SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING PUPIL'S WELFARE POLICY

Policy Review

Next Review Date:	August 2026
Ratified by:	Trust Board
Date Ratified:	August 2024
Dissemination:	The policy will be made available to all Trust employees

Document Control - Policy Amendments

Date	Version	Summary of Changes	Reviewer/s
Aug-25	1.0	- Shown in red	Shirley Young
Aug-25	1.1	- Policy uploaded onto new template	Z Yassin, Head of Brand Development

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1. Overview

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

This policy is updated in view of statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2025 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

At the Active Learning Trust (ALT), safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The Active Learning Trust is fully committed to ensuring that all its schools demonstrate effective safeguarding to protect all pupils, students and staff. The Trust fully recognises its accountability and responsibilities for Safeguarding and Promoting Pupil's Welfare. This policy will be adopted by all schools who will, in turn, have procedures for safeguarding and child protection that reflect local needs and circumstances as well as take account of related Trust guidance such as on safer recruitment practice and ALT staff Code of Conduct.

2. Definitions

2.1 It is important to see safeguarding as the universal term for everything we do to support children and young people by keeping them safe and promoting their welfare.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

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

2.2 Child Protection, however, is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) as:
- the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. As part of this, all staff will be responsive to emerging issues preventing the need for child protection procedures with good safeguarding and welfare practices.

2.3 Our policy applies to all Trust staff – central team and consultants – school staff, governors, external visitors and volunteers working in each academy.

There are five main elements to our policy:
2.3.1 We practice safer recruitment in checking the suitability of all staff, external visitors and volunteers to work with children and young people
2.3.2 We raise awareness of safeguarding issues and equip children and young people with the skills and resilience to assess risk, make wise choices, stay safe and talk with others about concerns including in relation to bullying including cyberbullying, e-safety such as exposure to the risks of grooming, extremism and

radicalisation and exploitation and child-on-child abuse including sexual violence and harassment.

2.3.3   We develop and implement rigorous procedures for identifying, investigating, recording and reporting on every incident, however small as well as distinguishing between concerns and those situations which suggest immediate danger or risk of harm, which demand instant referral

2.3.4   We support children and young people who have been identified as being vulnerable and at risk of harm, intervening with targeted 'early help', in partnership with external support agencies, as appropriate

2.3.5   We establish a safe and secure environment in all our academies where all children and young people are listened to, have the confidence to learn and flourish as individuals.

2.4   We recognise that because of daily contact with pupils, academy staff are well placed to observe outward signs of abuse – physical, sexual, emotional and neglect, including online abuse – manifesting itself in a range of ways including poor attendance patterns, missing from education, challenging behaviours, erratic mood swings and changes in self-presentation. We are also aware that some of these signs can be an indication of extra-familial harm including (but not limited to) domestic abuse, harmful sexual behaviours, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and exposure to serious youth violence.

2.5   The Trust will therefore, through its academies:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children and young people feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to, whilst recognising that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused.
- Ensure children and young people know that there are adults in each academy who they can approach and trust if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the curriculum for children and young people to develop the skills they need to stay safe from abuse as well as develop their own emotional and mental health and well-being.
- Develop Mental health as a key development priority for the Trust following recent national guidance and concerns reported by Heads. A mental health lead from each academy will be trained and a Trust-wide working group is active, focusing on curriculum development and the dissemination of best practice in response to regular pupil and staff surveys.

2.6   The Trust supports arrangements set out by local multi-agency safeguarding partners with which schools must comply, including health and children's social care ensuring:

- There is at least one designated senior person for safeguarding, in each academy, who has received appropriate training and support, and with responsibility for the child protection file, as well as named deputies, all of whom have their role referenced in job descriptions.
- There is a named Attendance Champion in every academy who is expected to work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Leader.
- Every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff, external visitors, volunteers and the governing body) is made aware of the names of the senior designated safeguarding lead and deputies and their roles in each academy.
- **All** staff and governors in academies, including central Trust staff, receive safeguarding training as stipulated by statutory guidance.
- **All** staff and governors in academies, including Trust staff and associated consultants, appear on the relevant central register that records a DBS check and a signed response

establishing that they have read and understood the Safeguarding Policy and the relevant statutory guidance - part 1 and annex A - of the Keeping Children Safe in Education latest version.

- In accordance with guidance for academies all of our senior leaders, teachers that carry department headships, headteachers, governors and trustees are subject to a 128 check.
- The Board of Trustees and Local Governing bodies facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

3.   Procedures

3.1   The training of all staff in safeguarding must be reviewed in line with Government guidance and KCSiE and communicated to parents/carers so that they have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the academy and its staff by setting out its obligations in the academy prospectus.

3.2   The appropriate Local Authority professionals are notified if there is an unexplained absence of a pupil who is subject to a Child in Need Plan, including early detection of children missing from education.

3.3   Effective links are maintained and developed with relevant agencies and academies co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters including attending the multi-agency core group, child in need and case conferences.

3.4   All staff meet the statutory duty of safeguarding pupils at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM) and have undertaken appropriate training. Staff have a mandatory duty to report to the police any cases of FGM and they are also expected to report cases of girls they believe are at risk of undergoing the procedure.

3.5   Written, chronological records of concerns about children and young people are kept, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately. All academies are now using MyConcern - a highly-regarded software package that supports a consistent approach to recording and reporting across the Trust.

3.6   All paper records are kept securely; separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations, with standards of confidentiality maintained. It is good practice to have two emergency contact numbers for pupils.

3.7   Correct and appropriate procedures are followed where an allegation is made against a member of staff, agency cover staff or volunteer. All academies now have access to MyConcern Staff Safeguarding where files relating to allegations against employees can be stored and monitored. It is important that all staff who are trained in positive handling strategies are aware of safeguarding issues and how to use restraint safely. From the autumn term of September 2024 all staff are in our academies will be trained in de-escalation strategies regularly.

3.8   Safer recruitment practices are always followed including that at least one member of an interview panel for posts with access to children and young people has undertaken recognised safer recruitment training.

3.9   We recognise that children and young people who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. 2.9 The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children and young people at risk. When in the academy their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. Our academies will endeavour to support the pupil or student in:

- Engaging with the content of the curriculum and the teaching of specific skills, positive behaviours and attitudes.
- Learning within the academy ethos, promoting a supportive and secure environment, where pupils feel valued and listened to, with concerns taken seriously.
- Benefiting from the academy positive behaviour policy that is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school including those with SEN and disabilities, looked after and young carers as well as those at risk of exclusion. The academy will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Accessing local agencies that support the pupil such as children's social care, Child and Adult Mental Health Services (CAMHS), education welfare services and educational psychology services.
- Gaining the support required, eg when a pupil who is subject to a Child in Need Plan leaves a school, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and the child/young person's social worker is informed.
- Recognising that child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways. All forms of child on child abuse are unacceptable and will be taken seriously
- Being clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment will not be tolerated. KCSiE – Part Five – 2021 should be referred to for full details of procedures to be followed in such cases.
- Recognising that young people who go missing can be at increased risk of sexual exploitation and have procedures in place to ensure an appropriate response, particularly students who go missing on repeat occasions.
- Supporting pupils who are victims, or suspected victims, of domestic abuse.

4.   The School's Prevent Strategy as Part of Safeguarding

4.1   Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism and radicalisation. There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

4.2   The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable young people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. Academies need to make it clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.

4.3   The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act, 2015 places a duty on authorities (including schools) 'to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'.

4.4   All staff in our academies must be made aware of this duty.

4.5   When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Prevent Lead.

4.6   'The statutory guidance makes clear that schools and childcare providers are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them.' *The Prevent Duty, DfE advice for schools and childcare providers 2015*

In view of the above the Trust's expectation is that:
- Prevent will be included in the school's safeguarding policy and as part of the school's prevention strategy, with a view to protecting those children and young people vulnerable and at risk
- There will be a single, trained, point of contact, who will provide staff awareness training and vet external speakers and internal events
- All adults within the school community who may come into contact with children and young people during the school day, including before and after school, will undertake the appropriate training, including Prevent
- Links will be made with SMSC, British values, citizenship, PSHE, tutorials, assemblies - identifying explicit opportunities for pupil skill development in assessing risk and having the ability to look out for themselves and others
- Parents/carers will be involved as appropriate
- E-safety advice and guidance for pupils, staff and parents will include Prevent
- Processes will be robust in terms of assessing, recording and reporting incidents, as well as referring on, if appropriate.

5.   Trust Monitoring and Responsibilities

5.1   The Trust leadership and Trustees have the following recognised responsibilities:
   5.1.1   To ensure that safeguarding and associated policies are in place at all academies.
   5.1.2   To ensure that all staff meet the requirements of KCSIE 25, Working together to safeguard children 2023 and the statutory framework for EYFS 24.
   5.1.3   Ensure safer recruitment procedures are followed in all academies.
   5.1.4   To ensure that all trustees have attended appropriate training.
   5.1.5   To ensure that best practice for safeguarding is shared across the trust.
   5.1.6   To ensure that appropriate funding is available to deliver all aspects of safeguarding education and training.
   5.1.7   To monitor child on child abuse between children, attendance, behaviour, and other key indicators of the current safeguarding position.
   5.1.8   To ensure a full understanding of GDPR obligations
   5.1.9   To ensure that safeguarding is an agenda item on all relevant SLT and Governance meetings.

5.2   Safeguarding is part of the Ofsted inspection framework within the 'personal development and welfare', 'leadership and governance', behaviour, attendance and inclusion strands as well as the separated safeguarding section. Extreme radicalisation and exploitation is regarded as a safeguarding issue for vulnerable and at-risk children and young people and

therefore schools are expected to respond to this within their own 'Prevent risk assessment/action plan' as part of their safeguarding approach. A proforma for this plan is usually available from the LA.

6.   Trust ICT Infrastructure

6.1   Appropriate internet filters and monitoring systems are in place in all our academies to keep children and young people safe online. This is informed by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty. DSL's and relevant school leaders have received training to ensure they are aware of the requirements of KCSIE 23. The DFE standards tool is used for leaders to complete and share with governors to ensure ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring systems.

7.   ALT Central Team

7.1   All ALT staff are based at Neale-Wade Academy Campus (NWA) or work remotely and therefore abide by NWA's safeguarding policy and procedures. They all undertake annual safeguarding training as part of their role. If they are working in one of our academies, they follow the child protection policy of that academy. Within the ALT team we always have a minimum of one DSL who oversees all aspects of safeguarding. If a member of the ALT central team needs to report any concerns regarding safeguarding practices in one of our academies, they report it directly to the Trust DSL, the linked school AIL, or the Director of Education.

8.   Trust Safeguarding Structure

To ensure the trust's own culture is embedded the members and trustees are all appropriately trained having read and understood KCSIE 25 Part 1/A

The Academy Improvement Lead for Safeguarding and lead DSL for the trust is:
Shirley Young shirley.young@activelearningtrust.org

The Deputy DSL for Safeguarding is the Director for Education, Duncan Low
duncan.low@activelearningtrust.org

The trust named Attendance Champion is Shirley Young
Shirley.young@activelearningtrust.org

Contact is preferred through the Head of Business Services, Karen Jarvis
Karen.jarvis@activelearningtrust.org

Other related trust policies include:

- Whistleblowing
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Managing Allegations

9. Appendix A

Appendix A provides a checklist for school governors as a means of quality assuring the school's procedures alongside the Trust's policy, legal requirements and statutory guidance.

September 2025
This policy shall be reviewed annually.

Expectations of Academy Committees

All local Academy Committees will have a Safeguarding champion.

The Safeguarding Champion role is currently under review and therefore the role description included below is DRAFT. The final agreed role descriptor will be updated during Autumn 2025.

Core Responsibilities

As a Safeguarding Champion, you will:

- **Engage with the DSL**: Meet once per term with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to understand current strengths, challenges, and actions in safeguarding practice.
- **Keep safeguarding visible**: Ensure safeguarding, child protection, and wellbeing are considered during LTC discussions—raising questions where appropriate.
- **Review progress**: Monitor the school's progress against actions from internal safeguarding reviews or audits, in partnership with the DSL.
- **Ask informed questions**: Support accountability by constructively questioning how safeguarding concerns, policies, and training are monitored and addressed.
- **Be a visible link**: Act as a connection point between the DSL and the LTC, strengthening understanding and responsiveness.
- **Promote awareness**: Encourage all LTC members to consider how decisions may affect pupil wellbeing and safety.
- **Share learning**: Attend ALT's termly Champion Forums (when established) to access training and share ideas with Safeguarding Champions across the Trust.

What Safeguarding Ambassadors are Not Responsible For

Safeguarding Ambassadors are **not expected to**:

- Respond to safeguarding concerns or disclosures.
- Investigate individual safeguarding matters.
- Review the Single Central Record or lead audits.
- Make decisions on behalf of the school in a safeguarding capacity.
- Represent the school during inspections or formal reviews.

The role is to support **vigilance and reflective practice**, not to act as a safeguarding lead.