Aspire and Shine
Education Trust

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

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Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

1. Policy introduction and ethos

The purpose of this policy is to detail how Aspire and Shine Education Trust (ASET) ensures that all children and young people within the Trust are protected and safeguarded from harm, reflecting current legislation, known best practices, and compliance with relevant government guidance.

This policy applies to all staff, governors, volunteers, and visitors, and outlines the Trust's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as a core part of its ethos and values. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and this policy sets out the expectations for a whole-school approach to child protection.

This policy is informed by the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, which together set out the responsibilities of the Trust and other agencies in identifying, responding to, and preventing harm to children.

Trust ethos

At Aspire and Shine Education Trust, we recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection, and justice.

Our child protection policy addresses all forms of prejudice and discrimination, including both misogyny and misandry, ensuring a balanced and inclusive approach to safeguarding all pupils.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the MAT, and outlines our academies commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as a core part of its ethos and values. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and this policy sets out the expectations for a whole-school approach to child protection.

Annual review and public availability

This Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed by the MAT board.

Date of last review: September 2025 (v10.0), September 2026 (V 11)

Date of next review: September 2027

The policy is made publicly available via the Trust and academy websites and can be requested in alternative formats if needed.

2. Statutory duties and legal framework

Our safeguarding arrangements are shaped by both national legislation and statutory guidance, as well as local safeguarding expectations in Nottinghamshire and procedures set by the relevant local authority and safeguarding partners. Together, these establish the legal duties and operational standards our academies must meet to keep children safe.

2.1 National legislative duties

We carry out all functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in line with:

- Education Act 2002
    - *Section 175* - duty on local authorities, governing bodies of maintained schools, and FE colleges.

  - *Section 157* - equivalent duty on proprietors of independent schools, academies, and free schools.
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015
- Children Act 1989 & Children Act 2004 - duties to safeguard and promote welfare, including participation in local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- Children and Social Work Act 2017 (Section 16H) - duty to provide information to safeguarding partners when requested.
- Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Section 26) - Prevent Duty.
- Teachers' Standards (2021) - professional responsibility to safeguard pupils.
- Childcare Act 2006 & Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018
- Serious Crime Act 2015 - mandatory duty for staff to report known cases of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in under-18s disclosed to them during their work.
- Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR, and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025

2.2 Statutory guidance

We have regard to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Working Together to improve school attendance (2026)
- Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners (DfE) (2024)
- Relevant national guidance on safer recruitment, online safety, and specific safeguarding issues.

These documents set out requirements including:

- A whole-school approach to safeguarding.
- Clear referral and reporting procedures.
- The appointment of a suitably trained Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with appropriate resources and time.
- Safer recruitment practices and maintenance of a Single Central Record.
- Ongoing staff training and annual safeguarding updates.
- Systems for children to express concerns and be listened to.
- Procedures for managing allegations and low-level concerns.
- Online safety measures, including filtering and monitoring in line with the DfE Filtering and Monitoring Standards (2026).
- Compliance with legal notification duties (e.g. private fostering, pupil deletions from roll).

2.3 Local safeguarding expectations

At Aspire and Shine Education Trust, we are committed to meeting the expectations set out by the relevant Safeguarding Children Partnership for each academy's local authority area (see Appendix 7). These include:

- Following the multi-agency procedures set by the relevant local Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP, NCSCP or DDSCP) and ensuring they are reflected in our Trust and academy specific policies.
- Engaging fully in local safeguarding arrangements, including early help pathways, child protection conferences, and multi-agency risk assessments.
- Completing the annual Section 175/157 safeguarding audit and acting on any identified areas for improvement.
- Participating in serious case reviews, child safeguarding practice reviews, and learning reviews where appropriate.
- Liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day of any allegation against a person working with children, including volunteers and third-party providers.
- Maintaining comprehensive safeguarding records to inform review of concerns and ensure effective information sharing with safeguarding partners.
- Ensuring all staff are aware of local referral routes, including the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City schools, and Starting Point for our Derbyshire school.
- Promoting a culture of listening to children, with clear systems for pupils to raise concerns and be taken seriously.

2.4 Core duties in practice

To fulfil our statutory and local safeguarding obligations, we will:

- Engage with local safeguarding partners and act on requests for information.
- Appoint and support a Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies, where applicable) with the authority, training, and time to carry out the role.
- Maintain accountability for safeguarding across leadership and governance.
- Operate safer recruitment, including DBS/barred list checks, prohibition checks, right-to-work checks, and online searches for shortlisted candidates.
- Keep an up-to-date Single Central Record covering all required staff, volunteers, and governance.
- Check suitability for early/later years provision in line with the Childcare Disqualification Regulations.
- Refer to the DBS where an individual is removed from regulated activity due to safeguarding concerns.
- Consider referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency in cases of serious misconduct.
- Meet the Prevent Duty, including risk assessment, training, and referrals.
- Report known cases of FGM in under-18s directly to the police (teachers only).
- Notify the local authority about private fostering arrangements and deletions from roll.
- Provide induction and annual safeguarding updates to all staff, ensuring familiarity with Part 1 of KCSIE and relevant annexes.
- Implement and review online safety measures including filtering, monitoring, and cyber security standards.

2.5 Key Definitions

Significant Harm: The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children. There are no absolute criteria for determining what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the degree and extent of physical harm, the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect, and the extent of premeditation, and the presence or degree of threat, coercion, sadism, and bizarre or unusual elements.

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.

Prejudice based-harm: All staff should recognise that children may experience prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-based prejudice and other forms of discrimination. Such experiences may affect a child's welfare, wellbeing, mental health, sense of safety and willingness to seek help.

Staff will remain alert to the signs and impact of prejudice-based harm and will consider concerns within safeguarding practice where appropriate.

Concerns will not be treated solely as behaviour, equality or disciplinary matters where they may affect a child's welfare, wellbeing or safety. They must be reported and recorded in accordance with the setting's safeguarding procedures.

Discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse and other prejudice-based incidents, will be recognised, recorded and responded to within the Trust's child-on-child abuse arrangements.

Physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect are defined in full in Part One of KCSIE 2026, which all staff must read.

The Trust recognises that the definition of sexual abuse within the final September 2026 edition of Keeping Children Safe in Education has been revised and expanded to align with *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*. Staff will use the definition contained within the current statutory guidance when recognising, reporting and responding to concerns relating to sexual abuse.

Relevant staff have been informed of the revised wording and the additional clarification provided within KCSIE 2026. Through induction, training and safeguarding updates, staff will be supported to understand the indicators of sexual abuse and their responsibilities in responding appropriately to concerns.

3. Aims and responsibilities

At Aspire and Shine Education Trust, safeguarding is a shared responsibility that demands clear leadership, accountability, and a whole-school commitment to protecting children. We strive to create a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment where pupils feel secure, valued, and heard. All staff are expected to understand their safeguarding responsibilities and respond promptly to any concerns. Safeguarding is embedded throughout academy life—from the curriculum and pastoral care to staff conduct—ensuring it remains a central focus. We work in close partnership with families and external agencies to safeguard children from harm, and our approach is firmly rooted in the principles outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

3.1 Whole-school safeguarding culture

We are committed to maintaining a whole-school approach to safeguarding that reflects vigilance, openness, and accountability. This commitment is reflected in the systems we have in place to ensure pupils can express concerns and be taken seriously, and in the safe culture we foster for whistleblowing and raising low-level concerns in line with statutory guidance. Staff are supported to feel confident in reporting concerns and challenging unsafe practices. Safeguarding is fully integrated into our policies, curriculum, and daily routines, ensuring it is part of the fabric of academy life. Our approach is inclusive, addressing the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND and additional vulnerabilities. Our child protection policy addresses all forms of prejudice and discrimination, including both misogyny and misandry, ensuring a balanced and inclusive approach to safeguarding all pupils.

The governing body, Trust Board and academy leaders will promote an inclusive, anti-discriminatory culture in which racism and other forms of discriminatory behaviour are recognised, challenged and addressed as part of the academy's safeguarding responsibilities.

Children will be provided with accessible ways to report prejudice-based and discriminatory harm and will be supported to have confidence that their concerns will be listened to, taken seriously and acted upon.

Relevant safeguarding information, including incidents involving prejudice-based harm, discrimination, racism or faith-targeted abuse, will be reviewed to identify patterns and themes and to inform staff training, preventative education, pastoral support, risk assessment and continuous improvement in safeguarding practice.

We also recognise that safeguarding extends beyond the school gates, encompassing online safety, peer relationships, and wider community contexts. The Trust's approach to contextual safeguarding and extra-familial harm is outlined in Appendix 8

The following policies and statutory guidance contribute to the Trust and Academies whole-school approach to safeguarding:

- Behaviour Policy (including Anti-Bullying physical restraint and searching)
- Child-on-child abuse procedures contained within this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Code of Conduct for Parents, Carers and Visitors
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Looked After Children Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Staff Disciplinary Procedure – including Allegations Against Staff and Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Guidance
- Radicalisation – Prevent Duty- (Academies have a Prevent Action Plan and Risk Assessment).
- Knife Crime Guidance

- Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy
- Mental and Physical Health (KCSiE 2026 Part One, Part Two and Annex A and Annex B)
- CRB - Use of Reasonable Force Guidance
- Visitors and VIP Guidance
- The neglect toolkit issued by the academy's local Safeguarding Children Partnership (available from the partnership's website)
- The department provides Searching Screening and Confiscation Advice for schools. The UKCIS Education Group has published guidance on making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes (including images digitally altered or wholly generated by artificial intelligence) which outlines how to respond to an incident. All such incidents mandate a safeguarding response.

Each of these policies is informed by relevant sections of KCSIE 2026 and reflects statutory guidance, best practice and the Trust's safeguarding ethos.

3.2 Roles and responsibilities

Local Governing Body

The governing body ensures strategic oversight of safeguarding by:

- Appointing a trained link governor for safeguarding and receiving regular reports from the DSL.
- Ensuring all governors have read Part 2 of KCSIE 2026 (and at least one governor reads the full guidance).
- Ensuring safeguarding policies and procedures are in place, reviewed annually, and aligned with the thresholds and protocols of the academy's local Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- Monitoring the Single Central Record to ensure compliance with all statutory vetting checks, including DBS and Section 128 checks.
- Overseeing safer recruitment practices and ensuring a safeguarding culture throughout the organisation.
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead from the senior leadership team and ensuring effective cover arrangements.
- Ensuring governors themselves are subject to appropriate checks and safeguarding training.
- Engaging in the annual Section 175/157 safeguarding audit and strategic reviews of safeguarding practice.
- Ensuring safeguarding is a standing item at governing body meetings and providing strategic challenge.
- Ensuring the academy's online safety arrangements, including filtering and monitoring, comply with the DfE Filtering and Monitoring Standards (2026).
- Receiving and reviewing the annual filtering and monitoring review report.
- Ensuring all governors undergo:
    - Enhanced DBS checks (or basic DBS checks for governors who do not engage in regulated activity)
    - Section 128 checks for those in management positions
    - Identity verification
    - Safeguarding induction and training before taking up their role
    - Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 checks (where applicable)

Headteacher

The headteacher provides operational leadership of safeguarding by:

- Ensuring all staff, volunteers, and contractors receive safeguarding induction before commencing work.
- Allocating sufficient time, training, and resources to enable the DSL to fulfil their role.
- Promoting a culture where staff feel confident to raise concerns about pupils or practice.
- Liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in cases of allegations against staff, including supply staff and volunteers.
- Ensuring safeguarding concerns such as poor attendance, children missing education, forced marriage, or domestic abuse are identified and acted upon.
- Overseeing regular review of the child protection policy to ensure compliance with KCSIE, *Working Together*, and local procedures.
- Ensuring staff are aware of Operation Encompass and domestic abuse notifications.
- Ensuring online safety education is embedded across the curriculum in line with statutory guidance.
- Ensure attendance concerns are treated as safeguarding issues; particularly where persistent absence may indicate welfare concerns. Implement the statutory expectations of *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)*, including early intervention and multi-agency collaboration.
- Ensure the annual review of filtering and monitoring systems is completed by the designated SLT member, DSL, and IT support, and that findings are reported to governors.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is the lead professional for safeguarding and child protection and will:

- Have a clearly defined role and be provided with sufficient time, supervision, and support to carry it out.
- Complete updated safeguarding training at least every two years.
- Promote a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings.
- Make referrals to children's social care, police, or the Channel programme where required.
- Liaise with safeguarding partners and attend multi-agency meetings and case conferences.
- Maintain secure, accurate, and confidential safeguarding records.
- Ensure all staff know how to report concerns and are familiar with safeguarding procedures.
- Lead on online safety, including the academy's filtering and monitoring systems.
- Ensure safeguarding records are transferred securely when pupils move school and that support is continuous during transitions.
- Liaise with the senior mental health lead and external support agencies as appropriate.
- Be available during school hours and ensure Deputy DSLs can provide cover if absent.
- Meet regularly with Deputy DSLs to review caseloads and procedures.
- **Receive regular safeguarding supervision** from the Headteacher or an external supervisor to:
    - Reflect on complex cases and decision-making
    - Manage the emotional impact of safeguarding work

- Identify training needs and areas for development
- Ensure accountability and quality assurance
- Supervision takes place at least termly and is recorded

All staff

All staff, including volunteers and visiting professionals, must:

- Read and understand Part One of KCSIE 2026 in its entirety and the Trust child protection policy, and any other policies the school/college deems appropriate.
- Recognise signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and contextual harm.
- Report concerns immediately using the academy's safeguarding procedures.
- Record concerns accurately and provide any additional relevant information.
- Share information with the DSL and, if necessary, make direct referrals to children's social care.
- Follow the Trust's low-level concerns procedures if worried about an adult's behaviour.
- Undertake safeguarding training at induction and at regular intervals thereafter.
- Maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" in relation to safeguarding.
- Supervise pupils appropriately when using online platforms and report any breaches in filtering or monitoring.
- Monitor attendance patterns and report persistent absence or children missing education.
- Be aware of specific safeguarding risks including FGM (known cases), forced marriage, honour-based abuse, exploitation, extremism, and serious violence.
- Support statutory assessments and work with social workers when required.
- Raise concerns about safeguarding practice (whistleblowing) when needed.

Volunteers

All volunteers must:

- Complete safeguarding induction before commencing work with children
- Understand and follow the Trust's safeguarding procedures
- Report any concerns immediately to the DSL
- Be subject to appropriate vetting checks based on their role and frequency of contact with children

Volunteers who frequently teach, train, instruct, or supervise children (once a week or more, or four or more days in a 30-day period) are in regulated activity and must have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information. The previous supervision exemption no longer applies.

3.3 Multi-agency working

We actively participate in the local authority's multi-agency safeguarding arrangements by:

- Sharing information lawfully and effectively with safeguarding partners, in line with the Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners (DfE).
- Participating in early help/family help assessments, child protection plans, and strategy meetings.
- Understanding and applying local thresholds and protocols for assessment and referral.
- Responding promptly to requests for information from safeguarding partners.

- Allowing access to children's social care for assessments under Section 17 (child in need) or Section 47 (child protection) of the Children Act 1989.
- Following the escalation procedures of the relevant partnership if disagreements arise about safeguarding decisions.
- Engaging in child safeguarding practice reviews, serious case reviews, and local learning events.
- Contributing to local safeguarding developments, including through the local authority's education safeguarding subgroup.

3.4 Staff induction and training

All staff, governors, and volunteers **must** receive safeguarding induction appropriate to their role before commencing work. This includes:

- Copies of key policies (child protection and safeguarding, behaviour, disciplinary procedure, online safety, whistleblowing)
- Identification of the DSL, deputies, and safeguarding governor.
- Familiarisation with reporting procedures and safeguarding systems.
- Confirmation of having read Part One of KCSIE 2026 in its entirety.

Safeguarding training is refreshed regularly and includes updates on emerging risks, online safety, and local procedures. Governors receive training to provide strategic challenge and oversight. DSLs receive enhanced training including data protection and cyber security.

4. Reporting concerns

At Aspire and Shine Education Trust, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff, volunteers, and visitors must report any concerns about a child's welfare, safety, or behaviour immediately. We follow clear procedures for reporting, recording, and escalating concerns in line with statutory guidance and local protocols.

4.1 Immediate response to a disclosure

If a child, parent, or carer shares a concern or discloses abuse:

- **Listen calmly and attentively**, allowing them to speak freely.
- **Use open-ended questions** (e.g., "Can you tell me what happened?").
- **Avoid leading or investigative questions**.
- **Reassure them** that they are being taken seriously and will be supported.
- **Do not promise confidentiality** — explain that you must share the information to keep them safe.
- **Avoid physical comfort gestures** unless clearly appropriate.
- **Do not ask the child to write a statement or sign your notes**.
- **Record the child's exact words** and any wishes or feelings expressed.
- **Report verbally to the DSL** and **write up the conversation as soon as possible**.
- **Wherever practicable,** manage disclosures with **two staff present**, ideally including the DSL or Deputy DSL. If this is not immediately possible due to the urgent nature of the disclosure or staff availability, proceed with one staff member and inform the DSL immediately afterwards. Document the reason why two staff were not present.

4.2 Reporting procedures

Staff must:

- Report concerns to the DSL or Deputy DSL as soon as possible, and by the end of the day at the latest.
- If the DSL is unavailable, report to the most senior person on site and ensure the DSL is informed later.
- In emergencies, call 999 or make a direct referral to the relevant local authority's MASH/referral line for the academy (see Appendix 7) — anyone can make a referral.
- Do not delay reporting due to uncertainty — if unsure, speak to the DSL.
- Do not view, copy, or share images in cases involving making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes (including AI-generated or digitally altered images).
- Share information only on a need-to-know basis.
- Report concerns about staff (including supply staff and volunteers) to the Headteacher, or to the Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Headteacher.

Examples of concerns include:

- Signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or radicalisation
- Child-on-child abuse, sexual violence, or harassment
- Domestic abuse, forced marriage, FGM, or honour-based abuse
- Online abuse or inappropriate adult communication
- Making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes (including AI-generated or digitally altered images)
- Private fostering arrangements
- Changes in behaviour, attendance, or presentation
- A person who may pose a risk to children living in the same household

4.3 Recording and escalation protocols

All concerns, decisions, and actions must be recorded:

- Immediately, and by the end of the same working day.
- The primary recording system is CPOMS. All staff with CPOMS access must use this system.
- Paper forms (Appendix 1 and Appendix 2) are provided for circumstances where a paper safeguarding file is required, for example when managing original hard-copy documentation, receiving transferred records from another setting, maintaining legacy records, or during periods when electronic systems are temporarily unavailable. Any paper records must be stored securely and referenced within CPOMS where appropriate.
- Paper forms (Appendix 3 & Appendix 4) should only be used when:
    - CPOMS is temporarily unavailable due to technical issues
    - Staff do not have CPOMS access (e.g., supply staff, volunteers, visitors)
    - In these cases, paper records must be transferred to CPOMS by the DSL within 24 hours
- Include date, time, context, and direct quotes or observations.
- Record facts, not assumptions, and include your full name and role.
- Note non-verbal behaviour and physical indicators (e.g., “bruise on right arm above elbow”).

- Tag child protection files separately from the main pupil file, using the appropriate forms to build the child protection file (Appendix 1 & Appendix 2).
- Transfer safeguarding records securely when a pupil moves *school/college* (within 5 working days) and obtain confirmation of receipt.
- Retain safeguarding records securely until the pupil reaches age 25.

The DSL:

- Monitors records for patterns and ensures appropriate escalation.
- Presses for reconsideration or escalates using the procedures of the academy's local Safeguarding Children Partnership if concerns persist or outcomes are unclear.

4.4 Confidentiality and consent

- Information is shared in line with the Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners (DfE), the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR, and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.
- Consent is not required to share information if a child or adult is at risk of significant or serious harm.
- Parents/carers are usually informed, unless doing so would increase risk.
- All non-routine information sharing is logged appropriately.
- If in doubt, staff should consult the DSL or Deputy DSL.

4.5 DSL Actions following a concern

The DSL or Deputy DSL will:

- Assess urgency and immediate safety needs.
- Review the child's presentation and known history.
- Inform relevant staff on a need-to-know basis.
- Use appropriate assessment tools (e.g., body maps (Appendix 5 to be used where CPOMS is not in use), contextual safeguarding tools).
- Refer to MASH (Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire) or Starting Point (Derbyshire), and to Prevent or Police where necessary.
- Consider early help, family help or internal pastoral support.
- Notify the local authority of private fostering arrangements.
- Follow up referrals within 48 hours and maintain contact with social workers.
- Attend and contribute to strategy meetings, child protection conferences, and core groups.
- Share reports with parents/carers, and where appropriate, the child.
- Document all actions, decisions, and rationales in the safeguarding record.
- Use escalation procedures if concerns are not addressed or outcomes are unclear.

FGM mandatory reporting:
In known cases of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), **teachers must report directly to the police via 101 by the end of the next working day**, in addition to informing the DSL.

4.6 Support for staff and pupils

We recognise that reporting safeguarding concerns can be distressing. Support is available through:

Support for staff:

- Key staff – DSLs, Senior Mental Health Leads, Headteacher, Trust CEO and Trust Team are in place to directly support staff.
- Access to helplines, counselling, and peer support, including referral to external services where appropriate.
- Time-out or supervision opportunities for staff affected by disclosures or safeguarding processes.
- Confidentiality and respectful handling of sensitive information to protect staff wellbeing.
- Whistleblowing and complaints procedures to raise concerns about unsafe practice or safeguarding failures.
- Staff wellbeing and supervision sessions, where available, to reflect on safeguarding practice and emotional impact.

Support for pupils:

- Pastoral support from trusted adults, mental health leads, PSHE leads, or designated pastoral staff.
- Safe spaces within each academy where pupils can go if they feel overwhelmed or need time out.
- Regular check-ins for pupils involved in safeguarding concerns, including those subject to child protection or early help / family help plans.
- Empowerment through education, including RSHE and PSHE lessons that build resilience, self-esteem, and understanding of safeguarding risks.

Staff should speak to the DSL or Headteacher if they feel a pupil requires additional support following a safeguarding concern.

4.7 Academy register of Designated Persons

This register is maintained at individual academy level – see Appendix 7.

Aspire and Shine Education Trust child protection & safeguarding flow chart

'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused, at risk of harm or neglect'

Concerned for a child's welfare in and outside of school?
Be alert to signs of abuse, low attendance, unusual behaviour and/or changes to presentation

A child makes a disclosure

- **Listen calmly and attentively**, allow them to speak freely and reassure them that they have made the right choice
- **Use open-ended questions** ("Can you tell me what happened?") and **avoid leading or investigative questions**
- **Reassure them** that they are being taken seriously and will be supported
- **Do not promise confidentiality** — explain that you must share the information to keep them safe
- **Avoid physical comfort gestures** unless **clearly** appropriate.
- **Do not ask the child to write a statement or sign your notes**
- **Record the child's exact words** and any wishes or feelings expressed on paper
- **Report verbally to the DSL** or SLT in DSL's absence and **write up the conversation as soon as possible**
- **Where possible**, manage disclosures with **two staff present**, ideally including the DSL or Deputy DSL

DO NOT DELAY. Take any immediate actions necessary if a child is in immediate danger and call the police on 101

Discussing concerns with DSL

- DSL to consider further actions and make necessary decisions
- If unsure call **Consultation Line** for advice: see appendix 7 for Local Authority specific details.
- Concerns, discussion, decisions and reasons for decision should be recorded in writing
- "Confidential concerns" or "Child protection file" should be opened and filed in line with academy procedures
- At all stages, the child's circumstance should be kept under review. Re-refer to relevant referral point if circumstances do not improve.

Still concerned in school time?

Make a safeguarding referral to the relevant Local-Authority Children's Social Care/Early Help (if safe).

See Appendix 7 for local authority-specific consultation and referral routes

- Have all child/families personal details to hand

Record all decisions and actions, working to agreed outcomes and within timescales.

Escalate any emerging threats/concerns by adopting the relevant Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures for each academy's local authority area.

Out of hours concern?

- Nottinghamshire 0300 456 45 46
- Nottingham City 0115 876 4800
- Derbyshire 01629 532 600

Allegations/concerns regarding adults? (paid or volunteer)

- Call LADO – see appendix 7
- Call NSPCC Whistle Blowing: **0800 028 0285**

Safeguarding concern resolved/no longer held

- Decide on actions needed to support child
- Implement any actions and support plans
- Record decisions and ensure follow ups take place

Consult with child and family if necessary

Agree support and refer to Local Authority guidance:

- Nottinghamshire Pathway to Provision
- Nottingham City Interim Continuum of Need NCSCP
- Derby City and Derbyshire Threshold Document

5. Supporting pupils

At Aspire and Shine Education Trust, we are committed to ensuring that all pupils feel safe, supported, and able to thrive. Safeguarding is not only about protecting children from deliberate harm but also about creating a nurturing environment in which they are valued, respected, and encouraged to achieve their full potential.

We recognise that some children may require additional support to stay safe, and we are dedicated to identifying and addressing these needs at the earliest opportunity. Our approach is informed by *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026*, *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*, and the *relevant Safeguarding Children Partnership* procedures for the academy's local authority area (see Appendix 7).

5.1 Whole-school commitment to support Contextual Safeguarding

We recognise that children may experience harm beyond their family home, including within peer groups, education settings, neighbourhoods, transport routes, public places and online environments. We will consider the people, places and relationships surrounding a child when assessing risk. Further information is contained within Appendix 8: Contextual Safeguarding and Extra-Familial Harm.

5.2 Early help, family help and pastoral support

- We are committed to the principles of early identification and intervention, distinguishing between universal services and community-based early help, and the targeted early help level of Family Help.
- Staff are trained to recognise when children may benefit from early help or family help and to raise these concerns with the DSL.
- The DSL will consider early help or family help assessments and referrals to external services, working closely with families to provide coordinated support.
- We make use of initiatives such as Operation Encompass, ensuring staff are informed of incidents of domestic abuse and can provide timely support.

5.3 Supporting vulnerable groups

We recognise that some pupils are more vulnerable to safeguarding concerns. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Children with social, emotional, or mental health needs
- Children in care and previously in care
- Young carers
- Children missing education or persistently absent
- Children affected by domestic abuse, substance misuse, or parental mental health difficulties
- Children at risk of criminal or sexual exploitation (CCE/CSE), radicalisation, or serious youth violence
- Children from minoritised groups who may face additional barriers or discrimination

We will make reasonable adjustments and provide targeted interventions to meet these pupils' needs. Support may include in-school provision, referrals to early help, family help or multi-agency working through the relevant local Safeguarding Children Partnership.

5.4 Mental health and wellbeing

- All staff are trained to be alert to the links between safeguarding and mental health.
- Where a child is experiencing mental health difficulties, we will work with parents, the academy Senior Mental Health Lead, health professionals, and external services such as CAMHS or MHST.
- We promote mental health through a whole-school approach, including wellbeing initiatives, safe spaces in school, and embedding resilience and coping strategies within the curriculum.

5.5 Use of restrictive practices

Restrictive practices are only used in exceptional circumstances to prevent harm and must be:

- Proportionate, reasonable, and necessary.
- In line with the Trust's behaviour policy.
- Carried out by staff trained in approved techniques and de-escalation approaches .
- Documented thoroughly, including the rationale, actions taken, and outcomes.
- Reported to parents/carers on the same day and, where appropriate, safeguarding partners.

Incidents involving restrictive intervention will be treated as safeguarding events and recorded on the academy's safeguarding recording system on the same day.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will review records regularly to identify any patterns or disproportionality, particularly for pupils with SEND or other vulnerabilities, and ensure that behaviour support plans and risk assessments are reviewed where necessary.

Restrictive practices must never be used as punishment or to enforce compliance. We prioritise de-escalation, pupil dignity, and emotional regulation. Any use of physical intervention is reviewed by the DSL and senior leadership to ensure safeguarding standards are upheld.

Staff who have not received training in restrictive practices must not use physical intervention except in emergency situations to prevent immediate serious harm. In such cases, they must report to the DSL and Headteacher immediately.

5.6 Trauma-informed and inclusive practice

- We adopt a trauma-informed approach, recognising the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) on behaviour, relationships, and learning.
- Staff are supported to respond with sensitivity and consistency, fostering trusting relationships and safe routines.
- We are committed to equality and inclusion, actively challenging discrimination and ensuring equity of access to support for all pupils.

5.7 Alternative provision and education outside of the academy

Where a pupil is placed in alternative provision or educated off-site, we:

- Retain overall safeguarding responsibility and maintain oversight of the pupil's welfare and progress.
- Share appropriate safeguarding information before placement commences, and throughout the placement where new concerns emerge, to ensure that children receive effective and coordinated safeguarding support.
- Seek and expect written assurance that the provider has effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place.

- Monitor attendance, progress, and wellbeing through regular contact with both the provider and the pupil.

5.8 Ongoing monitoring and transitions

- Safeguarding records are monitored to identify emerging patterns of concern.
- Individual support plans are regularly reviewed with pupils, parents/carers, and professionals.
- When pupils move school, safeguarding records are transferred securely and within five working days, in line with the local safeguarding partnership's expectations.

5.9 Empowering pupils

We are committed to equipping pupils with the knowledge and confidence to safeguard themselves by:

- Delivering RSHE/PSHE programmes that cover online safety, healthy relationships, exploitation, and resilience.
- Ensuring pupils know about support services such as Childline, NSPCC, and local safeguarding agencies.
- Embedding opportunities for pupil voice, such as ***school*** councils, wellbeing champions, or feedback forums, to shape our safeguarding culture.

5.10 Children Missing from Education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff must follow the academy's attendance procedures and report concerns about absence to the DSL immediately.

When a child is missing from education, we will:

- Make reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and ensure they are safe
- Contact parents/carers using all available contact numbers
- Contact emergency contacts if parents cannot be reached
- Liaise with the local authority and police if we have safeguarding concerns
- Follow the local authority's Children Missing Education procedures
- Notify the local authority when removing a pupil's name from the admission register in accordance with statutory requirements

If a child goes missing during the academy day:

- Inform the DSL and Headteacher (or most senior person on site) immediately.
- Carry out a thorough search of the school buildings, grounds and immediate perimeter.
- Check signing-out records, attendance records and any information relating to approved collection arrangements.
- Contact parents/carers and emergency contacts to establish whether the child has left the site or made contact with them.
- Where appropriate, speak with friends, siblings, classmates and staff who may have information about the child's whereabouts.

The police must be contacted immediately by calling 999 where there is an immediate risk to the child or others, including but not limited to:

- The child is very young or has significant additional vulnerabilities, severe learning difficulties, or physical or mental health needs.
- The child is believed to be in immediate danger, has entered a busy road, is near water, railways or other hazardous locations, or has threatened self-harm.
- There are concerns the child may have been abducted, coerced, exploited or is being targeted by an unsafe adult.

Where initial checks have been completed and the child's whereabouts remain unknown, but there is no evidence of immediate danger, the police should be contacted via 101 without delay.

As a Trust expectation, initial enquiries and searches should normally be completed within 30 minutes, and a report to police should not be delayed beyond this point unless there is confirmed information that the child is safe.

If at any stage information becomes available indicating an increased level of risk, a 999 emergency call must be made immediately.

All actions, decisions, searches undertaken, contacts made and outcomes must be recorded on the appropriate safeguarding recording system.

5.11 Elective Home Education (EHE)

Parents have the right to educate their children at home. However, we recognise that in some cases, the decision to home educate may be used to remove a child from the academy due to safeguarding concerns or to avoid exclusion.

When a parent expresses their intention to home educate, we will:

- Inform the DSL immediately
- Arrange a meeting with parents to discuss their reasons and ensure they understand their responsibilities
- Assess whether there are any safeguarding concerns that should be referred to children's social care
- Inform the local authority's EHE team
- Follow the local authority's procedures for pupils being removed from roll for EHE
- Where there are safeguarding concerns, discuss with the local authority and MASH (or Starting Point for our Derbyshire school) before removing the child from roll

We will not seek to prevent parents from educating their children at home but will ensure appropriate safeguarding checks are in place before a child is removed from roll.

Where any safeguarding or welfare concerns are present, the case must be subject to Trust-level oversight before the pupil is removed from the school roll. This includes, but is not limited to, cases where:

- the child is subject to a Child Protection Plan or is a Child in Need;
- there are current or recent safeguarding concerns, including concerns which may not meet the threshold for statutory intervention;
- there are significant concerns about the child’s welfare, vulnerability or wellbeing;

- there are significant or persistent attendance concerns, including patterns of absence which may indicate that the child is at risk of becoming a child missing education;
- there are concerns about the child's whereabouts, engagement with education or the suitability of the proposed home education arrangements;
- there is evidence or concern that the decision to electively home educate may be associated with the child's safeguarding, attendance, behaviour or welfare circumstances; or
- there is any other concern which, in the professional judgement of the DSL, Headteacher or Trust safeguarding lead, means that removal from the school roll could increase the child's vulnerability or reduce the visibility of the child to safeguarding services.

Trust oversight will provide challenge and assurance that:

1. all relevant safeguarding, attendance and welfare information has been considered;
2. appropriate discussions have taken place with the parent/carer and, where appropriate, the child;
3. relevant safeguarding partners and/or the local authority have been informed or consulted where appropriate;
4. any existing safeguarding plans, referrals or multi-agency arrangements have been appropriately considered;
5. the proposed arrangements for the child's education and ongoing visibility are understood; and
6. removal from the admission register is appropriate and compliant with statutory requirements.

5.12 Safeguarding during educational visits and off-site activities

Safeguarding arrangements apply to all educational visits and off-site activities. We will:

- Complete a risk assessment for all trips and visits, including safeguarding considerations
- Ensure appropriate staff-to-pupil ratios and supervision arrangements
- Ensure at least one member of staff on each trip has safeguarding training
- Provide staff with emergency contact details for the DSL and senior leadership
- Brief all staff and volunteers on safeguarding procedures before the visit
- Ensure pupils know how to raise concerns during the visit
- Obtain parental consent and share relevant medical and safeguarding information with trip leaders on a need-to-know basis
- For residential visits, ensure accommodation providers have appropriate safeguarding policies and DBS checks for staff
- For visits abroad, consider additional safeguarding risks and ensure staff are aware of local emergency procedures.
-

6. Child-on-child abuse and harmful sexual behaviour

The Trust recognises that children can abuse, exploit or harm other children. Abuse can occur between children of any age, sex or background, including those attending the same or different schools, and may take place within intimate personal relationships, peer groups, community settings or online environments. We recognise that child-on-child abuse can be shaped by contextual and extra-familial factors beyond the family home. When assessing concerns, we will consider any wider influences, including peer relationships, neighbourhoods, transport routes, community locations and online activity, that may have contributed to or increased the risk of harm.

Child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding matter. It is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. It will not be dismissed as "banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys". Failure to challenge such behaviour can contribute to a culture in which abuse, misogyny and other harmful behaviours become normalised.

All staff must maintain an attitude that "it could happen here". The absence of reports does not mean that abuse is not taking place, and staff should remain professionally curious to signs, indicators and changes in presentation.

The Trust recognises that some forms of child-on-child abuse are more likely to be experienced by girls and perpetrated by boys. However, all children can experience or cause harm, and every concern will be taken seriously.

Child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for the child who has experienced the harm, the child alleged to have caused it and any other children who may have been affected. Our response will be child-centred, proportionate, trauma-informed and based on the circumstances, wishes, safety and needs of all children involved.

In responding to child-on-child abuse, each academy will:

- prioritise the safety and best interests of all children involved;
- consider the wishes, feelings and lived experiences of each child;
- take account of age, developmental stage, SEND, communication needs and other vulnerabilities;
- consider any power imbalance, coercion, discrimination or contextual safeguarding factors;
- provide appropriate safeguarding support alongside any disciplinary response;
- involve safeguarding partners and specialist services where required.

6.1 Forms of child-on-child abuse

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

- bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying;
- discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse and other prejudice-based incidents;
- abuse within intimate personal relationships between children, sometimes referred to as teenage relationship abuse;
- physical abuse, including hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm;
- physical assault, threats of serious violence, or harm involving or threatening the use of a weapon;

- harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence, including behaviour associated with misogyny or misandry;
- sexual comments, sexualised language, jokes, taunting or unwanted sexualised behaviour;
- causing another person to engage in sexual activity without consent;
- rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- making or sharing nudes or semi-nudes, whether described as consensual or non-consensual, including photographs, videos, livestreams and images altered or wholly generated using artificial intelligence;
- sharing unwanted explicit material or pornography;
- sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments or messages, coercion, threats or pressure to share images or perform sexual acts online;
- upskirting; and
- initiation or hazing-type violence and rituals, including activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation.

Abuse can occur as an isolated incident or as part of a pattern of behaviour. It may occur face-to-face, online or through a combination of both. Online abuse can also facilitate, threaten or encourage abuse taking place offline.

6.2 Harmful sexual behaviour

Harmful sexual behaviour can occur between two or more children of any age and sex, including primary-aged children. It can be displayed by an individual or a group and may be directed towards one child or a group of children.

Sexual behaviour exists on a continuum, ranging from developmentally expected behaviour through to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent behaviour. Behaviour that is inappropriate, problematic, abusive or violent may cause developmental and emotional harm and may escalate if it is not identified and addressed early.

When assessing sexual behaviour, the DSL will consider:

- the age and developmental stage of all children involved;
- the nature, frequency and context of the behaviour;
- whether the behaviour was spontaneous or planned;
- any difference in age, maturity, size, status or power;
- whether there was coercion, secrecy, intimidation, exchange or reward;
- whether a child has SEND, a disability or another vulnerability;
- whether the behaviour is isolated or forms part of a pattern;
- whether other children may have been affected;
- the impact on the child who experienced the behaviour; and
- any evidence that a child involved has experienced abuse, exploitation or trauma themselves.

6.3 Prevention

Each academy will take steps to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by:

- establishing a culture in which children feel valued, heard and understood;
- making reporting systems well promoted, easily understood and accessible to all children;

- identifying trusted adults to whom children can speak;
- responding consistently to inappropriate, discriminatory or harmful language and behaviour;
- ensuring staff understand the indicators and different forms of child-on-child abuse;
- identifying patterns, locations, times or groups associated with increased risk;
- considering the additional barriers faced by children with SEND, disabilities, communication needs or other vulnerabilities;
- providing age-appropriate, evidence-based Relationships, Sex and Health Education through regularly timetabled lessons;
- teaching children about respectful relationships, consent, boundaries, equality, online safety, the making and sharing of images, and how to seek help;
- challenging sexism, racism, misogyny, misandry, homophobia, biphobia, discriminatory behaviour, sexual harassment and other derogatory or violent behaviour; and
- reviewing safeguarding, behaviour and curriculum information to identify emerging patterns or cultural concerns.

The DSL will ensure that child-on-child abuse is considered within the academy's safeguarding training, contextual safeguarding work, curriculum planning and safeguarding evaluation.

6.4 Reporting concerns

Children may report child-on-child abuse to any member of staff. They may make a direct verbal report, communicate through behaviour, writing, online reporting arrangements or another child or adult.

Staff must recognise that a child may not:

- understand that the behaviour constitutes abuse;
- feel ready or able to make a direct disclosure;
- know how to explain what has happened;
- want to be described as a victim; or
- feel able to identify the other child as having caused harm.

Staff should be aware that children may not use language that adults readily recognise as abusive and may disclose incidents only in part, over time or indirectly through behaviour, attendance issues or emotional presentation. Staff must remain professionally curious and act upon indicators or concerns without waiting for a direct disclosure.

Any member of staff who receives a report or has a concern must:

- listen carefully and calmly;
- take the child seriously;
- avoid expressing shock, disbelief or judgement;
- not ask leading or investigative questions;
- not undertake their own investigation;
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking;
- explain that the information must be shared with the DSL so that appropriate help can be provided;
- never promise confidentiality;

- make a factual written record as soon as possible, using the child's own words where appropriate; and
- report the matter to the DSL or a deputy without delay.

Where a child is in immediate danger, staff must take urgent action to secure the child's safety and contact the DSL, children's social care and/or the police as appropriate. Staff must not wait until the end of the school day to report an urgent safeguarding concern.

Parents, carers and visitors should report concerns immediately to the DSL, a deputy DSL or, in their absence, the Headteacher. The school's reporting arrangements will be publicised through its website, safeguarding information and visitor procedures.

6.5 Initial response by the DSL

The DSL or deputy will take the lead in responding to concerns. The response will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will consider the best interests, wishes, safety and welfare of all children involved.

The DSL will:

- establish the immediate safeguarding needs of the children involved;
- consider whether any other children may have experienced or witnessed harm;
- make and record an initial safeguarding decision;
- consider the wishes and feelings of the child who has experienced the alleged harm;
- consider the needs and vulnerabilities of the child alleged to have caused the harm;
- decide what information can appropriately be shared and with whom;
- consider whether parents or carers should be informed;
- determine whether a safety plan and/or risk and needs assessment is required;
- consider whether any physical or digital evidence requires preservation and will follow police advice where criminal offences may have occurred;
- consider whether the matter requires internal management, universal or community-based support, Family Help, children's social care involvement or police referral;
- consult children's social care, the police or specialist services where necessary;
- record the decision, action taken and rationale; and
- keep the arrangements under review.

Parents and carers will normally be informed unless doing so could place a child at increased risk, prejudice a statutory investigation or conflict with advice from children's social care or the police.

The school will not unnecessarily delay safeguarding action while waiting for a child to provide a complete account or for the outcome of an external investigation.

6.6 Safety Plan and Risk Assessment

Following a report of sexual violence, the DSL or deputy will undertake an immediate safety plan / risk assessment. Following a report of sexual harassment or other harmful sexual behaviour, the need for a written assessment will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The assessment will consider:

- the protection, needs and wishes of the child who experienced the alleged harm;
- whether there may be other children who have experienced harm;

- the needs, vulnerabilities and risks associated with the child alleged to have caused the harm;
- the safety of other children and, where relevant, adults;
- the location and timing of the alleged incident;
- any contextual safeguarding or extra-familial risks, including peer-group influences, neighbourhood factors, community locations, transport routes and online activity;
- online risks, including the circulation of images, messages or identifying information;
- any continuing contact between the children;
- classroom, breaktime, transport and wraparound-care arrangements;
- any action needed to protect the anonymity and privacy of the children;
- whether specialist advice or input is required; and
- the educational, emotional and pastoral needs of everyone affected.

Safety plans / risk assessments will be recorded and regularly reviewed. They will not be used as a reason automatically to remove the child who has experienced harm from their normal education or activities.

6.7 Deciding the response

Depending on the circumstances, one or more of the following responses may be appropriate:

1. **Internal safeguarding and pastoral management** where the behaviour can be managed safely and appropriately by the academy and statutory intervention is not required.
2. **Universal services or community-based early help**, where additional support would benefit a child or family.
3. **Family Help**, where the child or family requires targeted early help or statutory support under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.
4. **Referral to local authority children's social care**, where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm or may be in immediate danger.
5. **Referral to the police**, normally alongside children's social care, where a criminal offence may have occurred.

Reports of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault will be referred to the police. This remains the starting point even where the child alleged to have caused the harm is under the age of criminal responsibility.

The DSL will follow the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for the area in which the child lives or the incident occurred. Relevant contact information for Nottinghamshire, Nottingham City and Derbyshire is contained within the local safeguarding appendix to this policy.

Where children's social care or the police are involved, the academy will agree with those agencies how the children will be informed and how the investigation can be supported. The academy will not wait for the outcome of a statutory or criminal investigation before taking reasonable steps to safeguard children.

6.8 Making and sharing nudes and semi-nudes

Every incident involving the making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes requires a safeguarding response, regardless of whether the activity is described as consensual or non-consensual.

This includes images or videos:

- taken by the child themselves;
- taken by another person;
- captured during a livestream;
- digitally altered; or
- wholly generated using artificial intelligence, including deepfake or “deep nude” images.

Staff must not view, copy, print, save, forward or ask a child to send an image unless specifically advised to do so by the police or another appropriate statutory agency. Devices may be secured or confiscated in accordance with the academy’s Searching, Screening and Confiscation procedures.

The DSL will follow the current UKCIS guidance on sharing nudes and semi-nudes and will consider the age and development of the children, consent, coercion, exploitation, vulnerability, circulation of the material and the risk of further harm.

The DSL will also consider the welfare of any children who may have received, viewed, shared or been pressured to engage with the material, whether intentionally or unintentionally.

6.9 Supporting the child who has experienced harm

The child will be reassured that they are being taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe. They will not be made to feel responsible, ashamed or that they have created a problem by reporting the concern.

Support may include:

- a trusted adult and regular check-ins;
- an individual safety or support plan;
- adjustments to lessons, movement, social times or transport;
- pastoral, SEND or mental health support;
- specialist external support;
- support to maintain attendance and engagement in education; and
- protection from bullying, retaliation, intimidation or online harassment.

The child’s wishes will be considered, but the DSL may need to take action that the child has not requested in order to safeguard them or others. The reasons for this will be explained sensitively.

The child who has experienced harm should remain in their normal educational arrangements wherever reasonably possible. Any changes should be necessary, proportionate and agreed with the child and their parents or carers where appropriate.

6.10 Supporting the child alleged to have caused harm

A child alleged to have caused harm may also have unmet safeguarding, welfare, SEND or mental health needs and may have experienced abuse, exploitation or trauma themselves.

The academy will:

- safeguard and support the child;
- avoid language that unnecessarily criminalises or labels them;
- ensure that they understand the concerns and expectations, subject to advice from statutory agencies;
- consider whether a referral for support or assessment is required;
- provide appropriate education about boundaries, consent, relationships and behaviour;

- maintain suitable educational provision; and
- monitor the effectiveness of support and risk-management arrangements.

Providing support does not prevent the academy from applying proportionate sanctions under its Behaviour Policy. Safeguarding decisions and disciplinary decisions are related but separate processes.

6.11 Other children and the wider school community

The DSL will consider the needs of witnesses, friends, siblings and other children who may have been directly or indirectly affected. This includes children who may have observed the incident, shared or viewed harmful material, been named in communications, participated in group chats, or experienced distress as a result of the incident or its aftermath.

Where an incident indicates a wider cultural or safeguarding issue, the academy may take broader action through:

- increased supervision;
- staff training;
- curriculum work;
- pupil voice activity;
- targeted education;
- review of reporting systems;
- review of behaviour patterns and safeguarding records; or
- amendment of relevant policies and procedures.

Care will be taken not to identify the children involved or allow rumours or information to circulate, particularly through social media.

6.12 Confidentiality, anonymity and information sharing

Information will be shared only with those who need it for safeguarding, welfare, investigation or support purposes. Children and parents will be told what information can be shared, with whom and why, unless doing so would increase risk or prejudice an investigation.

Staff and governors must not promise confidentiality or disclose information inappropriately. The academy will take reasonable steps to protect the anonymity of children involved in reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment.

Information will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR, the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 and the Trust's information-governance arrangements. Data-protection law does not prevent information being shared where this is necessary and proportionate to safeguard a child.

6.13 Recording, monitoring and governance

All concerns, reports, decisions, referrals, risk assessments, support arrangements and outcomes will be recorded on the academy's safeguarding recording system. Records will include the rationale for decisions, including decisions not to refer to another agency.

The DSL will monitor individual cases and emerging patterns, including repeated concerns involving the same children, locations, times, peer groups or types of behaviour.

Following significant incidents of child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment or sexual violence, the DSL will review the school's response and any lessons learned.

The review will consider:

- whether safeguarding procedures were followed appropriately;
- whether children received timely and effective support;
- whether risk management and safety planning arrangements were effective;
- whether any patterns, trends, locations, peer groups or cultural issues have been identified;
- whether staff require additional training, guidance or supervision;
- whether curriculum content, behaviour expectations or reporting systems should be strengthened; and
- whether any amendments to safeguarding policies, procedures or practice are required.

The purpose of the review is to promote continuous improvement in safeguarding practice and reduce the likelihood of future harm.

Anonymised information about the nature, frequency and response to child-on-child abuse will be reported through the Trust's safeguarding governance arrangements. The Trust Board, as proprietor, will seek assurance that:

- reporting systems are accessible and effective;
- staff understand and follow the procedures;
- children receive appropriate support;
- incidents are recorded and addressed consistently;
- lessons are learned from individual cases and patterns; and
- the child protection, behaviour, RSHE, online safety and related policies remain aligned.

This section should be read alongside the Trust's Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Online Safety Policy, RSHE Policy, Equalities Policy, Searching, Screening and Confiscation procedures, Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy and Complaints Policy.

7. Safeguarding in the curriculum

At Aspire and Shine Education Trust, we believe safeguarding is most effective when it is embedded across the whole curriculum and academy life. Our aim is to equip pupils with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to recognise risk, seek help, and make safe, informed choices in all aspects of their lives.

7.1 Whole-school approach to preventative education

- Safeguarding education is delivered through a planned, progressive, and age-appropriate programme that reflects our *Trust's* values and ethos.
- Learning is timetabled and reinforced across the wider curriculum and through the wider *school cu*lture.
- Delivery includes:
    - RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education)
    - PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education)
    - Computing and Online Safety
    - Assemblies, themed days/weeks, and external speakers
    - Cross-curricular links (e.g., English, Drama, Citizenship, PE)

- Our curriculum promotes a culture of zero tolerance towards abuse, discrimination, harassment, and violence of any kind.

7.2 Key topics covered

We ensure pupils are educated on a broad range of safeguarding issues, using evidence-based resources and adapting content to reflect local safeguarding priorities.

Topics include (but are not limited to):

- Bullying (including cyberbullying and prejudice-based bullying)
- Racism, faith-targeted abuse, discrimination and the impact of prejudice-based harm
- Online safety, digital resilience, and responsible use of technology
- Child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, and harmful sexual behaviour
- Domestic abuse and healthy relationships
- Consent, bodily autonomy, and respect for boundaries
- Exploitation (Child Sexual Exploitation, Child Criminal Exploitation, county lines)
- Radicalisation and extremism
- Honour-based abuse, including FGM and forced marriage
- Mental health, resilience, and emotional wellbeing
- Substance misuse and risky behaviours
- Road, fire, and water safety
- Knife crime and serious youth violence
- Making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes, including AI-generated or digitally altered images

7.3 Empowering pupils

We aim to create an environment where pupils:

- Feel safe to ask questions, challenge unsafe behaviours, and express concerns without fear of stigma.
- Understand their rights, responsibilities, and the importance of respecting others.
- Know how to access help, both in school and externally (e.g., Childline, NSPCC, Kooth).
- Recognise signs of abuse, exploitation, and coercion.
- Develop resilience, empathy, critical thinking, and self-esteem.

Pupil voice is central to our approach. We actively involve pupils in shaping, evaluating, and improving our safeguarding curriculum through various feedback mechanisms.

7.4 Staff responsibilities

All staff are expected to:

- Reinforce safeguarding messages consistently across subjects and interactions.
- Be alert to safeguarding concerns or disclosures arising during lessons.
- Use age-appropriate, inclusive, and accessible language and resources.
- Adapt delivery to meet the needs of pupils with SEND and additional vulnerabilities.
- Share any concerns promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Staff receive regular training and updates to ensure they are confident in delivering sensitive content and responding appropriately.

7.5 Curriculum review and evaluation

Our safeguarding curriculum is reviewed annually and informed by:

- Pupil feedback and engagement.
- Local and national safeguarding trends and emerging risks.
- Updates to statutory guidance (e.g., *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*, *Relationships, Sex and Health Education statutory guidance*).
- Input from the local Safeguarding Children Partnership, MASH/Starting Point, Operation Encompass, and other safeguarding partners.

We are committed to continuous improvement, ensuring our safeguarding curriculum remains relevant, inclusive, and impactful, preparing pupils for life in modern Britain.

8. Online safety including the use of mobile phones, cameras and other devices

At Aspire and Shine Education Trust, we recognise that safeguarding children includes protecting them from risks associated with digital technologies. Online safety is a core part of our safeguarding strategy and is embedded across our curriculum, policies, and school culture.

We are committed to ensuring that pupils, staff, and visitors use technology safely and responsibly, and that our systems are robust enough to prevent access to harmful content while enabling effective learning.

8.1 Whole-school approach to online safety

Online safety is addressed through:

- A dedicated Online Safety Policy aligned with DfE guidance and the Filtering and Monitoring Standards (2026)
- Integration into RSHE, PSHE, Computing, and wider curriculum
- Regular staff training and updates on emerging risks
- Engagement with parents/carers to promote safe use of technology at home
- Clear procedures for reporting online concerns, including cyberbullying, grooming, and harmful content

Monitoring emerging platforms and risks:

- We actively monitor emerging social media platforms, apps, and online trends that may pose risks to pupils
- Staff receive regular updates on platforms popular with children (e.g., TikTok, Snapchat, Discord, Roblox, WhatsApp)
- We educate pupils about the risks associated with specific platforms and apps
- Parents/carers are informed about emerging online risks through newsletters, workshops, and online safety events

8.2 Filtering and monitoring systems

We use appropriate filtering and monitoring systems to:

- Block access to harmful or inappropriate content

- Monitor user activity for signs of risk or misuse
- Alert designated staff to potential safeguarding concerns

Filtering and monitoring systems must be reviewed at least once every academic year. This review must be conducted by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) member responsible for filtering and monitoring, supported by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and IT support. The review must assess the effectiveness of systems, identify any gaps or breaches, and ensure compliance with the DfE Filtering and Monitoring Standards (2026). Findings from the review are reported to governors.

These systems are proportionate to the age, needs, and vulnerabilities of our pupils. We follow the DfE's Digital and Technology Standards and ensure:

- Roles and responsibilities for managing filtering and monitoring are clearly defined
- Systems do not unreasonably impact teaching and learning
- Staff are trained to understand and respond to alerts appropriately

8.3 Risks addressed

We educate and safeguard pupils against a range of online risks, including:

- **Cyberbullying** and online harassment
- **Online grooming**, exploitation, and radicalisation
- **Exposure to pornography**, violent content, or hate speech
- **Making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes**, including images digitally altered or wholly generated by artificial intelligence (e.g., deepfakes). All such incidents mandate a safeguarding response.
- **Online challenges, hoaxes**, and misinformation
- **Use of generative AI**, deepfakes, and manipulated media
- **Access via mobile networks** (e.g., 4G/5G) bypassing filters

Staff are trained to recognise signs of online harm and respond in line with safeguarding procedures.

8.4 Curriculum integration

Pupils are taught to:

- Recognise online risks and unsafe behaviours
- Understand privacy, consent, and digital footprints
- Report concerns and seek help
- Use technology responsibly and respectfully
- Navigate misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories
- Understand the risks and dangers associated with generative AI

We use age-appropriate resources and adapt content to reflect local safeguarding concerns and pupil needs.

8.5 Staff responsibilities

All staff must:

- Supervise pupil use of technology appropriately
- Report breaches in filtering or monitoring systems

- Reinforce online safety messages across the curriculum
- Be aware of the academy's online safety and acceptable use policies
- Understand their role in safeguarding pupils online, including during remote learning

8.6 Remote learning and home use

Where pupils access learning remotely (e.g., during periods of absence, illness, or exceptional circumstances), we ensure:

Technology and platforms:

- Platforms used are secure, age-appropriate, and approved by the Trust
- Staff and pupils receive guidance on safe use of remote learning platforms
- Video calls are conducted through academy-approved platforms only
- Staff ensure appropriate backgrounds and professional dress during video calls
- One-to-one video calls with pupils are avoided unless another adult is present or the call is recorded

Safeguarding oversight:

- Staff maintain safeguarding oversight and report concerns using normal procedures
- DSLs remain contactable during remote learning periods
- Pupils and parents are provided with information on how to raise safeguarding concerns
- Regular welfare checks are conducted for vulnerable pupils
- Attendance at remote learning sessions is monitored

Online safety:

- Pupils receive ongoing online safety education during remote learning
- Parents are provided with guidance on supervising online learning at home
- Filtering and monitoring arrangements continue to apply where academy devices are used

We work with families to promote safe online habits and provide support where risks are identified.

8.7 Artificial intelligence (AI)

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Gemini.

The Trust recognises that AI has many uses, including enhancing teaching and learning, and in helping to protect and safeguard pupils. However, AI may also have the potential to facilitate abuse (e.g. bullying and grooming) and/or expose pupils to harmful content. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

Our academies will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully pupils in line with this policy and our AI and Emerging Technologies Policy.

We integrate dedicated guidance and resource frameworks addressing safeguarding, data protection, and ethical risks involved in the educational use of Generative AI. Staff should be aware of the risks of using AI tools while they are still being developed and should carry out risk assessments for any new AI tool being used by the school. Our school's requirements for filtering and monitoring also apply to the use of AI, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

8.8 Use of mobile phones, cameras and other devices

To safeguard our pupils, The Trust requires that personal mobile phones, cameras, and any other devices capable of capturing or sharing images are not used by staff, volunteers, visitors, or pupils within the academy setting. All staff and visitors must store personal devices securely and out of sight during working hours. Only school-owned devices may be used to capture images or videos of children, and these must be used in line with our Trust's data protection and safeguarding policies. Images and recordings are only taken with parental consent, stored securely, and are never shared via personal devices or social media.

Breaches of this policy will be treated as a safeguarding concern and may result in:

- Immediate referral to the DSL
- Disciplinary action in line with the Trust's Staff Disciplinary Procedure
- Referral to the LADO if the breach involves inappropriate images of children
- Police involvement if a criminal offence is suspected

Any concerns or breaches of this policy are reported immediately to a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who will follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures.

Photography and filming consent

We obtain written consent from parents/carers before taking or using photographs or videos of pupils. Consent covers:

- Use of images on the academy website
- Use of images in academy publications and displays
- Use of images in local media
- Use of images on social media (academy accounts only)

Parents can withdraw consent at any time. We maintain a register of pupils who cannot be photographed and ensure all staff are aware.

When taking photographs or videos, staff must:

- Only use academy-owned devices
- Focus on the activity rather than individual children where possible
- Ensure children are appropriately dressed
- Not take images in sensitive locations (e.g., changing rooms, toilets)
- Store images securely on the academy network
- Delete images from devices after transferring to the academy network
- Never share images via personal devices or social media

8.9 Staff personal social media use

Staff must maintain professional boundaries in their use of social media and online platforms. All staff must:

- Not accept friend requests or follow pupils or parents on personal social media accounts
- Not share personal contact details (phone numbers, email addresses, social media handles) with pupils
- Ensure privacy settings on personal social media accounts are set to maximum
- Not post content that could bring the academy or Trust into disrepute

- Report any inappropriate contact from pupils or parents via social media to the DSL
- Be aware that online conduct outside of work can impact on their professional role

Staff should refer to the Trust's Staff Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Policy for full guidance on online conduct.

Breaches of this guidance may result in disciplinary action.

8.10 Pupil mobile phone use

In line with KCSIE 2026, all our academies operate as mobile phone-free environments. Pupils are restricted from accessing mobile phones during lessons, breaktimes, and lunchtimes.

- Pupils must hand in their mobile phones at the start of the school day to the school office
- Phones are stored securely in a locked cabinet
- Phones are returned to pupils at the end of the school day
- Any pupil found using a mobile phone during restricted times will have it confiscated and parents/carers will be contacted
- Exceptions may be made for pupils with specific medical needs or safeguarding circumstances, with prior approval from the Headteacher

This policy applies to all mobile devices capable of communication or internet access, including smartphones and smartwatches with communication functions.

9. Working with parents/carers

At Aspire and Shine Education Trust, we recognise that safeguarding is most effective when schools work in partnership with parents and carers. We are committed to building strong, transparent relationships with families, based on mutual trust, respect, and shared responsibility for keeping children safe.

9.1 Communication and transparency

We ensure that parents/carers:

- Are informed about the Trust's safeguarding responsibilities and procedures
- Understand how concerns are managed and when referrals may be made
- Know who to contact if they have safeguarding concerns
- Can access the Trust's Child Protection Policy and related safeguarding documents via the academy and Trust websites, or on request

We aim to communicate in a way that is clear, accessible, and sensitive to individual needs, including providing information in alternative formats or languages where required.

For information about consent and information sharing principles, see Section 4.4 of this policy.

9.2 Supporting families

We recognise that families may face challenges that impact their ability to safeguard their children. We offer support through:

- Early Help referrals and signposting to local services
- Pastoral support and family liaison staff
- Access to parenting programmes and workshops
- Referrals to external agencies (e.g., mental health, housing, domestic abuse support)

We work collaboratively with families to identify needs, agree support plans, and monitor progress.

9.3 Involving parents in safeguarding education

We encourage parents/carers to engage with safeguarding education by:

- Sharing online safety guidance and resources
- Providing updates on safeguarding topics via newsletters, workshops, and school events
- Promoting awareness of risks such as exploitation, radicalisation, and harmful online content
- Encouraging open conversations at home about safety and wellbeing

We aim to empower families to reinforce safeguarding messages and support their children's development.

9.4 Respecting the child's voice

Where appropriate, we consider the child's views when deciding whether to inform parents/carers about a safeguarding concern. This is particularly relevant where:

- The child is mature enough to make informed decisions
- Informing parents may increase risk or distress
- The child has expressed a clear preference

Decisions are made in consultation with the DSL and, where necessary, safeguarding partners.

10. Children in care and previously in care

At Aspire and Shine Education Trust, we recognise that Children in Care (CiC) and those previously in care may face additional barriers to learning, wellbeing, and safety. We are committed to promoting their educational achievement, safeguarding their welfare, and ensuring they feel valued and supported throughout their time in our Trust.

10.1 Designated Teacher responsibilities

We appoint a Designated Teacher for Children in Care, who is responsible for:

- Acting as a key point of contact for the Virtual School
- Attending and contributing to Personal Education Plan (PEP) reviews
- Ensuring that CiC pupils receive appropriate support, interventions, and access to enrichment opportunities
- Monitoring progress, attendance, and wellbeing
- Liaising with carers, social workers, and other professionals

The Designated Teacher works closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to ensure a coordinated approach to safeguarding and education.

10.2 Children previously in care

We recognise that children who were previously looked after may continue to experience vulnerability. These pupils are supported through:

- Pastoral care and targeted interventions
- Access to mental health and wellbeing support
- Inclusion in safeguarding monitoring and review processes
- Continued liaison with the Virtual School where appropriate

Staff are made aware of the potential challenges faced by previously looked-after children and are trained to respond with sensitivity and understanding.

10.3 Private fostering arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when a child under 16 (or under 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not a parent or close relative for 28 days or more. We have a statutory duty to report any known or suspected private fostering arrangements to the local authority.

Staff must:

- Notify the DSL if they become aware of a private fostering arrangement
- Support the DSL in liaising with the family and confirming whether the local authority has been informed
- Ensure that safeguarding procedures are followed and that the child's welfare is prioritised

We take steps during admission to verify the relationship between the child and the adults registering them.

10.4 Kinship care arrangements

Kinship care refers to children being raised by relatives or close family friends. These arrangements may be informal or formalised through legal orders. Schools must:

- Identify and support children in kinship care, including those not known to the local authority.
- Be aware of the local authority's published *Kinship Care offer* and signpost carers to relevant support.
- Liaise with the Virtual School Head to promote educational outcomes for children in kinship care.
- Ensure staff understand the potential vulnerabilities and safeguarding needs of children in kinship arrangements.

10.5 Multi-agency working

We work closely with Virtual Schools, Children's Social Care, Health and mental health services, Carers and families to ensure that CiC and previously looked-after children receive the support they need to thrive. We contribute to multi-agency plans and ensure that safeguarding concerns are addressed promptly and effectively.

10.6 Temporary accommodation notification duty

Local housing authorities have a duty to notify the relevant local authority when relocating children to temporary accommodation. We work with local authorities to ensure we are informed of any pupils affected by such arrangements and provide appropriate support and monitoring.

Staff should be alert to pupils who may be living in temporary accommodation and report any concerns about welfare, attendance, or wellbeing to the DSL. The DSL will liaise with the local authority and relevant agencies to ensure appropriate support is in place.

11. Particularly vulnerable groups

At Aspire and Shine Education Trust, we recognise that some children and young people may be particularly vulnerable to abuse, neglect, exploitation, or harm due to their individual circumstances, characteristics, or lived experiences. We are committed to identifying these pupils early, providing tailored support, and ensuring that safeguarding arrangements reflect their specific needs.

11.1 Identification and monitoring

We actively monitor and support pupils who may be vulnerable due to factors including (but not limited to):

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Mental health needs
- Young carers
- Children with specific medical conditions that may affect their vulnerability or require additional safeguarding considerations
- Children in care or previously in care
- Children with a social worker or history of social care involvement
- Children affected by domestic abuse, parental substance misuse, or mental health
- Children at risk of exploitation (CSE, CCE, county lines)
- Children at risk of radicalisation or extremism
- Children from minority ethnic backgrounds or with protected characteristics
- Children who are LGBTQ+ or exploring their identity
- Children who are privately fostered
- Children missing education or frequently absent
- Children at risk of serious violence or involved in gang activity

Staff are trained to recognise signs of vulnerability and report concerns promptly to the DSL. We use safeguarding records, attendance data, behaviour logs, and pupil voice to identify patterns and respond proactively.

11.2 Reasonable adjustments and positive action

We make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils with protected characteristics or additional needs are safeguarded effectively. This includes:

- Differentiated safeguarding education
- Accessible reporting systems
- Tailored pastoral support
- Positive action to address disadvantage or discrimination
- Inclusive curriculum content and representation

We promote a culture of respect, equity, and inclusion, and challenge all forms of prejudice-based bullying or harassment.

11.3 SEND and communication needs

Children with SEND may face barriers to recognising or reporting abuse. We ensure:

- Staff are trained to understand SEND-specific safeguarding risks
- Communication methods are adapted to meet individual needs
- Additional pastoral support is available
- External agencies (e.g. Learning Support, EHCP teams) are involved where appropriate

We recognise that challenging behaviour may be a sign of distress or unmet need and respond accordingly.

11.4 Specific safeguarding risks

We are alert to specific safeguarding risks that may disproportionately affect vulnerable groups, including:

- **Female genital mutilation (FGM)**: Staff are aware of the mandatory reporting duty and indicators of risk.
- **Forced marriage and honour-based abuse**: We educate pupils and staff on recognising coercion and cultural pressures.
- **Child sexual exploitation (CSE)** and **Child criminal exploitation (CCE)**: We work with external agencies to identify and support children at risk.
- **Modern slavery and financial exploitation**: Staff must be alert to all forms of exploitation including modern slavery and financial exploitation.
- **Radicalisation and extremism**: We fulfil our Prevent Duty obligations through training, curriculum, and referral pathways.
- **Serious youth violence and knife crime**: We engage with community partners and police to address local concerns.
- **Sexual abuse and grooming**: Staff are trained to identify signs of manipulation, distress, and inappropriate relationships, and respond swiftly and sensitively.
- **Child-to-parent or caregiver abuse**: Staff should be aware that children may perpetrate abuse towards their parents or caregivers. This can include physical violence, emotional abuse, financial exploitation, or coercive control. Such situations require a sensitive, multi-agency response that considers the needs and safety of all family members.

11.5 Multi-agency collaboration

We work closely with safeguarding partners to support vulnerable pupils, including:

- Children's Social Care
- Health and mental health services
- Youth justice, early help, family help teams
- Domestic abuse and exploitation services
- Prevent and Channel teams

We contribute to multi-agency plans and ensure that pupils receive coordinated, timely support.

11.6 Facilities usage and social transition

In line with KCSIE 2026, children are prohibited from entering toilets, changing rooms, and boarding/residential accommodation designated for the opposite biological sex. The same applies for participation in PE classes or sports designated for a specific sex. No exceptions are permitted, even when supporting a child's social transition.

Social Transition:

- The academy must not initiate any action regarding social transition; we will only respond if a child or their parent specifically requests it
- Primary schools must exercise "particular caution" and support for full social transition should be agreed "very rarely"

- Staff must not adopt any changes relating to social transition without a decision involving the parents, except in exceptionally rare cases where doing so would pose a greater risk to the child
- The academy is legally required to record a child's biological sex accurately wherever it is recorded
- All decisions regarding social transition will be made in consultation with the DSL, senior leadership, and where appropriate, external safeguarding partners
- The child's welfare and safety remain paramount in all decisions

Single-sex sports: The academy can legally separate children into sports based on biological sex for reasons of safety and fairness without violating non-discrimination laws.

12. Prevention in the curriculum

At Aspire and Shine Education Trust, we recognise that safeguarding is most effective when it is proactive, preventative, and embedded across the curriculum. We are committed to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain by equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to identify risk, make safe choices, and seek help when needed.

12.1 Preventative education strategy

We adopt a whole-school approach to preventative safeguarding education, which includes:

- A planned programme of RSHE and PSHE that is age-appropriate, inclusive, and accessible to all pupils
- Integration of safeguarding themes across subjects such as Computing, Citizenship, English, and Drama
- Regular assemblies, workshops, and themed events focused on safety, wellbeing, and resilience
- Use of evidence-based resources and input from external agencies (e.g. NSPCC, Police, Prevent Team)

Our curriculum reflects the statutory expectations outlined in KCSIE 2026, including the promotion of a culture of zero tolerance for abuse, harassment, and discrimination.

12.2 Key topics covered

Pupils are taught to:

- Recognise and manage risks in different contexts (online, peer relationships, public spaces)
- Understand consent, boundaries, and bodily autonomy
- Identify and respond to bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based bullying
- Navigate online safety, including risks from AI, misinformation, and using critical thinking skills
- Understand the law around sharing nudes/semi-nudes and youth-produced sexual imagery
- Recognise signs of grooming, exploitation, and radicalisation
- Develop healthy relationships and challenge harmful behaviours
- Understand the impact of domestic abuse and how to seek help
- Resist peer pressure and make informed decisions
- Know how and where to report concerns

12.3 Curriculum adaptation and inclusion

We ensure that safeguarding education is:

- Differentiated to meet the needs of pupils with SEND and other vulnerabilities
- Responsive to local safeguarding concerns and emerging risks
- Inclusive of pupils with protected characteristics, with reasonable adjustments made where needed
- Reviewed annually to ensure relevance, impact, and alignment with statutory guidance

Pupils are actively involved in shaping the curriculum through feedback, pupil voice activities, and consultation.

12.4 Staff responsibilities

All staff are expected to:

- Reinforce safeguarding messages across the curriculum
- Create safe spaces for discussion and disclosure
- Be alert to safeguarding indicators during lessons
- Liaise with the DSL if concerns arise during curriculum delivery
- Ensure that content is delivered sensitively and appropriately

Staff receive regular training to support effective delivery of preventative education.

13. Allegations against staff and safer recruitment

13.1 Safer recruitment and selection procedures

At Aspire and Shine Education Trust, we follow robust safer recruitment procedures to ensure that all staff, governors, volunteers, and contractors are suitable to work with children. This includes carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks, such as enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, barred list checks, identity verification, employment history, references, and, where relevant, prohibition from teaching and section 128 checks.

Following The Crime and Policing Act 2026, any volunteer who frequently teaches, trains, instructs, or supervises children is in regulated activity and must have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information. The previous supervision exemption has been removed. This means that volunteers working frequently with children require enhanced DBS checks regardless of whether they are supervised.

At least one member of every recruitment panel has completed safer recruitment training. Throughout the recruitment process, we ensure that safeguarding and child protection are central to our decision making, and any concerns about suitability are referred to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or the local authority designated officer (LADO) as appropriate. Our procedures comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and relevant statutory guidance.

13.2 EYFS DBS requirements (where the academy has EYFS provision)

Where an academy operates provision that falls within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, an individual must not begin working within that provision until the academy has received the individual's enhanced DBS certificate, including children's barred-list information.

This requirement applies to employees, agency staff and relevant volunteers working within EYFS provision. Allowing an individual to begin work under supervision, or relying solely on a separate

children's barred-list check while awaiting receipt of the enhanced DBS certificate, does not meet the requirements of the EYFS framework and KCSIE 2026.

Where applicable, the academy will ensure that:

- individuals due to begin work within EYFS provision do not commence work until the required enhanced DBS certificate has been received;
- volunteers undertaking relevant activity within EYFS provision do not commence work until the required enhanced DBS certificate has been received;
- any individual awaiting an enhanced DBS certificate is not deployed within EYFS-covered provision;
- recruitment and volunteer arrangements are reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with EYFS safeguarding requirements.

The academy will maintain appropriate records of all checks undertaken, including the date on which the enhanced DBS certificate and children's barred-list information were received.

13.3 Allegations against staff

At Aspire and Shine Education Trust, we take all allegations and concerns about staff conduct seriously. We are committed to maintaining a safeguarding culture where concerns are identified early, reported appropriately, and managed in line with statutory guidance and local procedures.

This section applies to all staff, including supply staff, volunteers, contractors, and visitors working with children.

13.4 Managing allegations

We follow the procedures outlined in Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 and in line with the protocols of the academy's local authority (see Appendix 7 for LADO contact).

An allegation may relate to a person who works with children and has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm
- Behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

All allegations must be reported immediately to the Headteacher.

If the allegation concerns the Headteacher, it must be reported to the Chair of Governors who will act as the Case Manager. The chair must ensure the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is informed within one working day and follow all statutory procedures to safeguard pupils and ensure a fair, impartial investigation.

13.5 Role of the case manager and LADO

The Case Manager (usually the Headteacher or Chair of Governors) is responsible for:

- Liaising with the LADO
- Ensuring the allegation is investigated promptly and fairly
- Coordinating with police and children’s social care where necessary
- Ensuring the safety and welfare of the child
- Supporting the member of staff subject to the allegation

The LADO provides oversight, advice, and guidance throughout the process and ensures consistency and timeliness.

13.6 Low-level concerns

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, including a sense of unease or a "nagging doubt", that an adult working in or on behalf of the academy may have acted in a manner that is inconsistent with the academy's Staff Code of Conduct, including conduct outside of work, but which does not meet the harm threshold for managing allegations against staff. The academy promotes an open and transparent culture where staff feel confident to report concerns without fear of reprisal.

Examples may include:

- Being overly familiar with pupils;
- Showing favouritism towards particular pupils;
- Using inappropriate language;
- Failing to maintain professional boundaries.

All low-level concerns must be reported to the Headteacher (or Designated Safeguarding Lead where appropriate) and recorded securely. Records will be reviewed to identify patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, and concerns will be escalated where necessary.

The Trust HR team should be consulted where advice is required, where concerns indicate a potential conduct or capability issue, where multiple concerns demonstrate a developing pattern, or where formal employment action may be necessary.

The Trust Safeguarding Lead should be consulted where there is uncertainty about whether the harm threshold has been met, or whether consultation with or referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) should be considered.

13.7 Whistleblowing

We encourage staff to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice through our Whistleblowing Policy. This includes concerns about:

- Safeguarding failures
- Unsafe behaviour by colleagues
- Inadequate safeguarding procedures

Staff can report concerns internally or contact the **NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline**:
Tel: 0800 028 0285 or email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Whistleblowers are protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act and will not suffer detriment for raising genuine concerns.

13.8 Safeguarding culture

We are committed to fostering a safeguarding culture that includes:

- Clear expectations for staff behaviour (Code of Conduct)
- Regular safeguarding training and updates
- Open dialogue and reflective practice
- Support for staff involved in safeguarding processes
- Transparent and fair management of allegations

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and we expect all staff to uphold the highest standards of professional conduct.

14. Professional development and training

At Aspire and Shine Education Trust, we recognise that safeguarding is most effective when all staff are confident, knowledgeable, and up to date with current guidance and best practice. We are committed to ensuring that all staff, governors, and volunteers receive appropriate safeguarding training and ongoing professional development.

14.1 Induction training

- All new staff, supply staff, volunteers, and governors receive safeguarding induction before commencing work. This includes:
- The Trust Child Protection and safeguarding policy
- The Staff Behaviour Policy / Code of Conduct
- The Behaviour Policy
- Identification of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputies
- Procedures for reporting concerns and disclosures
- Confirmation of having read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 in its entirety

Induction is tailored to the individual's role and responsibilities.

14.2 Ongoing safeguarding training

- All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training that is:
- Refreshed at least annually
- Updated in response to emerging risks, changes in legislation, or local procedures
- Delivered through a combination of whole school INSET, online modules, staff briefings, and external courses

Training includes topics such as:

- Online safety and filtering/monitoring standards
- Child-on-child abuse and harmful sexual behaviour
- Domestic abuse and Operation Encompass
- Exploitation (CSE, CCE, county lines)
- Mental health and trauma-informed practice
- Prevent and radicalisation
- FGM and honour-based abuse
- Whistleblowing and low-level concerns

14.3 DSL and governor training

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** and deputies:

- Complete enhanced safeguarding training every two years
- Attend termly DSL network meetings and local safeguarding briefings
- Receive training on data protection, online safety, and multi-agency working
- Are supported to maintain oversight of safeguarding trends and case management

Governors:

- Receive safeguarding training at induction
- Are updated annually on safeguarding responsibilities and strategic oversight
- The Safeguarding Link Governor attends additional training at least every three years

14.4 Training register and evaluation

We maintain a training register that records:

- Dates and types of training completed
- Staff attendance and completion status
- Expiry dates for time-limited training (e.g., DSL training valid for 2 years)

14.5 Culture of learning and reflection

We promote a safeguarding culture that encourages:

- Continuous professional development
- Reflective practice and peer learning
- Openness to new guidance and local learning reviews
- Engagement with safeguarding partners and external expertise

Staff are encouraged to contribute to the development of safeguarding practice and share insights from training.

15. Identification for visitors

At Aspire and Shine Education Trust, we are committed to ensuring that all visitors to our site are appropriately identified, vetted, and supervised in line with safeguarding expectations. We recognise that visiting professionals, contractors, and volunteers may have access to children and must therefore meet the same safeguarding standards as school staff.

15.1 Expectations for visitors

All visitors must:

- Report to the main reception on arrival
- Present official photographic ID and, where applicable, evidence of DBS clearance
- Sign in using the academy's visitor management system
- Wear an academy-issued visitor badge at all times while on site
- Be accompanied or supervised unless prior safeguarding clearance has been confirmed

Visitors without appropriate ID or clearance will be refused entry or restricted to non-child-facing areas with appropriate supervision. The decision to refuse entry or restrict access will be made by the Headteacher or most senior member of staff on site.

15.2 DBS verification and third-party organisations

Where visitors are from external organisations (e.g. NHS, social care, educational services), we ensure we have requested and received written confirmation from the employing organisation that:

- The visitor has undergone appropriate DBS checks
- Safeguarding procedures have been followed
- The visitor is suitable to work with children

Any third-party agreement letter is updated annually and retained by the individual Academy for reference. Visitors from the local authority or other approved agencies are expected to carry their organisation ID and be listed on the DBS verification letter.

15.3 Visiting professionals and contractors

Professionals working directly with pupils (e.g. therapists, social workers, peripatetic teachers) must:

- Be expected and pre-booked by the academy
- Have safeguarding clearance confirmed prior to arrival
- Be briefed on the Trust's safeguarding procedures, including how to report concerns

Contractors working during school hours must:

- Be risk-assessed for safeguarding impact
- Be supervised if not DBS-cleared
- Avoid unsupervised contact with pupils

15.4 Volunteers and regular visitors

Volunteers who frequently teach, train, instruct, or supervise children are in regulated activity and are subject to:

- Enhanced DBS checks with barred list information (mandatory - no supervision exemption applies)
- Safeguarding induction and training
- Ongoing monitoring and review

Occasional volunteers who do not frequently teach, train, instruct, or supervise children may be supervised and risk-assessed depending on the nature of their role. However, they must still undergo appropriate vetting checks proportionate to their role and level of contact with children.

15.5 Definition of 'Frequently' for Volunteers

In line with KCSIE 2026, 'frequently' means:

- Once a week or more regularly; or
- Four or more days in a 30-day period; or
- At any time overnight between 2am and 6am

Any volunteer meeting this threshold is in regulated activity and must have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information, regardless of supervision arrangements.

15.6 Safeguarding responsibilities

All visitors are expected to:

- Follow the *Trust's* safeguarding procedures
- Report any concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Maintain professional boundaries and confidentiality

Safeguarding information is displayed prominently in reception and staff areas, including contact details for the DSL and deputies.

Appendix 1 – Information/Front sheet

Name:	**DOB:**	**Class:**	**Ethnicity:**
Home Address:		**Telephone:** **e mail:**	
Status of file and dates:			

OPEN					
CLOSED					
TRANSFER					

Any other child protection records held in academy relating to this child/child closely connected to him/her?
YES/NO WHO?

Members of household

Name	Age/DOB	Relationship to child	Contact No

Significant Others (relatives, carers, friends, child minders, etc.)

Name	Relationship to child	Address	Tel No

Other Agency Involvement

Name of officer/person	Role and Agency	Status of Child i.e. EHAF/CPP/LAC/CiN	Tel No	Date

Appendix 2 – 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:		**Class:**
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, visitor, volunteer)

URGENT SAFEGUARDING CONCERN? Complete this form and report immediately to the DSL. Do not wait for the form to be completed before speaking to the DSL. If a child is at immediate risk, contact emergency services or children's social care in line with academy procedures.

Pupil's Name:	**Date of Birth:** **Class:**
Date and Time of Incident:	**Date and Time (of writing):**
Full Name: **Signature:** **Full Job Title:**	
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? *Use full names throughout. Do not use initials.*	
Professional opinion where relevant (how and why this might 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Part 2 (for use by the 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 MASH/Starting Point/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.**	
Parents 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	

Appendix 4 – Logging concerns/information shared by others to the academy

(Pass to the Designated Safeguarding Lead)

Pupil's Name:	**Date of Birth:** **Class:**
Date and Time of Incident:	**Date and time of receipt of information:** **Via letter / telephone etc.?**
Recipient (and role) of information:	
Name of caller/provider of information:	
Organisation/agency/role:	
Contact details (telephone number/address/e- mail)	
Relationship to the child/family:	
Information received:	
Actions/Recommendations for the academy:	
Outcome:	
Name:	
Signature:	
Date and time completed:	
Counter Signed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead:	
Name:	
Date and time:	

Appendix 5 – Body map

Where appropriate, medical assistance should be sought without delay.

Body maps are a tool to help staff accurately document and illustrate visible signs of harm or physical injury. They should be used in conjunction with the school's safeguarding recording procedures.

- Always use a black ink pen (not pencil), and do not use correction fluid or erasers.
- Do not remove clothing to examine injuries unless the area is already exposed due to treatment or the child's clothing naturally allows visibility.
- Staff must not take photographs of any injuries or marks on a child's body under any circumstances. Doing so may result in the staff member being subject to managing allegations procedures. Use the body map provided to record observations in line with this guidance.
- All concerns must be reported and recorded immediately to the appropriate safeguarding services, such as the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) / Starting Point for our Derbyshire school or the child's allocated social worker if the case is already open to children's social care.

When recording an injury, aim to include the following details for each mark observed (e.g. bruises, cuts, swelling, burns, scalds, lacerations):

- Exact location on the body (e.g. upper outer arm, left cheek)
- Size of the injury (in centimetres or inches)
- Shape of the injury (e.g. round, linear, irregular)
- Colour of the injury (note if multiple colours are present)
- Whether the skin is broken
- Presence of swelling, either at the site or elsewhere
- Any scabbing, blistering, or bleeding
- Whether the injury appears clean or contaminated (e.g. grit, fluff)
- Any restriction in mobility due to the injury
- Whether the site feels warm to the touch
- Whether the child appears feverish or in pain
- Any changes in the child's posture or body movement

The date and time of the observation must be clearly recorded, along with the name and role of the person completing the record. Additional comments may be added where relevant.

If First Aid is administered, this should be recorded appropriately.

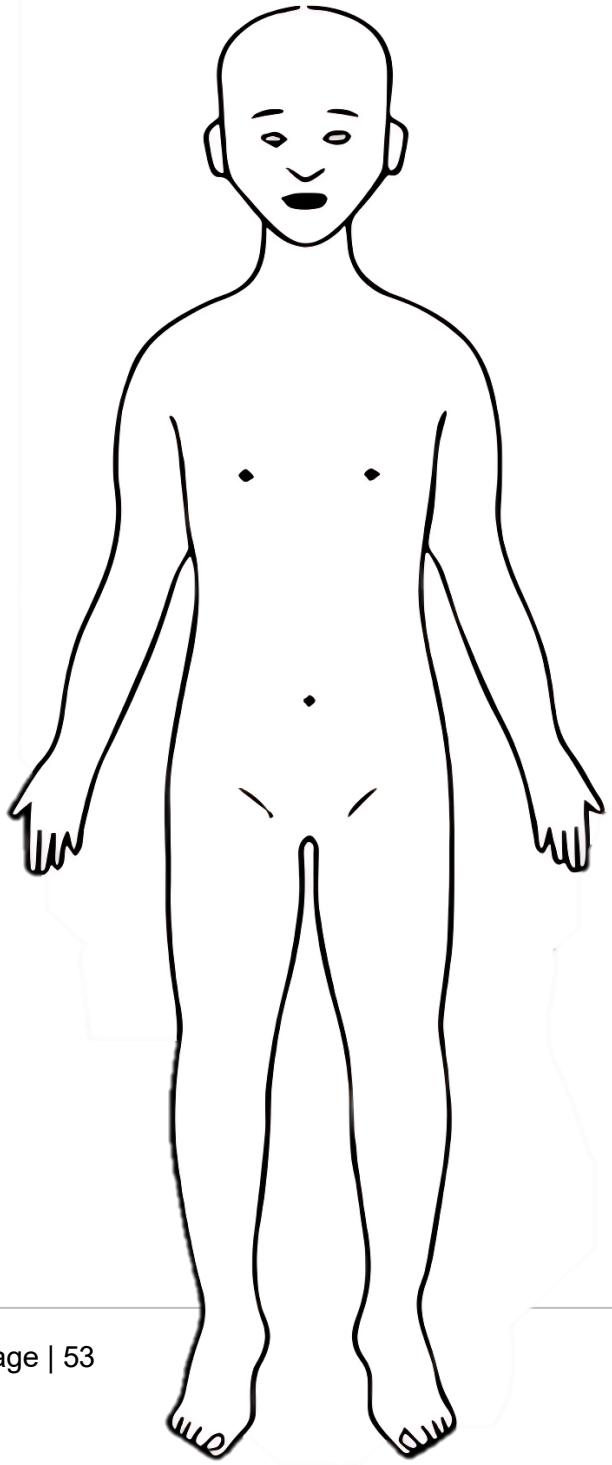
A completed body map should be stored securely within the child's **child protection file**.

BODYMAP

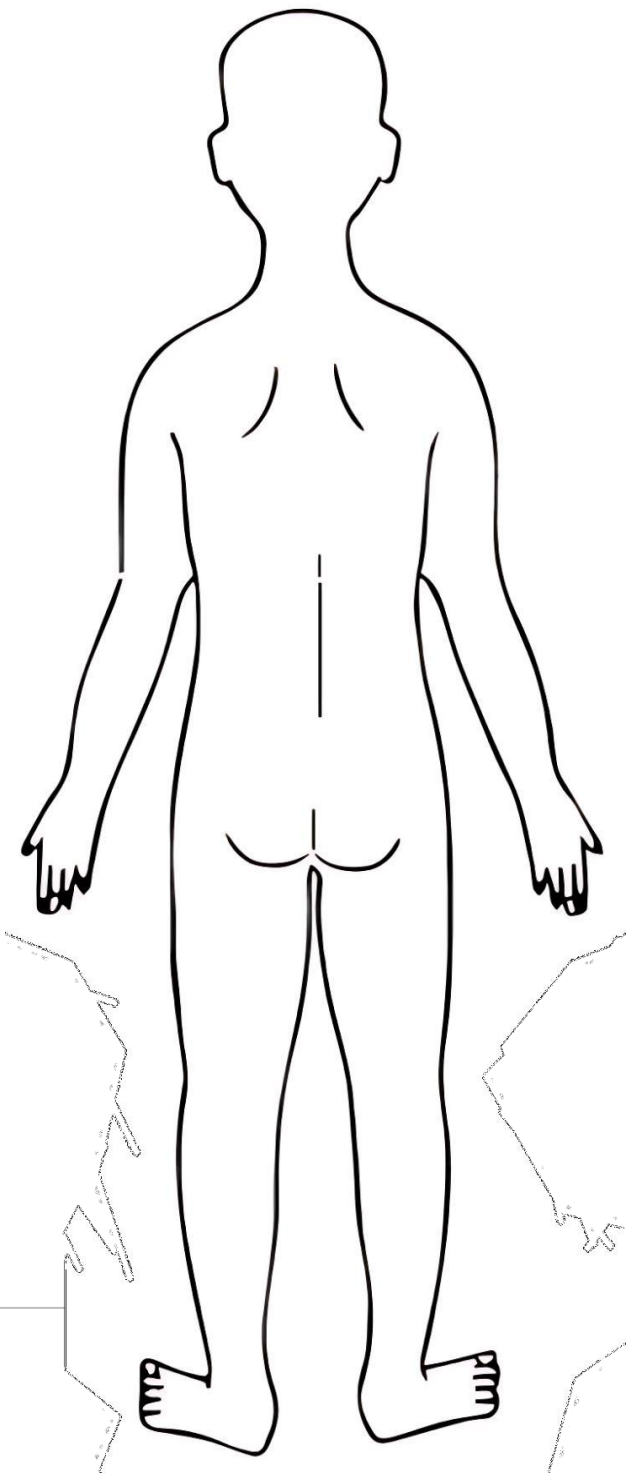
(This must be completed at time of observation)

Name of child:		Details of physical injury:
Date of Birth:		
Name of worker:		
Signature of worker:		
Date and Time of observation:		

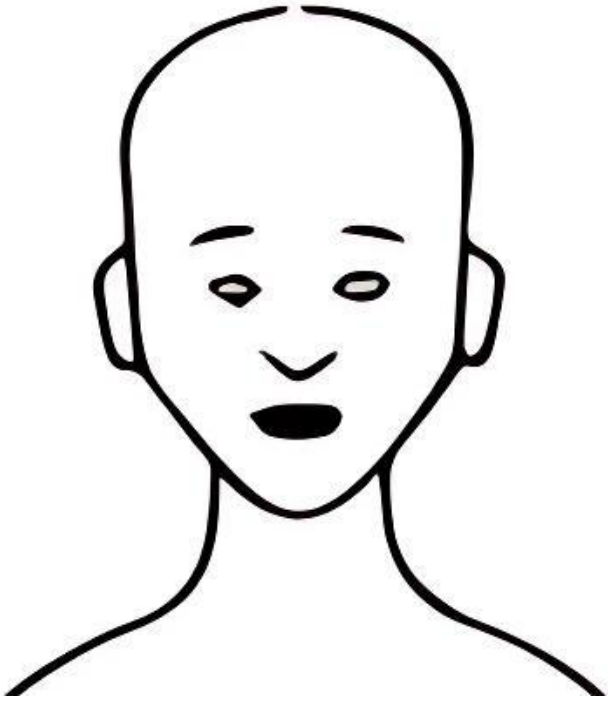
FRONT



BACK



RIGHT



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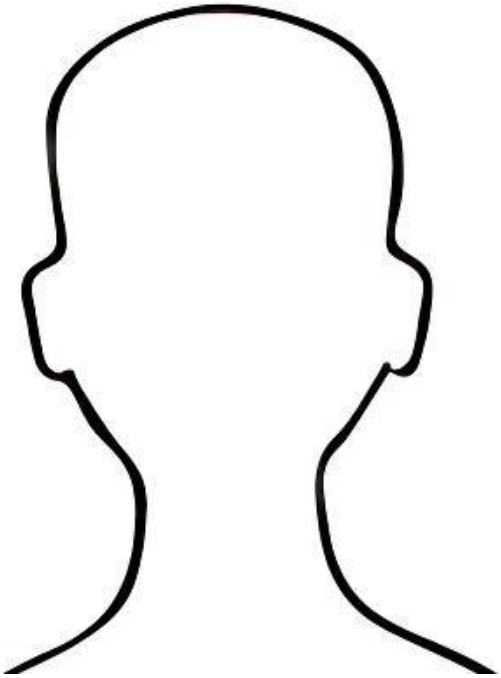
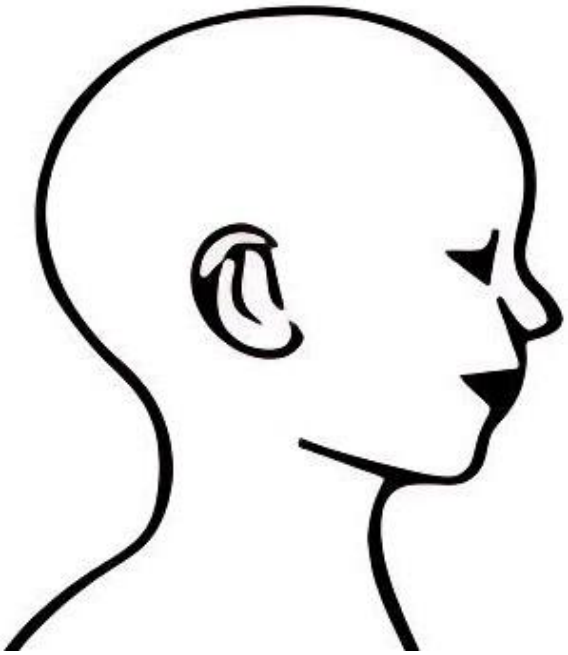


RIGHT



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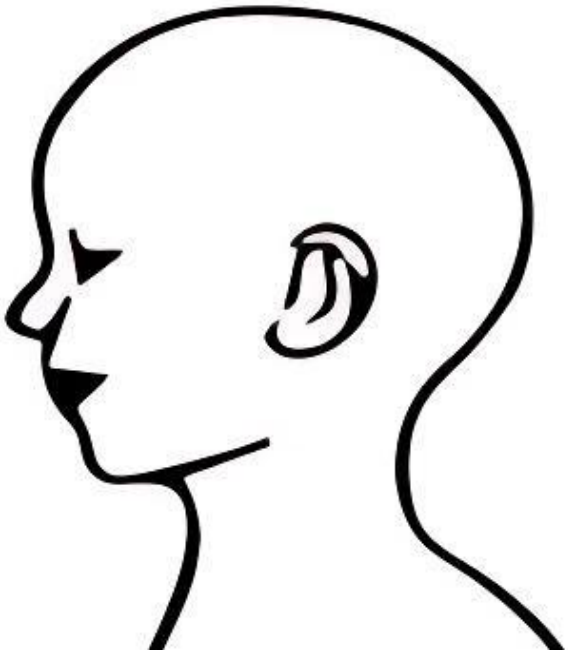

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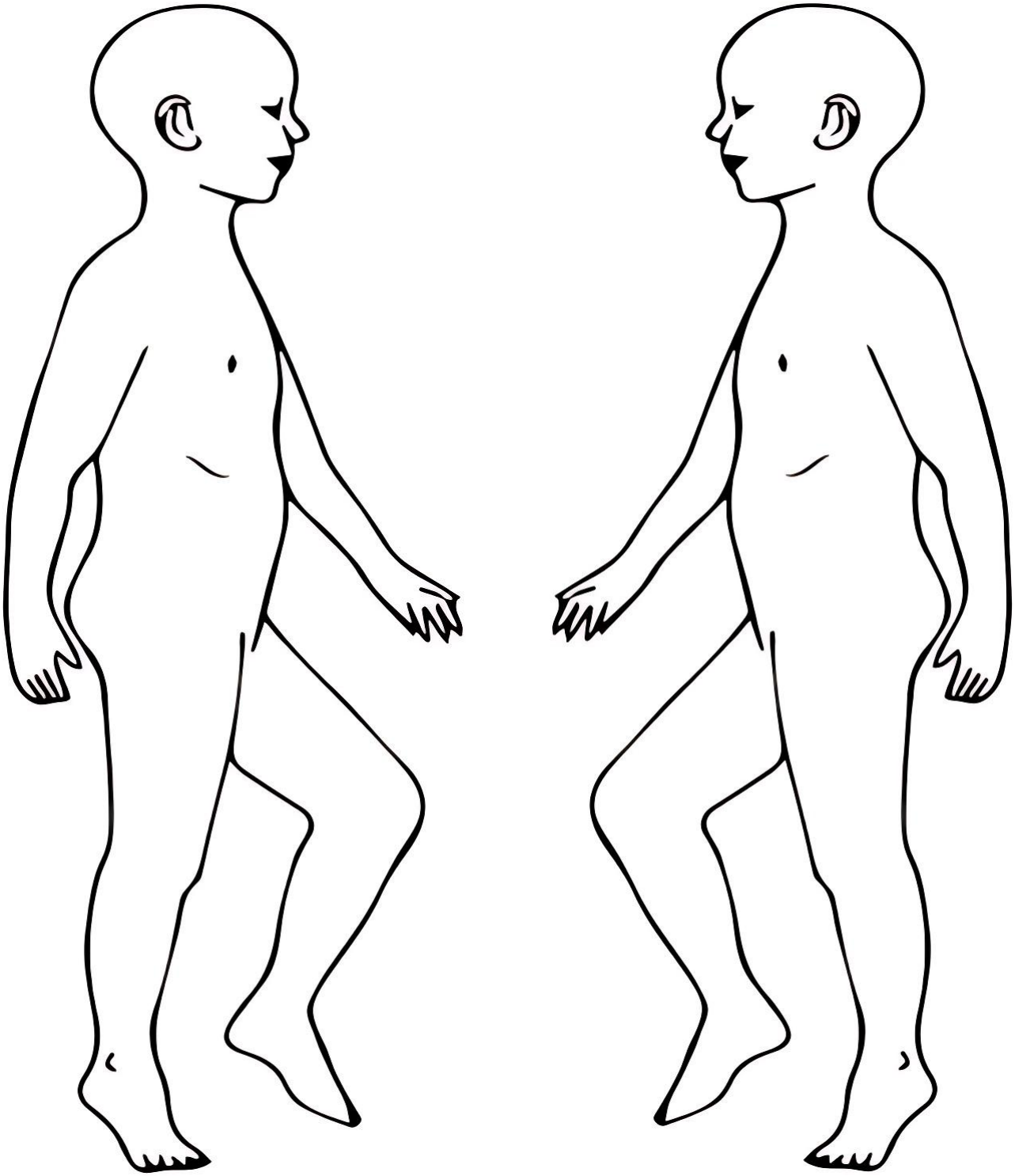
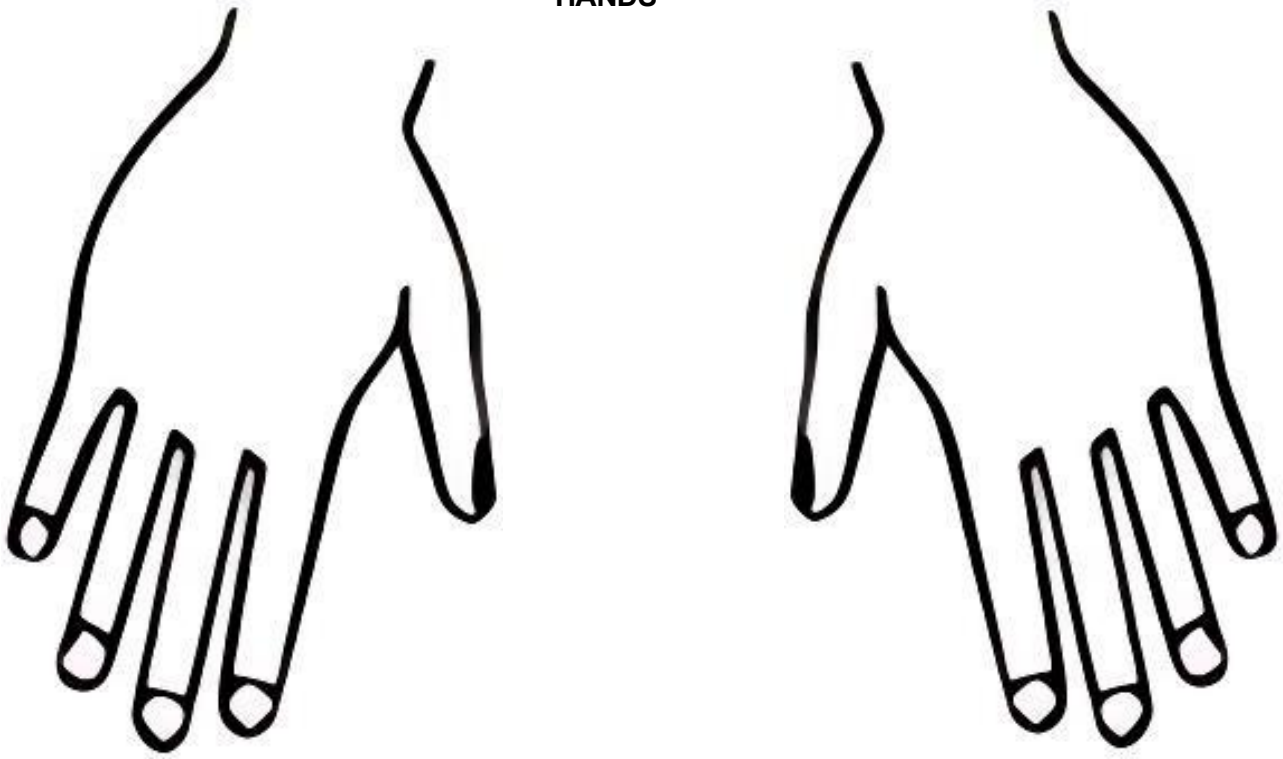


RIGHT

BACK OF HANDS

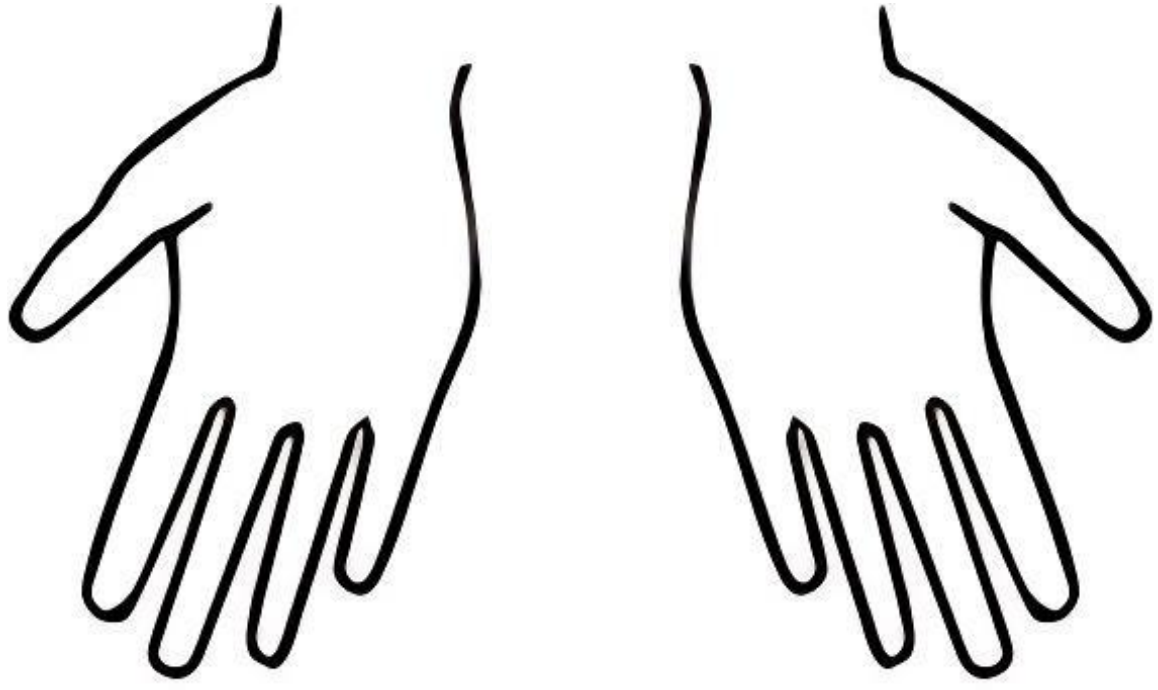
LEFT

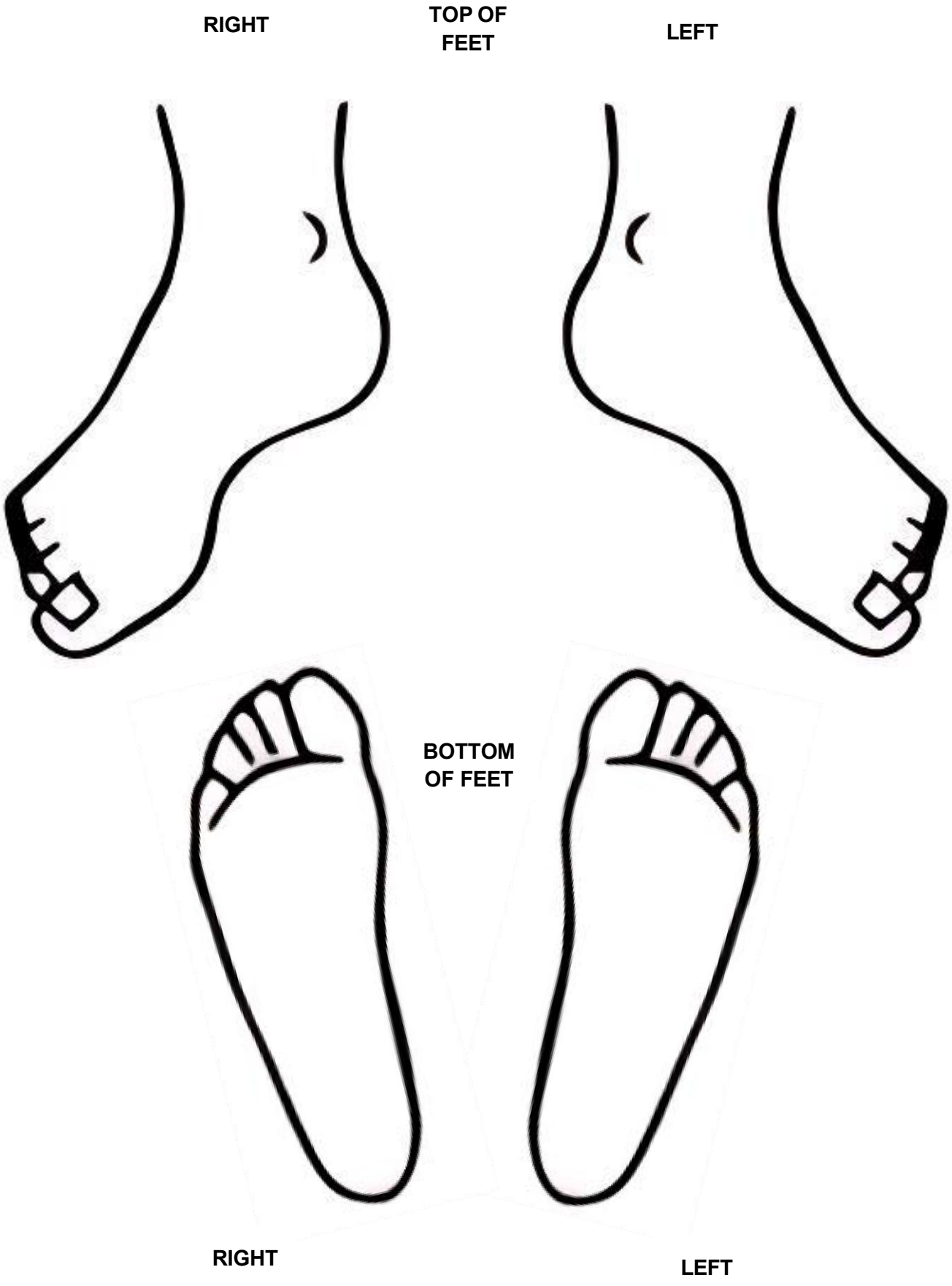


RIGHT

PALMS

LEFT




RIGHT
TOP OF FEET
LEFT
BOTTOM OF FEET
RIGHT
LEFT

Appendix 6 – KCSIE 2026 Key Changes

'Keeping Children Safe in Education' is a key document, with which all governors, staff and volunteers should be familiar with. It is updated every year and all staff must read Part One in its entirety of the updated document.

The Trust provides annual safeguarding training for all its academies and this provides the opportunity to ensure that all staff are made aware of any significant changes in KCSIE from year to year. The necessity of ongoing safeguarding training for all staff is a priority for our staff. DSLs and Headteachers schedule regular training sessions, including updates on the latest safeguarding practices, including ensuring that all staff are aware of the latest KCSIE guidelines.

Changes in the 2026 document are set out below and will be shared with all staff:

Area	Key Changes
Volunteers and regulated activity	Following The Crime and Policing Act 2026, any volunteer who frequently teaches, trains, instructs, or supervises children is in regulated activity and must have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information. The previous supervision exemption has been removed. "Frequently" means once a week or more, or four or more days in a 30-day period.
Image sharing terminology	The phrase "consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images" has been replaced globally with "making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes". This explicitly includes images digitally altered or wholly generated by artificial intelligence (e.g., deepfakes). All such incidents mandate a safeguarding response.
Filtering and monitoring	KCSIE 2026 mandates a strict review at least once every academic year. This review must be conducted by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) member responsible for filtering and monitoring, supported by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and IT support.
Facilities for biological sex	Introduces mandatory restrictions prohibiting children from entering toilets, changing rooms, and boarding/residential accommodation designated for the opposite biological sex. The same applies for participation in PE classes or sports designated for a specific sex. No exceptions are permitted, even when supporting a child's social transition.
Social transition	Schools must not initiate any action regarding social transition; they should only respond if a child or their parent specifically requests it. Primary schools must exercise "particular caution" and support for full social transition should be agreed "very rarely". Staff must not adopt any changes relating to social transition without a decision involving the

Area	Key Changes
	parents, except in exceptionally rare cases. Schools are legally required to record a child's biological sex accurately.
Data Protection legislation	Updates the statutory definition to collectively encompass the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK GDPR, and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.
Child-on-child sexual harassment and sexual violence	Part Five is substantially rewritten to establish a clear, progressive continuum from harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) to sexual violence. HSB is separated into its own distinct section, consent definitions are expanded, and NSPCC resources on typical stages of sexual development are integrated.
Removal of Annex A	The condensed summary of Part One is removed. All staff members (including those not working directly with children) must now read Part One in its entirety.
Early help vs. family help	Guidance now distinguishes explicitly between "universal services and community-based early help" and the "targeted early help level of Family Help".
Mobile Phone Policy	Introduces a default standard that all schools should be "mobile phone-free environments," restricting pupil access to phones during lessons, breaktimes, and lunchtimes.
Generative AI	Integrates dedicated guidance and resource frameworks addressing safeguarding, data protection, and ethical risks involved in the educational use of Generative AI.
Policy neutrality	Expands guidance relating to violence against women and girls (VAWG), misogyny and harmful attitudes, while also requiring schools to consider wider forms of prejudice and discrimination within safeguarding policy and practice.
Single-sex sports	Clarifies that schools can legally separate children into sports based on biological sex for reasons of safety and fairness without violating non-discrimination laws.

Area	Key Changes
Vulnerable groups	Adds separate, dedicated sub-sections addressing the distinct safeguarding requirements of "Young carers" and children with specific "medical conditions".
Definitions of harm	Explicitly includes "modern slavery" and "financial exploitation" under the core exploitation risks staff must recognize.
Temporary accommodation duty	Adds a new section outlining the "Temporary accommodation notification duty" placed on local housing authorities when relocating children.
Prejudice-based harm	Introduces specific safeguarding expectations relating to prejudice-based harm. Staff should recognise that racism, faith-targeted abuse and other forms of discriminatory behaviour can negatively affect a child's welfare, wellbeing, mental health and sense of safety. Schools should promote an inclusive, anti-discriminatory culture and consider such concerns within safeguarding practice where appropriate.
Sexual abuse definition	The definition of sexual abuse has been updated and aligned with *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*. Staff should be aware of the revised wording and apply the updated definition when identifying, reporting and responding to safeguarding concerns.
EYFS DBS requirements	Where a school or academy operates provision covered by the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, staff and relevant volunteers must not begin work until the enhanced DBS certificate, including children's barred-list information, has been received. Supervision arrangements or a standalone barred-list check are not sufficient pending receipt of the certificate.

Appendix 7: Academy Register of Designated Persons – *Gunthorpe C of E Primary*

Safeguarding Role	Contact Details
Trust Safeguarding Lead	Kate Watson
Chair of Governors	Tara Cook
Head Teacher	Mel Brown
Senior Leader(s) available for contact in the absence of DSLs	Anna Owen (SENCO)
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mel Brown
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Paula Findlay
Additional safeguarding leads	
Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children	Anna Owen
Safeguarding Governor	Tara Cook
SENCO	Anna Owen
Senior Mental Health Lead	Mel Brown
Prevent Single Point of Contact	Mel Brown
Online Safety Lead	Jamie Tyler
Attendance Lead	Emma Sanders

Nottinghamshire	
LA Safeguarding Children in Education Officer (Nottinghamshire)	Zain Iqbal - zain.iqbal@nottscc.gov.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer (Nottinghamshire)	LADO@nottscc.gov.uk - 0115 804 1272
Nottinghamshire MASH	0300 500 80 90
MASH Professional Consultation Line: for professionals seeking advice from a social worker when unsure whether a safeguarding referral is required.	0115 977 4247
Emergency Duty Team (out of hours)	0300 456 4546
Nottinghamshire Early Help Unit (information, advice and guidance)	0115 804 1248 earlyhelp@nottscc.gov.uk
Virtual School Contact	Head: Stephanie McGill General enquiries: 0115 977 4747, virtual.school@nottscc.gov.uk Previously looked-after / kinship care: 0115 804 4677, virtualschooladvice@nottscc.gov.uk Children with a social worker: 0115 804 3275, virtualschool.cwasw@nottscc.gov.uk
Children Missing Education	CME Officer: Glen Scruby glen.scruby@nottscc.gov.uk 0115 804 1045
Derbyshire	
Local Authority Designated Officer	LADO Referral Form to professional.allegations@derbyshire.gov.uk
Starting Point Consultation & Advice Service for Professionals	01629 535353
Call Derbyshire (urgent child protection concerns, Mon–Fri 9am–5pm)	01629 533 190

Call Derbyshire (out of hours) 5pm to 9am Monday to Friday and 24 hours per day at weekends and on bank holidays	01629 532 600
Family Help	Family Help Service Advice: Starting Point Consultation and Advice Service via 01629 535353 Requests for support from professionals should be made via the online request for support
Virtual School Contact	Helen Moxon, Virtual School Headteacher 01629 538028 virtualschool@derbyshire.gov.uk
Children Missing Education Team	Email: CS.CMEcoordinators@derbyshire.gov.uk Tel: 01629 535741
Nottingham City	
Nottingham City MASH Monday–Friday, 8:30am–4:50pm. Outside these hours, the same number is for emergency safeguarding enquiries only.	• 0115 876 4800 • Non-urgent referrals: Multi-Agency Referral Online Form
Nottingham City MASH (out of hours)	• 0115 876 4800
Local Authority Designated Officer	• Tina Wright, tel: 0115 876 5501 tina.wright@nottinghamcity.gov.uk
NCSCP general contact	• safeguarding.partnerships@nottinghamcity.gov.uk • 0115 876 4762 (note: separate from the Children and Families Direct/social care line)
Virtual School Contact	• Head: Jasmin Howell • 0115 876 4692 / 4694 • Email: thevirtualschool@nottinghamcity.gov.uk
Children Missing Education	• CME.EducationWelfare@nottinghamcity.gov.uk • Tel: 01158762965
National	
Police (non-emergency)	101

Police (emergency)	999
Channel helpline	020 7340 7264
NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline	0800 028 0285
Childline	0800 1111
Report Abuse in Education helpline	Young people who have experienced abuse at school and parents and teachers who are concerned about sexual abuse in education settings can call the Report Abuse in Education helpline on 0800 136 663 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

Appendix 8: Contextual safeguarding and extra-familial harm

At Aspire and Shine Education Trust, we recognise that children may experience harm beyond their family home, including within peer groups, education settings, neighbourhoods, public places, transport routes and online.

We will consider the people, places and relationships surrounding a child, understand their lived experience and work with children, families and safeguarding partners to identify and reduce risks.

Contextual and extra-familial harm

Extra-familial harm may include:

- child criminal exploitation
- child sexual exploitation
- county lines
- financial exploitation
- serious violence and weapon-related harm
- trafficking and modern slavery
- radicalisation
- abuse within intimate relationships between children
- child-on-child abuse and harmful sexual behaviour
- bullying, harassment and prejudice-based abuse
- grooming, coercion and controlling relationships
- abuse or exploitation facilitated through social media, gaming, generative AI or other technology

Different forms of harm may overlap. A child may experience harm in several contexts or be both harmed by others and involved in behaviour that harms other children. Staff must respond to children as children first. Apparent offending, aggression, absence or other concerning behaviour may indicate that a child is being groomed, coerced, controlled or exploited.

Recognising contextual concerns

Staff should be alert to changes or patterns which may indicate extra-familial harm, including:

- repeated or prolonged absence from education or home
- spending time in locations or with people not previously known
- changes in friendships, relationships or peer groups
- unexplained money, clothing, gifts, travel or mobile devices
- unexplained injuries, fear, secrecy or emotional distress
- threats, intimidation, coercion or debt
- carrying or associating with weapons
- concerning use of social media, gaming platforms or multiple accounts
- being collected by unknown adults or travelling unexpectedly
- declining attendance, engagement or educational progress
- concerns affecting several children or linked to the same location, group or individual

These indicators do not confirm that harm has occurred. Staff must report concerns to the DSL so that they can be considered alongside other information known about the child, their peers and the wider context.

Concerns must be reported and recorded in accordance with Section 4.

NAME OF ACADEMY – Understanding our local safeguarding context

Contextual Concerns	How we aim to address it
Use this section of the table to detail any prominent safeguarding themes that impact the setting and community specifically	**Use this section of the table to outline how the setting aims to address it via the curriculum, interventions, staff training, external support, engagement with the community, etc.**
Add more rows and adjust table as necessary	

The DSL will consider safeguarding information and patterns to identify:

- locations where children may feel or be unsafe
- peer groups or relationships associated with increased risk
- recurring concerns involving particular times, journeys or activities
- online platforms or technologies associated with harm
- groups of children who may require additional support
- gaps in our school's policies, curriculum, supervision or physical environment

Responding to extra-familial harm

Where extra-familial harm is suspected, we will:

- consider the child's immediate safety and the risk to other children
- listen to the child and consider their wishes, feelings and lived experience
- record and report the concern through our school's safeguarding procedures
- consider the locations, relationships, peer groups and online environments connected to the concern
- share information and make referrals where required
- work with parents or carers where it is safe and appropriate
- contribute to multi-agency assessments, plans and disruption activity
- provide appropriate safeguarding and pastoral support
- review whether changes are required to supervision, transport, timetabling, site arrangements or the curriculum.

We will avoid responses which place responsibility on the child for harm caused through grooming, coercion, exploitation or abuse. Behavioural or disciplinary action will be considered alongside the child's safeguarding needs and must not replace an appropriate safeguarding response.

Professional curiosity and inclusive practice

Staff must remain professionally curious and consider whether a child's behaviour or circumstances indicate harm that has not been disclosed.

Staff must be alert to bias, stereotyping and adultification. Cultural awareness should support respectful practice but must not discourage professional challenge or delay safeguarding action.

Children with SEND, communication needs or other additional vulnerabilities may require adapted reporting arrangements and support.

Working with Children, Families and Safeguarding Partners

We will use accessible opportunities for pupil voice to understand where and when children feel safe or unsafe.

Parents and carers will be involved where safe and appropriate, but their involvement must not delay protective action or place a child or another person at greater risk.

We will work with safeguarding partners and other relevant organisations to share information, assess risk, coordinate support and disrupt opportunities for abuse or exploitation.

Review of contextual safeguarding arrangements

The DSL and senior leaders will review contextual safeguarding information regularly and after significant incidents. The review will consider whether:

- identified risks have changed
- safeguarding responses are improving children's safety
- children know how and where to seek help
- staff training reflects current risks
- the curriculum addresses relevant local and online concerns
- supervision and environmental arrangements remain appropriate
- further action or multi-agency support is required

Relevant findings will inform the child protection policy, safeguarding training, curriculum planning, pastoral support and wider school procedures.

Identified curriculum needs will inform Section 11: prevention in the curriculum.