



# **HARMONIZE ACADEMY**

## **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

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| <b>POLICY WRITTEN BY:</b>                     | <b>PRINCIPAL</b>      |
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**Trust, Respect, Compassion, Forgiveness**

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## **INTRODUCTION: ‘*The Welfare of the Child is Paramount*’**

Harmonize Academy strives to create a culture of security for its students which demonstrates its concern for their welfare and safety. We aim to develop an ethos where students and staff can keep themselves and others safe, where they trust, have good relationships, and can share their thoughts and feelings with those who respect them, listen to them and take appropriate action, in their interests.

A printed copy of the Safeguarding Policy can be obtained from Harmonize Academy on request and is available on our website. *The Safeguarding Statement and Guidelines are displayed in every main working area of the building.*

The Safeguarding Policy provides guidelines to everyone in Harmonize Academy, whether working in a professional or voluntary capacity. Everyone in Harmonize Academy has a duty of care towards children and young people to help to protect them from abuse. Harmonize Academy’s approach to Safeguarding is based on the principles recognised within UK and International legislation and Government guidance. The following has been taken into consideration:

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## LEGISLATION AND STATUTORY GUIDANCE

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2025\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023 updates 2025\)](#), and the [Academy Trust Guidance](#) comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least one person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- Part 3 of the schedule to the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school
- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

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Harmonize Academy is committed to working in partnership with all agencies to ensure that information and training opportunities are available to ensure best practice when working with young people. Adopting best practice will help to safeguard these participants from potential abuse as well as protecting staff and other adults in positions of responsibility from potential false allegations of abuse. The Harmonize Academy Safeguarding Policy and Implementation Procedures will allow young people to excel in a safe environment.

Harmonize Academy is committed to ensuring that everyone working with children or young people:

- Has undergone a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check
- Is adequately trained and supervised
- Understands and follows the organisation's Safeguarding Policy

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

### **Responsibilities for All** - Harmonize Academy will:

- Accept the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty of care for young people, safeguard their well-being and protect them from abuse.
- Respect and promote the rights, responsibilities, wishes and feelings of young people
- Recruit, train and supervise its employees and volunteers so as to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect young people from abuse, and themselves against false allegations
- Require staff and volunteers to adopt and abide by the Safeguarding Policy and Implementation Procedures which incorporate the Harmonize Academy Code of Conduct (see p.24)
- Respond to any allegations appropriately.

### **Principles**

The guidance given in the procedures is based on the following principles

- This policy recognises and builds on the legal and statutory definitions of a child
- The distinction between ages of consent, civil and criminal liability are recognised but in the pursuit of good practice in the delivery and management of ministry, a young person is recognised as being under the age of 18 years (Children's Act 1989 definition)
- An adult has a moral and statutory duty for the care, custody and control of any child under the age of 18 under their supervision
- The child's welfare is paramount
- All young people, whatever their age, culture, any disability they may have, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- All incidents of poor practice or suspicions of poor practice and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All young people have a right to participate in the relevant activities of Harmonize Academy in an enjoyable and safe climate
- Young people have a right to expect appropriate management, support, personal and social development with regard to their involvement in the relevant activities of Harmonize Academy, whether it be on a short or long-term basis
- It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding experts and agencies to determine whether or not abuse has taken place but it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns
- Confidentiality should be upheld in line with the Data Protection Act 1984 and the Human Rights Act 2000. Working in partnership with young people, their parents and other agencies is essential for the protection of young people. All those involved in the management of young people in Harmonize Academy have a duty to ensure that they are: -
  1. Allowed access to relevant services and activities in a way that is appropriate for their age and ability
  2. Mentored and trained by appropriately qualified staff
  3. Not required to engage in so many activities, as to become a threat to their well being
  4. Not subjected to verbal or racial abuse from any source, including references to height, weight etc.
  5. Not subjected to bullying or undue pressure from any source
  6. Encouraged to achieve their full potential at all levels
  7. Instructed on how to behave when they are with us or outside of our environment

## WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has an important role to play.

School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating. ([DfE 2025](#))

### A child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding

Schools and colleges and their staff are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in statutory guidance Working together to safeguard children.

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

No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, **everyone** who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance 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

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

Keeping Children Safe in Education ([DfE 2025](#))

## ABUSE and NEGLECT

### Indicators of abuse and neglect

Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. **All** staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may need help or protection. If staff are unsure, they should **always** speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

**All** school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

## **Abuse**

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. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

## **Physical Abuse**

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

## **Emotional Abuse**

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

## **Sexual Abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also be abusers as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue.

## **Neglect**

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

## **POSSIBLE SIGNS OF ABUSE - WHEN TO BE CONCERNED**

- When a child has frequent or untypical injuries, not normally associated with the explanation given
- When a child exhibits untypical behaviour or his behaviour, progress, relationships or attitude at school changes significantly
- When a child indulges in sexual behaviour, either verbal or non-verbal that is unusually explicit or inappropriate to their age.
- When there are signs of neglect, lateness or truancy, when a child is 'missing from education'
- When their play / written work or art work expresses distress/ unusual messages.
- We must however, also be aware that signs can be misleading and that some children show no signs at all.

## **SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES**

Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example, NSPCC offers information for schools and colleges on the TES website and also on its own website [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk) Schools and colleges can also access broad government guidance on the issues listed below via the GOV.UK website:

- child sexual exploitation (CSE) – see also below
- bullying including cyberbullying
- domestic abuse
- drugs
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM) – see also below
- forced marriage
- gangs and youth violence
- Honour based abuse /violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- mental health
- private fostering
- radicalisation
- sexting
- teenage relationship abuse
- trafficking



## **SAFEGUARDING ISSUES**

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk. Below are some safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of.

### **CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE**

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse). It can happen both inside and outside of school and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (*sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’*)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- up-skirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm; and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

### **MENTAL HEALTH**

- All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children’s experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.
- If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

## **SERIOUS VIOLENCE**

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

## **CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION**

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others. Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

## **CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

## COUNTY LINES

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools (mainstream and special), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children’s homes and care homes. Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

A number of the indicators for CSE and CCE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

- go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home;
- have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime);
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs;
- are exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection;
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a ‘trap house or cuckooing’ or hotel room where there is drug activity;
- owe a ‘debt bond’ to their exploiters;
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

## DOMESTIC ABUSE

The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected”.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government has issued statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as ‘teenage relationship abuse’. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of ‘domestic abuse’ (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

Advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

- NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects
- Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children
- Safelives: young people and domestic abuse
- Domestic abuse: specialist sources of support (includes information for adult victims, young people facing abuse in their own relationships and parents experiencing child to parent violence/abuse)
- Operation Encompass (includes information for schools on the impact of domestic abuse on children)

### **So-Called ‘Honour-Based’ Abuse** *(including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)*

So-called ‘honour’-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving ‘honour’ often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

## **Actions**

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBV, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on **teachers** that requires a different approach (see following section).

## **FGM**

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

### **FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers**

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon **teachers** along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should **not** be examining pupils or students, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#).

Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's or college's designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: [FGM Fact Sheet](#).

## **Forced marriage**

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

The Forced Marriage Unit has published [statutory guidance](#) and [Multi-agency guidelines](#), pages 35-36 of which focus on the role of schools and colleges. School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email [fmu@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fmu@fco.gov.uk).

## **Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into local authority children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16- and 17-year-olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Local authority children's social care will be the lead agency for these children and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

## Online safety

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. An effective whole school and college approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate pupils, students, and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

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

**contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.

**conduct:** online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying, and

**commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

Further DfE guidance to plan technology use which schools can use to assess themselves against the filtering and monitoring standards and receive personalised recommendations on how to meet them can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-technology-for-your-school>.

The DfE has published [Generative AI: product safety expectations to support schools to use generative artificial intelligence safely](#), and explains how filtering and monitoring requirements apply to the use of generative AI in education.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES - THE STATUTORY FRAMEWORK**

The basis for the policy followed by this school is the ['Keeping Children Safe in Education' \(DfE 2025\)](#) plus the Safeguarding INSET guidance provided.

The Code of Practice requires all schools to follow its stated procedures for protecting children from abuse and to ensure that they have appropriate internal procedures in place to do so. The school has a statutory obligation to refer cases of suspected child abuse, including physical injury, emotional and sexual abuse, neglect or domestic violence. These procedures also cover circumstances where there is an allegation involving a member of school staff. The school's copy of the Code of Practice is held by the designated teacher and is to be found in the school offices. All staff (teaching and non-teaching) are required to comply with this Code of Practice.

Staff are reminded that there is a statutory requirement to act on suspicions of child abuse and that they should notify the Safeguarding /Child Protection Co-ordinator, immediately of any concerns. Otherwise, the information is strictly confidential and should not be discussed with anyone else.

## **DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD FOR SAFEGUARDING:**

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Code of Practice states that every school must designate a senior member of staff who is appropriately trained to co-ordinate action within the school and liaise with other agencies.

**This role is undertaken by: Mr Carl Parkinson – Vice Principal**

**Other designated persons are:**

- **Mrs Marie McConville      Principal**
- **Mrs Sheelagh Cloonan      Education Welfare Officer, Safeguarding Officer**
- **Mrs Liz Cunningham      Assistant Principal, Safeguarding Officer**
- **Mr Wynn Ridge      Assistant Principal, Safeguarding Officer**
- **Mr Matthew Baines      Behaviour Inclusion Manager, Safeguarding Officer**
- **Miss Emily Maxwell      SENDCo, Safeguarding Officer**



The designated safeguarding lead will fulfil the following areas of responsibility identified by the LEA:

- To know and follow the practices and procedures regarding Safeguarding / Child Protection as laid down in the Code of Practice.
- To ensure that all staff, including non-teaching staff, are aware of these procedures by facilitating appropriate training.
- To keep updated and secure records and inform staff on a 'need to know' basis.
- To work with the LA and other agencies – to make referrals where child abuse is likely to occur or is suspected or a disclosure has been made.
- To meet with the agencies involved and monitor 'Children at Risk' and 'Children In Need'.
- Attend case conferences (or to ensure that the appropriate member of staff attends) ensure a report is prepared and take part in core groups as required.
- Inform the Principal and Governing Body of any significant developments or concerns with regard to Safeguarding / Child Protection.

Additionally, [Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE 2025](#) sets out the broad areas of responsibility for the Designated Safeguarding Lead:

### ***Manage referrals***

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to refer cases:

- of suspected abuse and neglect to the local authority children's social care as required and support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care;
- to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;
- where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required; and
- where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required. NPCC - When to call the police should help understand when to consider calling the police and what to expect when working with the police.

### ***Working with others***

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff;
- act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners;
- liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- as required, liaise with the "case manager" (as per Part four) and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member;
- liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENDCOs), on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically;
- liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the Mental Health Support Team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health;
- promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances;
- work with the headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college. This includes:
  1. ensuring that the school or college knows who its cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; and,
  2. supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.

## ***Training***

The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years. The designated safeguarding lead should undertake Prevent awareness training. Training should provide designated safeguarding leads with a good understanding of their own role, how to identify, understand and respond to specific needs that can increase the vulnerability of children, as well as specific harms that can put children at risk, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care, so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements;
- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- understand the importance of the role the designated safeguarding lead has in providing information and support to children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes;
- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers;
- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners;
- understand and support the school with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation
- are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college
- can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses, and
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

### ***Raise Awareness***

The designated safeguarding lead should:

- ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school's or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff;
- ensure the school's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this;
- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this;
- link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements; and,
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and school leadership staff.

### **ROLE OF THE TEACHER**

The tutor is often the best person to notice signs of concern and all tutors are encouraged to work at developing good relationships with their class to foster a climate whereby pupils are able to approach them and talk freely.

### **TAKING REGISTERS**

Registers must be taken at the start of lessons. This is important so that teachers can report any student who appears to be absent when they have been marked present for the previous lesson that day. In the event of a student or students being absent, without explanation (having attended the previous lesson) staff should inform the school office, without delay, as this could be a Safeguarding issue (truancy etc).

### **WHAT TO DO IF A CHILD MAKES A DISCLOSURE**

A concerned member of staff should:

- Record in factual, precise notes, giving times, dates, and diagrams of injuries if possible, the exact nature of the concerns and then notify the designated senior person for safeguarding who will offer guidance on Safeguarding /Child Protection issues and know what to do next.
- Listen without displaying shock or disbelief, accepting what is being said without asking leading questions, and allowing the child to talk freely.
- Remain non-judgmental.
- Reassure the child that it is right to tell, explain what has to be done next, and do not promise confidentiality.

All staff have been issued with further guidelines -sheet attached (Appendix D)

## **SUPPORT FOR STAFF**

Dealing with child protection is always difficult and stressful. Members of staff should consider seeking support for themselves, initially from the designated safeguarding lead.

## **INVOLVING / CONTACTING PARENTS AND CARERS**

The school will endeavour to inform parents before making a referral, but recognises that there may be occasions when this is not appropriate / possible.

In all cases advice (regarding the involvement of parents /carers) will, therefore, be sought, by phone, from 'CASS' prior to formal referral.

Parents / Carers will be made aware of the Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy and relevant Procedures on a regular basis. Parents /Carers will receive a letter informing them who is responsible for Safeguarding / Child Protection, including contact details and reminding them that it is the duty of every adult (including them) to report any concerns.

Information will be given to parents on how to report concerns through the school and how they can refer directly to the agencies with regard to 'Concerns within the Wider Community', if they would prefer to report any concerns themselves.

These details will be displayed, in reception, at Parents Evenings and on 'Review Days', to draw attention to the responsibilities of parents with regard to Safeguarding / Child Protection both within school and the 'wider community'.

Parents / carers will be informed that copies of the Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy are available on request.

## **SOURCES OF ADDITIONAL ADVICE AND GUIDANCE**

Guidance for all staff, including ancillary staff is given in policies and procedures available to staff on the school website, staff guidelines, staff handbook and in training information and displayed in the staff rooms. Any member of staff, pupil or governor can ask the designated senior person for further advice or discuss concerns.

DFE guidelines [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023 updates 2025\)](#) forms the basis of this advice, particularly with regard to signs of "significant harm" (one traumatic event or compilation of events that interrupt, change or damage the child's physical or psychological development).

**'CASS' on 0151 459 2606** is the 24-hour service to give advice, answer queries and give guidance to staff with regard to referrals.

### **What should do if they have safeguarding concerns about another staff member who may pose a risk of harm to children.**

If staff have safeguarding concerns about another member of staff (including volunteers, supply staff, tradespersons and visitors) they should speak to the headteacher or to another member of the school's or college's senior leadership team.

### **What school or college staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices within the school or college.**

It is everyone's duty to pass information regarding actual or suspected abuse to the designated senior person and / or relevant external agencies. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's or college's safeguarding regime, and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team. If staff feel unable to raise an issue or feel that their genuine safeguarding concerns are not being addressed NSPCC whistleblowing advice line is available. Staff can call 0800028 0285 – 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk). Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH.

Safeguarding/Child Protection Procedures and Liverpool Local Authority advice will be followed where there is an allegation involving a member of staff. The Principal will be notified immediately, as will the Liverpool Authority Designated Officer (LADO) charged to deal with allegations against staff. They can be contacted through 'CASS' on 0151 459 2606 (24-hour service). The two people who oversee and manage allegations in Liverpool are:

Catherine Ballans, LADO & Risk Manager: Tel: 0771 670 2034

Pauline Trubshaw, LADO: Tel: 0784 172 7309

In the event of the Principal being involved in allegations of abuse the Local Authority Designated Officer, the LADO will be informed via 'CASS' on 0151 459 2606 Or via Catherine Ballans, LADO & Risk Manager: Tel: 0771 670 2034

The Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding / Child Protection, Rebecca Ross-Williams, will also be informed.

## **INSET**

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will provide appropriate annual INSET for all staff (teaching and non-teaching).
- Staff will all be issued with a personal copy of ['Keeping Children Safe in Education' \(DFE 2025\)](#). Training will also be delivered annually on the PREVENT Strategy and Far Right extremism.

## **TEMPORARY STAFF**

Temporary Staff e.g. supply staff will be issued with the Guidelines 'What to Do if a Child Discloses'. The department staff will ask each person whether they have encountered any 'Safeguarding / Child Protection Issues' before temporary staff leave at the end of the day.

## HOW CAN CHILDREN KEEP THEMSELVES SAFE?

Every opportunity for teaching children to keep themselves and others safe will be utilised. Parents/carers will also be involved in this process.

Children will be taught 'How to keep themselves Safe', as follows:

- Through House Group Time. Themes throughout the year e.g. via Assemblies/ Mentor Time
- Through the PSHE Curriculum
- Through student INDUCTION on e-Safety and Cyber-Bullying (delivered by Mr Carl Parkinson or external agencies)
- Helplines and Contact numbers and web-sites included in Student Handbook also displayed in student areas around the school.
- Theatre Companies delivering Messages on Safety e.g. 'Terriers', 'Eve's Story' and 'Knife Crime' and Drama department working through 'Safeguarding Themes' e.g. Anti-Bullying / Homophobic Bullying etc.-through the curriculum, in role-play etc.
- Letters home to parents / carers will contain 'Safeguarding / Child Protection' messages and information and contact numbers.

Safeguarding Policy will be distributed to Parents and help-lines/ contacts numbers and web-sites for parents will be distributed at Parents Meetings.

## THE ROLE OF GOVERNORS

**Mrs Ross-Williams** is the designated governor for Safeguarding and has undertaken the relevant specific Safeguarding / Child Protection Training, provided by School Improvement Liverpool.

It is the duty of this governor to liaise with the Safeguarding / Child Protection Coordinator in order to lead and advise the Governing Body in all matters relating to Safeguarding / Child Protection.

**In particular the Designated Governor has a duty to ensure that:**

- Safer Recruitment /Vetting and Barring Strategies are in place and effective;
- Enhanced DBS Checks with barred list information if appropriate / Single Central Record completed;
- Safeguarding / Child Protection Policies and strategies are in place, effective, reviewed, evaluated and monitored;
- The Governors are updated and aware of Safeguarding / Child Protection issues.

## **SAFEGUARDING ADVICE and SCREENING PROCEDURES FOR VISITORS & VOLUNTEERS**

In accordance with our Screening Procedures Document, the following conditions apply:

**ALL VISITORS WILL BE ASKED TO SIGN IN and BY SIGNING YOU ARE COMPLETING OUR SAFEGUARDING DECLARATION which states:**

*If applicable, since producing a DBS Certificate/ identity photo card, the safeguarding status of the visitor who has signed has remained unchanged.*

**VISITORS MAY BE ASKED TO COMPLETE THE VISITOR SCREENING DOCUMENT ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY ARE UNABLE TO PRODUCE A DBS CERTIFICATE.**

They will be issued with a 'Visitor's Badge' but must be supervised by staff at all times.

### **REGULAR VISITORS and ONE-OFF VISITORS WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

*For example, Psychologist, School Nurse, Careers Adviser*

- Only those visitors who have produced a current DBS Certificate which has been issued in the last two years plus photographic proof of identity are allowed to work unsupervised with students. All other visitors must be escorted and supervised at all times.
- The 'Regular Visitors' Book and the On- off visitor sign in book will contain a declaration to the effect that, 'Since producing the DBS Disclosure Certificate and identity photo card, the safeguarding status of the visitor has remained unchanged'.
- Once their DBS Certificate {or letter from the Local Authority line manager, confirming that checks have been made} and photographic proof of identity have been presented, regular visitors can be issued with a photo-ID badge indicating that they are a DBS Checked Visitor. This badge must be collected from and returned to reception on each visit to Harmonize Academy and signed for in the 'Regular Visitors' Book each visit.
- All one-off visitors will be issued with a 'Visitor's Badge'
- Visitors will need to read Harmonize Academy's Staff Code of Conduct, Child Protection Policy and Part 1 of the DfE's Guidance, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' available on the School's website.
- If visitors have any concerns about a child's welfare or well-being or have a concern about the behaviour of any adult within the school towards a child, discuss your concerns without delay with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### **GENERAL VISITORS NOT WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

In accordance with our Screening Procedures Document the following applies:

- General visitors may be issued with a 'Visitors Badge' but must be supervised by staff at all times. Schools do not have the power to request DBS checks and barred list checks, or ask to see DBS certificates, for visitors (for example children's relatives or other visitors attending a sports day or performance.)
- The Principal will use her professional judgment about the need to escort or supervise visitors.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY / DATA PROTECTION in compliance with GDPR, 2018**

For visitors to Harmonize Academy, their details are recorded on the sign-in sheet or the screening document, including DBS certificate number, date of issue, copy of photographic ID and initials of the member of staff who saw it, will be kept in one central file (not the Harmonize Academy single record) and subject to data protection regulations. (N.B. Persons signing the 'Screening Document' may disclose their work address providing they are visiting Harmonize Academy on behalf of their service rather than their home address, if they wish).

**ANY VISITOR OR VOLUNTEER WHO REFUSES TO COMPLETE THE SCREENING DOCUMENT OR COMPLY WITH THE ABOVE CONDITIONS WILL BE REFUSED ENTRY TO THE SCHOOL.**



## **Proprietors of independent schools including academies and free schools or alternative provision academies and free schools**

Before an individual becomes either the proprietor of an independent school or the chair of a body of people which is the proprietor of an independent school, the Secretary of State will:

- carry out an enhanced DBS check;
- confirm the individual's identity; and
- if the individual lives or has lived outside of the UK, making an enhanced check insufficient, such other checks as the Secretary of State considers appropriate.

The Secretary of State also undertakes these checks in respect of the chair of governing bodies of a non-maintained special school.

The requirement for an enhanced DBS check is dis-applied for the chair of an academy trust if the academy is converting from a maintained school and the person has already been subject to a check carried out by the local authority.

Where the proprietor is a body of people, the chair must ensure that enhanced DBS certificates are obtained for the other members of the body and that identity checks are completed before, or as soon as practicable after, any individual takes up their position. Further checks as the chair considers appropriate should be undertaken where, by reason of the individual's living or having lived overseas, obtaining an enhanced DBS check is not sufficient to establish his or her suitability to work in a school.

In the case of an academy trust newly established to operate a free school, the DfE will ask the DBS to conduct checks on all members and directors of the new trust. Academy trusts, including those established to run a free school, have the same responsibilities as all independent schools in relation to requesting enhanced DBS certificates for permanent and supply staff

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE SAFEGUARDING / CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

This policy will be subject to an annual, formal review.

This review will involve LA Officers, Governors the Safeguarding / Child Protection Coordinator and any other staff, as appropriate.

During the year additional information may be added, information may be modified or altered, according to any additional advice, guidance or developments. Where this is the case revised policy / guidelines will be issued to staff, as appropriate.

# **SAFE WORKING PRACTICE: STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT**

## **Introduction**

Harmonize Academy seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment where the welfare of pupils is paramount. Staff seek to act professionally at all times but we recognise that tensions and misunderstandings can occur in the context of interactions between staff and pupils. This guidance aims to help staff safeguard pupils and reduce the risk of improper conduct or false allegations.

Clear guidance for professional practice is given on pages 5-15 of the document ['Keeping children safe in education: Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff'](#) issued to staff and discussed with them in September 2025 (Appendix C).

The induction safeguarding guidelines document (Appendix D) gives specific, practical advice on significant aspects of professional conduct - including the Do's and Don'ts of 'Safer Working Practice'.

Harmonize Academy staff must read these guidelines and then return the pro-forma signing the declaration that 'they have received, read and agree to comply with the Guideline's'. Any member of staff who does not comply with this requirement will not be allowed to work in Harmonize Academy.

## **A SUMMARY OF THE GUIDELINES**

### **Principles**

- Staff are responsible for their own actions
- Staff should be seen to work in a transparent way
- All staff should report any incident which may give rise to concern to a senior member of staff
- All staff should be aware of and follow the school's child protection procedures
- Staff need to be aware that criminal or disciplinary action can be taken when professional guidelines are breached

### **Guidelines**

#### **1. Duty of Care**

All staff have a duty to keep pupils safe and are accountable for the way in which they use their authority and position of trust. This duty can best be exercised through the development of caring but professional relationships. Staff should avoid situations where their motives can be questioned.

Record discussions and actions taken. Report any incidents causing concern.

#### **2. Confidentiality**

Staff should never share information about pupils casually or allow pupils access to staff computer user privileges. However, concerns about Child Protection issues should be reported to the senior safeguarding/CP designated person.

Treat information about pupils discreetly seek advice when concerned.

Do not give out personal details to other pupils and be careful with email addresses.

Remember to log off whenever leaving your computer unattended; do not allow pupils to use your computer unless you have logged off.

### **3. Behaviour**

Staff should adopt high standards of personal conduct at all times. This means:

- Do not swear or use abusive language to or within the hearing of a pupil
- Do not use demeaning or racist or sexist comments (directly or indirectly)
- Never make sexual remarks to a pupil or discuss personal sexual relationships
- Do not lose your temper
- Dress appropriately in a smart and professional manner which will avoid attracting inappropriate comments
- Never make personal comments which humiliate or scapegoat a pupil or may seem to do so
- Be punctual at all times
- Not to use mobile phones for personal use in work time

### **4. Social Contact**

Staff should not seek to make contact with a pupil outside school for the purpose of friendship. This is particularly important when there is the possibility of a pupil becoming infatuated with a member of staff.

- Do not accept gifts that can be construed as bribes (inexpensive end of term gifts are acceptable)
- Never give out personal telephone numbers or email address
- All contact e.g. homework must be through the school email address only
- Report any suspected infatuation to your SLT Line Manager and the Safeguarding Officer
- Report any situation which you feel may compromise your professional standing

### **5. Physical Contact, Intervention and Control of Pupils**

It is not usually necessary to have physical contact with pupils, even when they are distressed and this should be avoided at all times. If physical contact of any kind is made, this should be entirely age appropriate and reported to a senior member of staff.

The circumstances in which staff can intervene to restrain a pupil are covered by the 1996 Education Act. These include intervention to prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property or behaving in a way that threatens discipline. However, staff must always have regard to their own and others' safety.

Physical punishment must never be used and unwarranted force can be construed as a criminal offence. Any physical intervention must always be reported and documented.

- Avoid all physical contact with a pupil, even horseplay
- Never hit a pupil; if you lose your temper and do so, report this straight away to the Principal
- Try to diffuse situations before they escalate
- If possible, seek help before restraining a pupil and remove others from the scene. Never endanger your own safety.
- Treat pupils with dignity and follow the School Behaviour Policy

## **6. Sexual Contact**

Any kind of sexual contact with, or comment to, a pupil is both inappropriate and illegal.

This is reinforced by the prohibition on adults in a position of trust. The sexual activity includes non-contact activities such as causing children to watch sexual activity or be involved in producing pornographic material. The Sexual Offences Act 2003 makes it clear that where positions of trust are concerned, offences apply to a young person under 18, not 16. If the trust of a child is gained with the sole purpose of manipulating the relationship so that sexual abuse can occur, this is known as "grooming" which is illegal, and applies to both online and offline grooming.

No sexual relationship with a pupil should ever be pursued in or out of school. Avoid any communication which could be interpreted as sexually provocative.

Sometimes the curriculum can raise subject matter which is sexually explicit or sensitive. Care must be taken to ensure that resource materials and discussions relate to learning outcomes. Careful judgment is necessary in responding to pupils' questions:

- Have clear lesson plans
- Refer to the school's Sex Education Policy
- End the discussion if it becomes uncomfortable or embarrassing
- Using images of children for publicity purposes requires the consent of the pupil and his / her parents. Images should not be displayed on websites or publicly without such consent.
- Under no circumstances should staff access inappropriate images in school. Making, storing or disseminating such material is illegal and if proven will lead to the individual being barred from working with young people.

## **7. One to one situation**

Staff are more vulnerable to accusations when alone with a pupil and any arrangements which require this (e.g. counselling) should be reviewed regularly.

If possible leave the door of a room open or use a room where there is a window in the door. Tell someone about your intention to meet a pupil alone (use your common sense)

If a pupil becomes agitated when you are speaking to him, end the meeting and report your concerns. Never arrange to meet a pupil away from the school site unless permission has been given by the Principal. Avoid travelling in a car with one pupil- take a colleague along instead or call a taxi. Plan and agree arrangements involving students in advance and ensure safety procedures are followed. If a pupil is known to be difficult, have a colleague close at hand.

## **8. Educational visits and after school activities**

Staff should take extra care in a less formal atmosphere and remember that they are still in a position of trust. The school follows the advice of its Outside Trips and Visits Policy. Risk Assessments should always be carried out, prior to any trips or visits. The LA Officer for trips and visits should be consulted where advice or guidance is required.

## **APPENDIX A - SAFER RECRUITMENT**

This document highlights those aspects of the recruitment and selection process that impact on the school's commitment to safeguarding and it should be read in conjunction with the school's Safer Recruitment and Selection procedure.

The process described below will apply to permanent and temporary vacancies as well as to volunteers.

Recruitment advertisements will include a statement about the school's commitment to safeguarding and will state that all posts are subject to an enhanced DBS check. Information packs to candidates will include the school's Safeguarding Policy.

Job descriptions will set out the post holders' responsibilities with regard to safeguarding. Applicants will be required to complete standard application forms.

References will be sought from the most recent employer/s/educational establishment. At least one reference should be obtained from someone who can comment on the candidate's suitability to work with children. Where possible references will be sought prior to interview and will request confirmation of the candidate's period of employment/study and will also include specific enquiries about the applicant's background in relation to safeguarding. Due weight and consideration will be given to references during the recruitment process. Shortlisted candidates should be informed that online searches may be carried out in the recruitment process.

The application forms of all candidates short listed for interview will be scrutinized to ensure that there are no gaps in their employment/education history. Where gaps do occur then the candidate will be required to account for these periods.

The selection process will include as a minimum a face to face interview with a safeguard trained panel and where possible will include other selection methods, for example, lesson observation, presentation, role play, participating in activities with children under observation etc.

Interviews questions will establish motives, attitudes and behaviours with regard to safeguarding issues and candidates will be given an opportunity to disclose any convictions.

Where possible, verification of identification and qualifications will be undertaken on the day of interview. Any offer of employment will be made subject to confirmation/verification of the following:

- Identity
- Address
- Date of Birth
- Qualifications/Statutory induction – original certificates
- Permission to work in the UK
- Medical fitness
- References
- Satisfactory enhanced DBS disclosure
- Barred Lists checks where necessary

Where an appointee has changed their name since obtaining their qualifications then they will be required to provide both their Birth Certificate and Marriage Certificate.

Where a DBS disclosure is unlikely to be obtained before an appointee commences their employment then a Risk Assessment will be undertaken to establish whether they can commence with a List 99 check prior to the DBS clearance.

Where there is a positive disclosure then this will be referred by the Human Resource Manager to the Principal. At this stage, an assessment of the individual suitability to work with children will be made by the Principal in conjunction with the Safeguarding Officer and the Human Resource Manager.

When assessing applicants' criminal records, the following factors should be considered:

- Nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence
- How long ago it occurred
- If it was a one off or part of a history
- Circumstances of it being committed
- Changes in the applicants' circumstances
- Country of conviction
- Remorse

The offence/s will be discussed with the applicant in order to obtain the above information.

The applicant will have the opportunity to challenge any information received and confirmation of the information will be sought before a final decision is made.

After these checks, where it is deemed that the conviction/s makes a person unsuitable to work with children, then the Chair of Governors will be consulted and the offer of employment withdrawn. Where the person is an existing employee then the employee will be suspended and the matter will be referred to the school's disciplinary procedure.

New appointees will be inducted on safeguarding and this will form the basis of at least one inset per year.

The school maintains a Single Central Safeguarding Record that records all the checks made on employees, governors, volunteers, external service providers and any other adults who regularly attend the school. It is a requirement that DBS certificates are reviewed on a three-year rolling programme.

**See also Appendix B** [Keeping children safe in education \(Statutory guidance for schools and colleges\) \(DfE 2025\)](#)

**See also Appendix C** [Keeping children safe in education: information for all school and college staff \(DfE 2025\)](#)

## APPENDIX D - HARMONIZE ACADEMY SAFEGUARDING GUIDELINES

All staff can access Harmonize Academy Safeguarding Policy via the intranet. All individuals must access the Safeguarding Policy within two weeks of taking up an offer of employment, a consultancy, a volunteering position or any other placement. Confirmation that you have read, understood and agreed to abide by the Guidelines is to be given in writing upon request.

A. If you **suspect** that a child/ young person is being abused:

Immediately inform relevant person: **Safeguarding Officer/ Child Protection Officer / Principal / Social Services/ Emergency Duty Team Police** (Only contact the next person on the list if the previous person is unavailable or implicated).

Record all known facts. Give them to relevant person. A copy must always be given to a Safeguarding Officer. You must not keep any copies.

**B. If a child or young person tells you that he/ she is being abused**  
**How to respond:**

You must inform the child/ young person of your duty of disclosure. This is to be done outside of immediate need, then reinforced if need arises.

Allow him/ her to speak without interruption, accepting what is said;

Advise him/ her that you will offer support, but, you **must** pass on information to relevant person (s);

Immediately inform the relevant person (s), as listed above

Record **all the facts** as you know them inclusive of what the child/young person has said to you. Give a copy to the Safeguarding Officer. *Do not keep copies yourself.*

**If you receive an allegation about another adult or about yourself:**

Immediately tell a Safeguarding Officer;

Record the facts as you know them and give this to the Safeguarding Officer.

***You must refer. You must not investigate. Remember confidentiality.***

## **SAFEGUARDING GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE**

You are encouraged to create a positive culture and climate within Harmonize Academy.

- Work in an open environment - avoid private or unobserved situations.
- **No secrets**; treat all young people equally and with respect and dignity.
- Build a balanced relationship with children and young people.

***This is in no way a comprehensive list and you are referred to Harmonize Academy Safeguarding Policy Statement.***

### **Do**

Treat everyone with respect;

Be the example you would wish others to follow;

Plan activities that involve more than one person;

Always respect a young person's right to privacy

Provide an environment in which children and young people are comfortable enough to point out attitudes or behaviour **they** do not like;

Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned;

Act as an appropriate adult at all times.

### **Do not**

Permit abusive youth/ peer activities (eg: bullying, ridiculing);

Play physical contact games, make inappropriate comments/ or have inappropriate verbal banter with young people;

Jump to conclusions without checking the facts;

Make suggestive remarks/ gestures or tell sexist/ homophobic "jokes";

Rely on your good name to protect you, it may not be enough;

Believe it could **not** happen to you. It could

**Always remember our policy on confidentiality. Do not gossip.**

**Name:**

**Signed:**

**Safeguarding Officer:**



## APPENDIX E - ESSENTIAL CONTACTS

### National contacts

The NSPCC National Centre,  
42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH.  
Tel: 020 7825 2500, Free phone 24-hour helpline: 0808 800 5000  
[help@NSPCC.org.uk](mailto:help@NSPCC.org.uk)  
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

Childline UK  
Freepost 1111, London N1 0BR.  
Tel: 0800 11 11

Disclosure and Barring Service

0870 909 0811

### Local Contacts

'CASS' on 0151 459 2606

Local Area Safeguarding Board (please note the Local Area Safeguarding Board, which can be contacted via your local authority, will be able to provide details of all local contacts re: Safeguarding)  
**Tel:** 0151 225 4928/ 4929/ 4956  
**Email:** [Jacqueline.taylor2@liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:Jacqueline.taylor2@liverpool.gov.uk)

Local Social Services (including out of office hours contact) N.B. In an emergency, the Samaritans will hold the Social Services Duty Officer's contact number.  
0151 220 2661

Social Services Emergency Duty Team for looked after children under 18 in the service to be used evenings and weekends.  
0151 220 2661

Local Police Safeguarding Teams 101

## **APPENDIX F – PHOTOGRAPHS / IMAGES AND ONLINE USAGE**

There have been concerns about the risks posed directly and indirectly to children and young people through the use of photographs on websites. Photographs can be used as a means of identifying children when they are accompanied with personal information - this is X who likes music - this information can make a child vulnerable to an individual who may wish to start to 'groom' that child for abuse. Secondly the content of the photo can be used or adopted for inappropriate use and there is evidence of this adapted material finding its way onto child pornography sites. Organisations need to develop a policy in relation to the use of images of Young People on their website. The organisations will need to make decisions about the type of images they consider suitable and that appropriately represent their activities. They will want to ensure that parents support their policy. When assessing the potential risks in the use of images of Young People, the most important factor is the potential of inappropriate use of images of children. If organisations are aware of the potential risks and take appropriate steps, the potential for misuse of images can be reduced.

### **The advice is to:**

- Consider using models or illustrations if you are promoting an activity
- Avoid the use of the first name and surname of individuals in a photograph. This reduces the risk in inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people outside the organisation

### **Easy rules to remember are:**

- Ask for parental permission to use an image of a young person. This ensures that parents are aware of the way the image of their child is representing the Organisation. Parental Permission Forms are available for use.
- Ask for Young Person's permission to use their image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image of themselves is to be used to represent the Organisation. A 'Young Person's Permission Form' is one way of achieving this.
- If the Young Person is named, avoid using his/her photograph
- If the photograph is used, avoid naming the Young Person
- Only use images of Young People in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use. With regard to the actual content it is difficult to specify exactly what is appropriate. However, there are clearly some activities – drama, swimming, gymnastic and athletics for example when the risk of potential misuse is much greater. With these activities the content of the photograph should focus on the activity not on a particular child, and should avoid full face and body shots. So, for example shots of children in a pool would be appropriate or if poolside, waist or shoulder up. Age is also something that should be considered and this may affect what would be appropriate
- Create a recognised procedure for reporting the use of inappropriate images to reduce the risks to Young People.

### **First steps and things to think about:**

- Establish the type of images that appropriately represent the activity for the Web medium. Think about the level of consideration you give to the use of images of Young People in other publications, for example, the processes involved in choosing appropriate images for the newsletter or magazine. Apply an increased level of consideration to the images of children young people used in the website.

N.B. For some young people, the Social Services take the parental role and must be consulted accordingly.

## **APPENDIX G – PHOTOGRAPHIC / FILMING EQUIPMENT AT EVENTS**

There is evidence that some people have used events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled young people in vulnerable positions. If you are commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to an activity or event it is important to ensure they are clear about your expectations of them in relation to Safeguarding:

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour
- Issue the photographer with identification which must be worn at all times
- Inform young people and parents that a photographer will be attending an event and ensure the consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs
- Do not allow unsupervised access to Young People for one-to-one photo sessions at events
- Do not approve/allow photo sessions outside the events or at a Young People's home. If parents or other spectators/audience are intending to photograph or video at an event they should also be made aware of your expectations
- Spectators/audience should be asked to register at an event if they wish to use photographic equipment
- Young People and parents should be informed that if they have concerns they can report these to the organiser
- Concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography should be reported and recorded in the same manner as any other Safeguarding concern.

### **How to deal with someone who is using photographic or filming equipment and has not sought permission**

There will be occasions, from time to time, when someone that you do not recognise will be taking photographs or filming participants and/or spectators at a Harmonize Academy event. If this situation arises, you should have the confidence and courage to challenge the individual/s to ensure and maintain the safety of the event.

You should –

- Approach the individual
- Challenge the individual as to who they are and why they are using photographic or filming equipment without permission
- Make them aware that they should have sought permission from the organisers to use their equipment and advise them of the protocol
- Make them aware that if they are seen to be doing anything untoward, they will be reported to the Police.

N.B. For some young people, the Social Services take the parental role and must be consulted accordingly.