c. Adopting a code of conduct for staff which is made available to all staff in welcome. A home school agreement</p>

	<p>for home education is also written for staff and for parents which includes expectations of safeguarding.</p> <p>d.Responding quickly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse or issues relating to child welfare, and keeping a log of any concerns or actions in an organised record.</p> <p>e.Working in partnership with parents, carers, families and children and providing them with the opportunities to voice any concerns they may have</p> <p>f.All parents or visitors on site for a period of time must sign the visitors book (located on all sites) and make the intention of their visit clear. They will not be left unsupervised or near any intimate care areas.</p> <p>g.Recruiting staff safely and ensuring all necessary checks are made.</p> <p>h.Sharing information about child protection and good practice with parents and staff.</p> <p>i.Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately</p> <p>j.Providing effective management for all staff through induction, supervision, support and appropriate regular safeguarding training with an appointed DSL (Dan Halford) or safeguarding trainer (Kate Morison).</p> <p>k. A child going missing from an education setting for long periods is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect.</p> <p>l.LAFS has in place appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education settings, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of them going missing or being absent in the future.</p> <p>m.Attendance is monitored regularly and any long or unexplained reasons for absence is discussed.</p>
<p>18. Understanding g Safeguarding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recognise how important providing early help can be in tackling issues as soon as they emerge. ● Ensure that we respond effectively to any concerns raised with us by the commissioner of the placement. ● Ensure that we report swiftly any concerns that we identify to the commissioner ● Ensure that we are clear on when to refer to the commissioner and when to make direct referrals in emergencies

<p>19. How do we do this</p>	<p>a. Listen carefully to the concerns and record them. Notify the DSL as soon as possible so a new entry in our records can be made.</p> <p>b. Staff are also trained not to ask leading questions and to record factually and without opinion or bias.</p> <p>c. Include the relevant information listed on the procedure when making note of any concerns including date, time, name and sign – written in pen.</p> <p>d. Talk about and discuss any concerns with a senior member of staff or DSL where conversations are minuted and confidential.</p> <p>e. If a concern is regarding a senior member of staff the person must immediately contact the LADO to discuss allegations and take advice. The numbers required are included at the end of this policy and are visible on the notice board for quick reference.</p> <p>f. If a child is seen to be in immediate danger contact the police immediately.</p> <p>g. If a child is seen to be in danger of radicalisation then the above procedure still stands however the prevent team (Channel) is contacted instead of the Local Authority (LA) First Response Team or Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP).</p> <p>h. Members of staff can contact the LA / LSP team to ask advice on information they have or what they have heard/ witnessed.</p> <p>i. Always work on the side of caution and with the child's best interests and welfare first.</p> <p>Staff can follow the flow chart (Appendix 1) for reference on what to do if they have concerns.</p>
<p>19. What we do</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure that our staff are ready to support social workers and other agencies, including the commissioner, especially if they were involved in being alert to any safeguarding issues ● Ensure that we have a DSL who provides support to staff in carrying out their safeguarding duties and will act to ensure close liaison with agencies as above
<p>20. How do we do this</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff will always report concerns to the DSL and where appropriate the school (if children are attending school). In the event that they are not contactable, they must inform the deputy DSL of their concerns.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All staff understand if they have any queries, they can always approach the NSPCC helpline for further information, or the LADO.
21. Ensure our staff know our policies and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Child Protection (including policy on dealing with child – on child abuse ● Behaviour Policy (including prevention of bullying, cyber bullying, prejudice based and discriminatory bullying) ● How we respond to absences – usually working with the commissioner ● What the role of the DSL is
22. How do we do this	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All staff have access to ALL policies, including Safeguarding, Behaviour (including e-safety), Social Media Policy, Attendance Policy and Equality and Inclusion policy. ● Staff are all aware who the DSL and deputy DSL are and their role in safeguarding at LAFS.
23. Develop a strong commitment to and understanding of the principles in this policy with new staff and reinforce it with existing staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All staff working for LAFS have yearly Level 3 Safeguarding training. ● The DSL and deputy have had appropriate local authority training between them and attend regular local authority updates.
24. The potential issues that we are alert to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse. ● Contextualised also known as extra-familial abuse. ● Bullying, including online bullying (by text message, on social networking sites, and prejudice-based bullying and being aware of the ease of access to mobile phone networks. ● The approach to online safety, including appropriate filtering and monitoring on AP devices and networks for home use. ● Going frequently missing and who are '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.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 susceptible to being at risk of being drawn into terrorism. ● Child sexual exploitation, human trafficking, modern slavery, sexual or criminal exploitation. ● A young carer. ● Has a mental health need and has an effect on school attendance and progress. ● Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)). ● Privately fostered. ● Has returned home to their family from care. ● Has a family member in prison or is affected by parental offending. ● Child-on-Child Abuse (broadened by KCSiE 2025 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 2025 Part Five). ● Harm outside the home extra familial harm. ● The impact of new technologies, including 'sexting' and accessing pornography. ● Issues which may be specific to a local area or population, are showing signs of being drawn into antisocial or criminal behaviour, including gang activity or involvement and associations with organised crime groups or county lines. ● In possession of a knife and or involved in knife crime, youth violence, criminal child exploitation (CCE). ● Is in family circumstances which present challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse/harm. ● Is at risk of or from serious violence and violent crime. ● Persistent absence from education, including persistent absence for part of the school day. ● At risk of suspension or permanent exclusion ● Particular issues affecting children including domestic abuse and violence, female genital mutilation, and honour-based abuse.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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).
<p>25. Staff response to these potential issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff and volunteers are aware of these areas of concern and the signs that might indicate that a learner is at risk ● Staff and volunteers know who to report their concerns to and how. ● Staff know that learners may not always be forthcoming in expressing concerns but that staff should nevertheless be vigilant and should report any concerns that they may have. ● Staff know that they must reassure learners that they are being taken seriously, will be supported and kept safe and that they are not causing a problem by making their disclosure and should not feel ashamed. ● Staff understand the need for urgency in these issues. ● Staff understand that issues of safeguarding are often complex and multi-faceted and often involve issues outside the AP setting and that they must be as concerned about these issues as any directly related to the setting. ● Staff are aware of the changing risks of harm that learners may be exposed to, ranging from drug taking, alcohol misuse, non-attendance, consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude images, county lines etc and are encouraged to be vigilant towards evidence of such behaviours, ● Staff realise that only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem, however staff are well placed to observe learners day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. ● Staff know that the guidance and regulations emphasise the effective assessment of the need for

	<p>early help and the importance of ensuring that a lead practitioner coordinates any needed actions. They understand that this is a multiagency role and that triggering this level of intervention needs to happen in discussion with the commissioner and LA services.</p>
<p>26. How we ensure that all staff and volunteers are enabled to respond as required? What is the process by which staff can raise concerns and to whom</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All staff understand through safeguarding training that “it could happen here” and that the “best interests of the child” must be paramount. ● Staff are aware of the need to report concerns immediately. ● All staff carry with them two forms for recording any disclosures or concerns at all times in their red bags. ● All staff follow the following procedure for reporting: ● Listen carefully to the concerns and record the using the agreed template. Notify the DSL as soon as possible so a new entry in our records can be made. ● Staff are also trained not to ask leading questions and to record factually and without opinion or bias. ● Include the relevant information listed on the procedure when making note of any concerns including date, time, name and sign – written in pen. ● Talk about and discuss any concerns with a senior member of staff or DSL where conversations are minuted and confidential. ● If a concern is regarding a senior member of staff the person must immediately contact the LADO to discuss allegations and take advice. The numbers required are included at the end of this policy and are visible on the notice board for quick reference. ● If a child is seen to be in immediate danger contact the police immediately. ● If a child is seen to be in danger of radicalisation then the above procedure still stands however the prevent team (Channel) is contacted instead of the Local Authority (LA) First Response Team or Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP). ● Members of staff can contact the LA / LSP team to ask advice on information they have or what they have heard/ witnessed. ● Always work on the side of caution and with the child’s best interests and welfare first. ● Staff can follow the flow chart (Appendix 1 from KCSIE 2025) for reference on what to do if they have concerns.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff are trained in knowing when to act swiftly with concerns about a child. <p>No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances so effective sharing of information between practitioners, local organisations and agencies is essential for early identification of need, assessment, and service provision to keep children safe. Rapid reviews and child safeguarding practice reviews have highlighted that missed opportunities to record, understand the significance of, and share information in a timely manner can have severe consequences for children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Practitioners should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children. This may be when problems are first emerging (for example, persistent school absences) or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care. ● Sharing information about any adults with whom that child has contact, which may impact the child's safety or welfare, is also critical. ● Information sharing is also essential for the identification of patterns of behaviour when a child is at risk of going missing or has gone missing, including being missing from education. ● If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately. ● If staff have a concern, they should follow our child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). <p>Options will then include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Managing any support for the child internally via the school or college's own ● Pastoral support processes ● Undertaking an early help assessment or making a referral to statutory services for example as the child could be in need, is in need, or is suffering, or likely to suffer harm. ● <i>The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken</i>
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	<p><i>should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) as soon as is practically possible.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff should not assume a colleague, or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful ● Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. ● If the DSL has to make a referral to social care they will follow up if they have not heard within the appropriate timescale given.
<p>27. Our awareness that the learners we work with a likely to fall into the “at risk” category of children who need early help</p>	<p>Our Learners are likely to fall into one or more of the following groups and as a result we will be alert to the potential need for early help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs. ● has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan) ● has a mental health need. ● is a young carer. ● is showing signs of being drawn into antisocial or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines. ● is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home. ● is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation. ● is at risk of being radicalised or exploited. ● has a family member in prison or is affected by parental offending. ● is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse. ● is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves. ● has returned home to their family from care. ● is at risk of so-called ‘honour’-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage. ● is a privately fostered child, or ● is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.
<p>28. The processes we have in place to ensure that</p>	<p>When a placement for a learner is commissioned with us we ensure that:</p>

<p>we are prepared to meet the needs of individual learners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We review all the information supplied to us by the commissioner, including any information about SEND. ● We check with the commissioner as to whether the child has a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan. ● We receive and review any risk assessments prepared by the commissioner for the child and if necessary prepare our own assessments to include risk mitigation advice to our staff. ● We ensure that risk assessment considers the list of potential issues that a child might be exposed to listed above alongside any risk issues related to the type of activities that the learner will be engaged in.
<p>29. Who does this, how is it carried out and what happens to it</p>	<p>If any additional risk assessments are needed for individual children they will be done by the lead practitioner who works with that child and shared with the DSL.</p>
<p>30. Online Safety Aims</p>	<p>The DSL leads in ensuring that learners' use of ICT is safeguarded and that they are protected from harm. We do this by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ensuring that access to online content is effectively filtered and monitored. ● Blocking harmful and inappropriate content ● Monitoring learners use of IT ● being aware of the need to monitor use in line with the Prevent Duty ● being vigilant in ensuring that learners are not subject to online abuse or harassment. ● Let the commissioner know of any concern incidents arising through the use of ICT, including recommending contact with parents.
<p>31. How do we monitor IT use, provide filtering etc and who does this?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As we are an outdoor group children have very little access to IT unless they bring in their own phone. ● Children are only allowed to bring in phones for our home education session but are asked to keep these away for the session.
<p>32. What do we do to make learners aware of our policy on the safe use of ICT?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Practitioners ensure that any opportunities to educate learners on e-safety are taken and discussions are supported by a practitioner.

<p>33. How do we monitor the use of mobile phones?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff are asked to keep mobile phones away during sessions unless needed for making an emergency phone call. ● Any children bringing mobile phones to sessions are asked to keep them away and not in use during sessions.
<p>34. How do we contribute to education our learners in the safe use of ICT (if appropriate to this setting)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Practitioners ensure that any opportunities to educate learners on e-safety are taken and discussions are supported by a practitioner.
<p>35. Our understanding of GDPR</p>	<p>The Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. We know we must not let any concerns about Data security stand in the way of child protection.</p>
<p>36. Child on Child abuse</p>	<p>We take a zero tolerance approach to child on child harassment and abuse. This involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● taking any report from child seriously, ● discussing concerns with the commissioner and working proactively to solve issues in a way that avoids “demonisation”, ● taking care not to use terms such as victim and perpetrator. <p>Staff understand that such abuse may not be reported but that they should be vigilant for any signs and should report it. Staff understand that they must challenge inappropriate behaviours of this kind and not dismiss it as trivial.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We recognise that child on child abuse may include bullying, ● teenage relationship abuse, ● physical abuse and threats including online ● sexual violence or the threat of sexual violence ● sexual harassment, ● causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, ● consensual and non consensual sharing of nude and semi nude images, ● up skirting, ● initiation/hazing type rituals.
<p>37. Identifying Concerns</p>	<p>Staff are aware of the four main categories of child abuse and the importance of being vigilant in spotting early signs of need. They recognise that abuse, neglect and</p>

	<p>safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and may not be easily assigned to one specific cause. Staff are aware that our learners at risk of exploitation in situations outside their families and this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation) ● domestic abuse within their own relationships ● criminal exploitation, youth violence, county lines ● radicalisation <p>Staff are aware of the risks associated with modern technology, including the potential for online abuse concurrently on and off line, abusive messaging, exchange of indecent images, pornography etc.</p> <p>The four main categories are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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. ● 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 expectations 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
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	<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 masturbations, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children to look at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. 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 their school or colleges policy and procedures for dealing with it. ● 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, because 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.
<p>38. Spotting behaviours that place a learner at risk of harm</p>	<p>Staff are vigilant in looking out for evidence of behaviours that might be placing a learner at risk of harm. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● patterns of poor attendance, ● evidence of drug taking or alcohol misuse, ● serious violence and / or criminality (county lines),

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● radicalisation, ● consensual and non consensual sharing of sexual images.
<p>39. Our awareness of the potential of our learners to be exposed to serious risk of harm and the signs we should look for</p>	<p>Staff are aware of the risks that our learners may be exposed to from</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Child Criminal Exploitation – we are vigilant in looking for signs of criminality such as shoplifting, knife crime, county lines drug issues etc and are aware that our learners may be “perpetrator victims” of exploitation. We recognise that girls face a range of risks of this kind too including a higher risk of sexual exploitation, ● Child Sexual Exploitation including abusive physical contact, online grooming, exploitative age difference relationships etc., ● Domestic abuse including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional, ● Female Genital Mutilation – where teachers have a legal duty to report any evidence of this to the police, ● Mental Health – our awareness that that issues may be a sign of underlying abuse and therefore the importance of reporting any concerns, ● Serious Violence indicated by absences, changes in relationships, decline in performance, signs of self harm, unexplained injuries, new gifts and possessions,
<p>40. How do we ensure that staff are fully aware of the categories</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff are trained yearly in Level 3 Safeguarding so they are up-to-date with any signs or indicators of abuse and the action needed. ● Any concerns of any abuse including child on child abuse are recorded in the appropriate way and therefore any patterns of concerning behaviour can be monitored.
<p>41. Acting where concerns are identified</p>	<p>If a child chooses to tell a member of staff about alleged abuse, there are several actions that staff will undertake to support the child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Where questions are asked, this should be done without pressurising, and only using open questions. ● Leading questions should 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. ● A full written record will be kept by the staff duly signed and dated, including the time the conversation with the child took place, 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead 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 First Response. 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. <p><i>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.</i></p>
<p>42. Confidentiality and Record Keeping</p>	<p>Staff should be aware that they should not share any information disclosed by a child other than with those who they are required to discuss it with as set out in this policy. All learners are placed in AP as a result of commissioning usually by a school or Partnership. Where staff have been in receipt of a disclosure or have made a report to the DSL the information will be shared with the commissioner who will be responsible for further action, decisions about who needs to know and record keeping. The AP will act on</p>

	<p>advice from the Commissioner about any information sharing, except in emergency situations.</p> <p>The AP will keep copies of any notes prepared for the commissioner in a secure file and pass these notes back to the commissioner on completion of the placement.</p>
43. Safe Recruitment of Staff	<p>The Director takes the lead in ensuring that the AP follows the guidance for safer recruitment set out in KCSiE 2025 Part Three</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dave Churchward has received safer recruitment training • Statutory pre-employment checks and references from previous employers are an essential part of the recruitment process. We ensure we adopt the appropriate necessary procedures to carry out the checks required and where any concerns arise, we will seek advice and act in accordance with national guidance <p>We maintain a Single Central Record (SCR), which is reviewed regularly and updated in accordance with KCSiE 2025 Part Three</p>
44. The role and responsibilities of the DSL	
• Task	Who does it in your organisation - Comments
Inform staff about any safeguarding needs that the commissioner has asked you to be aware of	Administrator- Meryl Gardner
Inform staff about any SEND needs that might impact on safeguarding of individual and other learners	Administrator – Meryl Gardner who will then notify the relevant staff.
Link with the commissioner and any other agencies including for LA the Virtual School	Administrator – Meryl Gardner alongside the DSL Lead – Dan Halford.
Lead on ensuring that training needs are met with regard to this policy	Director- Dave Churchward
Lead on ensuring that your safe use of ICT policy and procedures are in place and working effectively	Director – Dave Churchward
Ensures that records are kept safely and securely and record information appropriately	Director – Dave Churchward
Other areas related to safeguarding and child protection Refer to other policy documents if you have them.	

<p>How we deal with allegations against members of staff</p>	<p>If a member of staff has concerns over allegations of other staff members, if possible, they will speak with the DSL. If unable to do this, they can contact the LADO using the local authority contact. If needed LAFS will contact LEBC for advice. Concerns about staff members will be followed up and assessed as to whether further investigation needs to take place.</p>
<p>How we deal with allegations against the Proprietor / Manager</p>	<p><i>Any allegations against the Director will go to the DSL and they will get advice from the LADO where needed.</i></p>
<p>How we ensure a safe learning environment</p>	<p>a. Valuing our learners, listening to and respecting them, also using methods to ensure that children feel safe and the children are safe.</p> <p>b. Adopting child protection guidelines and statutory requirements through detailed procedures outlined in this policy</p> <p>c. Adopting a code of conduct for staff which is made available to all staff in welcome. A home school agreement for home education is also written for staff and for parents which includes expectations of safeguarding.</p> <p>d. Responding quickly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse or issues relating to child welfare, and keeping a log of any concerns or actions in an organised record.</p> <p>e. Working in partnership with parents, carers, families and children and providing them with the opportunities to voice any concerns they may have</p> <p>f. All parents or visitors on site for a period of time must sign the visitors book (in Hicks lodge café) and make the intention of their visit clear. They will not be left unsupervised or near any intimate care areas.</p> <p>g. Recruiting staff safely and ensuring all necessary checks are made.</p> <p>h. Sharing information about child protection and good practice with parents and staff.</p> <p>i. Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately</p> <p>j. Providing effective management for all staff through induction, supervision, support and appropriate regular safeguarding training with an appointed DSL (Dan Halford) or safeguarding trainer (Kate Morison).</p>

	<p>k. A child going missing from an education setting for long periods is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect.</p> <p>l. LAFS has in place appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education settings, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of them going missing or being absent in the future.</p> <p>m. Attendance is monitored regularly and any long or unexplained reasons for absence is discussed.</p>
<p>How we ensure that any external trips and visits are safe</p>	<p><i>We adhere to all Risk Assessments, all staff are DBS checked (following the safer recruitment guidelines) and are all Outdoor and Paediatric First Aid trained and carry with them a full first aid kit at all times.</i></p>

AS Sept 2023

Appendix 1

AP Child Protection & Safeguarding Flow Chart <u>'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused, at risk of harm or neglect'</u>		
<u>Actions where there are concerns about a child's welfare in and outside of school.</u> Be alert to signs of abuse, question unusual behaviour or changes to presentation		
<u>Where a child discloses abuse, neglect, sexual violence, sexual harassment, online harm.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to what they say, keep calm, reassure them they are right to tell, and you will take action to help keep them safe. • Inform them you need to share the information and what you are going to do next • Do not promise confidentiality, you will need to share/ report the information to appropriate services. • DO NOT DELAY, take any immediate necessary action to protect the child and ensure the Designated Safeguarding Lead is informed or a member of SLT in the DSL's absence. 		
<u>Discuss concerns with the Designated/Named Safeguarding Lead.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DSL will consider further actions. Usually this will be in discussion with the DSL at the commissioning body but in emergency could include consultation with First Response (if a new concern). • Concerns and discussion, decisions and reasons for decision should be recorded in writing and a 'confidential concerns' or a 'child protection' file should be opened, stored in line with the school child protection policy. • At all stages the child's circumstances should be kept under review and re-refer if concerned to ensure the child's circumstances improve – the child's best interests must come first. 		
Still have concerns - Refer to First Response (MARF) Have child/families' personal details to hand and be clear about concern/allegations. Complete referral form	Safeguarding concern - Resolved /no longer held Support has been agreed, record decisions and any follow up needed. actions.	
First Response 0116 305 0005 Where safe consider Early Help Service If the child is at immediate risk dial 101 and ask for assistance Record all decisions and actions, working to agreed outcomes and within timescales. Escalate any emerging threats/concerns by adopting Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures.	NSPCC Whistleblowing Tel: 0800 028 0285 Police Tel:101	Safeguarding concern Resolved /no longer held Support has been agreed, record <div style="background-color: yellow; padding: 5px;"> Consult with the child young person, family, and relevant agencies: Agree support, refer to LRSCP guidance Thresholds for access to services (September </div>

https://lrs.cb.proceduresonline.com/index.htm		decisions and any follow up needed. actions.
<p>Contacts: For any allegations/concerns regarding an adult who works with (in either paid/voluntarily) employment with children contact the LA Designated Officer (LADO) CFS-LADO@leics.gov.uk Allegations Line: 0116 305 4141 Monday-Thursday, 8.30am - 5.00 pm and Friday, 8.30am - 4.30pm Outside of office hours, contact the First Response Children's Duty Team: 0116 305 0005 LA Safeguarding and Compliance Lead Charlotte.Davis@leics.gov.uk 0116 305 6314</p> <p>This flowchart is a brief guide - Please refer to our School Child Protection Policy.</p>		

Appendix 2

Case Record/Chronology

CONFIDENTIAL

Sheet Number:

Complete for all incidents of concern including where a 'logging the concern' sheet has not been completed. If one has been completed, then add a note to this chronology to cross reference (significant information may also be added).

Name:		
DOB:		Form:
Date	Information/Details of concerns or contact	Print Name and Signature

Appendix 3

Logging a concern about a child's safety and welfare

Part 1 (for use by any staff)

Pupil's Name:	Date of Birth: FORM:
Date and Time of Incident:	Date and Time (of writing):
Name: Print: Job Title:	Signature:
Note the reason(s) for recording the incident.	
Record the following factually: Who? What (if recording a verbal disclosure by a child use their words)? Where? When (date and time of incident)? Any witnesses?	
Professional opinion where relevant (how and why might this have happened?)	
Note actions, including names of anyone to whom your information was passed.	

Any other relevant information (distinguish between fact and opinion).

Check to make sure your report is clear to someone else reading it.

Please give this form to your Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Part 2 (for use by the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL))

Time and date information received by DSL, and from whom.		
Any advice sought by DSL (date, time, name, role, organisation, and advice given).		
Action taken (referral to First Response (MARF completed)/children's social care/monitoring advice given to appropriate staff/EHAF etc. with reasons. Note time, date, names, who information shared with and when etc.		
Parent's informed Y/N and reasons.		
Outcome Record names of individuals/agencies who have given		

information regarding outcome of any referral (if made).		
Where can additional information regarding child/incident be found (e.g. Pupil file, serious incident book)?		
Should a concern/ confidential file be commenced if there is not already one? Why?		
Signed		
Printed Name		

Policy written by: Kate Morison (Lead Practitioner)

Date Created: November 2023

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