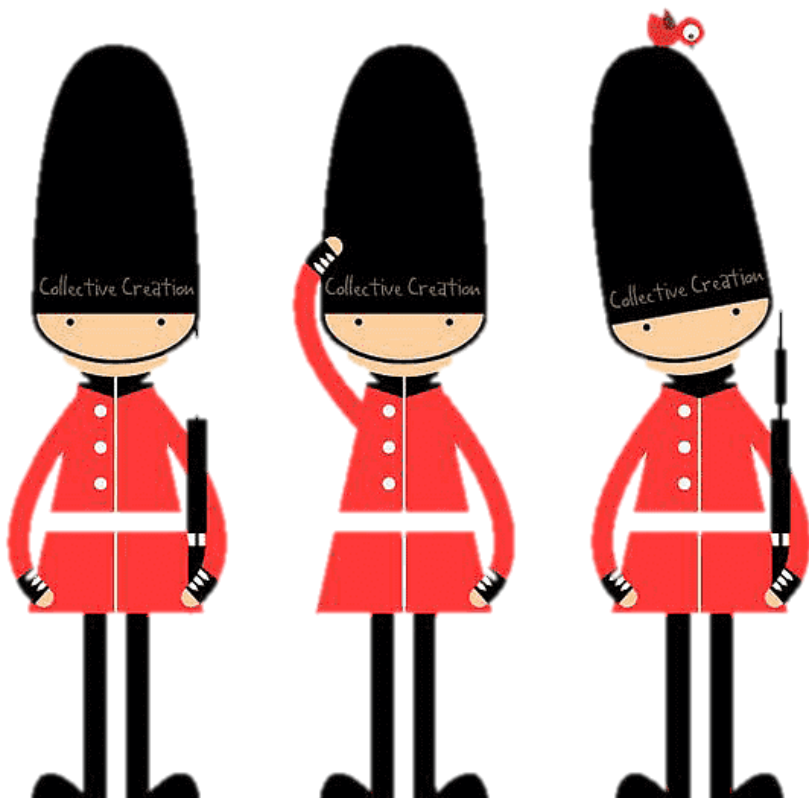


Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy Updated 2026



Who is in charge of safeguarding and child protection at Leighton Academy?



Mrs Thompson

Headteacher
Designated Safeguarding Lead
Single Point of Contact for Prevent



Miss Lockitt

Pastoral & Welfare Manager
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
Designated Teacher for Cared for Children



Mrs Schofield

Mental Health & Wellbeing Lead



Mr Jones

SENCO and Vice Principal



Mrs Hughes

Early Years Lead
Safeguarding Lead for Early Years



Mrs Procter

BASC Manager and
Safeguarding Lead for BASC



Mrs Kay

Safeguarding LGB Member



Mrs Dean

Chair of Governors



The Legal Bit

At Leighton Academy we recognise the responsibility we have under Section 175 of the Education and Inspections Act 2002, to have arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The Governing Body (local advisory board) in our school approve the S175/157 return to the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership (CESCP) on a yearly basis.

This policy demonstrates the school's commitment and compliance with safeguarding legislation; it should be read in conjunction with:

- ✓ *Working together to safeguard children 2023: Statutory Guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)*
 - ✓ *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025*
- ✓ *Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill: Child's rights impact assessment - March 2025*
 - ✓ *The Families First Partnership (FFP) Programme Guide - March 2025*
 - ✓ *What to do if you are worried a child is being abused - 2015*
- ✓ *Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework - GOV.UK Updated September 2025*
 - ✓ *Prevent Duty Guidance: Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales*
 - ✓ *Behaviour in Schools: Advice for headteachers and staff DFE 2022*
- ✓ *Safer Working Practice Guidance for those working with children and young people in education settings - May 2022*
 - ✓ *Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education - GOV.UK*
- ✓ *Guidance for Schools and Colleges: Gender Questioning Children - Department for Education - Citizen Space*
 - ✓ *"Preventing and Tackling Bullying" - DfE July 2017*
 - ✓ *School and Colleges: When to call the Police*
- ✓ *Searching, Screening and Confiscation (publishing.service.gov.uk) - July 2022*
 - ✓ *Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK*
 - ✓ *School Mental Health Policy*
 - ✓ *School Relationships Education Policy*
 - ✓ *Staff Code of Conduct*
- ✓ *Staff use of mobile phones, electronic devices and Social Media Policy*
 - ✓ *Substance Misuse Policy*

Whose responsibility is safeguarding?!

EVERYONE'S!

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 practitioners in this school make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that we consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child. The term children include everyone under the age of 18.

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.

Through our day to-day contact with pupils and direct work with families, staff take notice of indicators of possible abuse or neglect and consult with Children's Services in Cheshire East (or in neighbouring authorities dependent upon the child's area of residence). We recognise that we form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This responsibility also means that we are aware of the behaviour of staff in the school; we maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.

“It could happen here.”

At Leighton Academy, we make sure that:

- ✓ *All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, are treated equally and have equal rights to protection.*
- ✓ *All staff act on concerns or disclosures that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.*
- ✓ *Pupils and staff involved in Safeguarding issues receive appropriate support.*
- ✓ *Staff adhere to a code of conduct and staff handbook and understand what to do in the event of any allegations against any adult working in the setting.*
- ✓ *All staff are aware of Early Help and ensure that relevant assessments and referrals take place.*
- ✓ *All staff are aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label; they recognise that, in most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.*
- ✓ *All staff understand that children's poor behaviour may be a sign they are suffering harm or that they have been traumatised by abuse.*
- ✓ *Staff have received advice, support and training in regard to adverse childhood experiences and trauma informed practice.*

Aims of the Policy

- ✓ To provide staff with the framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and in doing so ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities
 - ✓ To ensure consistent good practice across the school
 - ✓ To demonstrate our commitment to protecting children
- ✓ To raise awareness of all staff of the need to safeguard all children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse
- ✓ To emphasise the need for good communication between all members of staff in matters relating to child protection
- ✓ To promote safe practice and encourage challenge for poor and unsafe practice
 - ✓ To promote effective working relationships with other agencies involved with Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, especially with Children's Social Care and the Police
- ✓ To ensure that all members of the school community are aware of our procedures for ensuring staff suitability to work with children
- ✓ To ensure that staff understand their responsibility to support pupils who have suffered abuse in accordance with their agreed plan e.g. Child in Need/ Child Protection Plan
- ✓ To identify additional measures that school may take in order to ensure that children are safe if they are unable to attend school due to Covid-19, particularly those who are vulnerable
- ✓ To identify any additional measures that may be required to protect staff when they are working remotely and/or delivering learning online.



What do we mean by?...

Child Protection:

Refers to the activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Early Help:

Means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.

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.

Child:

Refers to all children who have not yet reached the age of 18. On the whole, this will apply to pupils from our own school; however, the policy will extend to visiting children from other establishments.

Safeguarding and welfare of children:

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 and acting to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Staff:

Refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school/education setting in either a paid or voluntary capacity, full time or part time. This also includes parents and members of the governing body.

Parent:

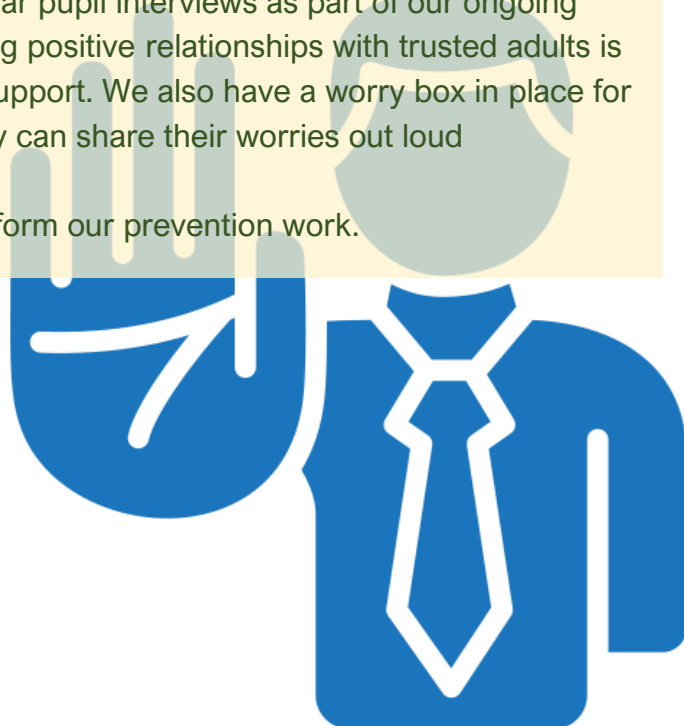
Refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role e.g. carers, step-parents, foster parents, and adoptive parents.

How can we stop something from happening?

Children feel secure in a safe environment in which they can learn and develop. We achieve this by ensuring that:

- ✓ Children develop realistic attitudes to their responsibilities in adult life and are equipped with the skills needed to keep themselves safe; including understanding and recognition of healthy/unhealthy relationships and support available.
- ✓ Children are supported in recognising and managing risks in different situations, including on the internet, being able to judge what kind of physical contact is acceptable and unacceptable, recognising when pressure from others, including people they know, threatens their personal safety and well-being and supporting them in developing effective ways of resisting pressure.
- ✓ All staff are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and have discussed safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated risks.
- ✓ Importance and prioritisation are given to equipping the children with the skills needed to stay safe; including providing opportunities for Personal, Social and Health Education and Relationships & Sex Education throughout the curriculum.
- ✓ We ensure that appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place; however, we are careful that “over blocking” does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding.
- ✓ All adults feel comfortable and supported to draw safeguarding issues to the attention of the Principal and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead and are able to pose safeguarding questions with “respectful uncertainty” as part of their shared responsibility to safeguard children.
- ✓ Emerging themes are proactively addressed and fed back to the local authority and CESCOP to ensure a coherent approach so that multi-agency awareness and strategies are developed.
- ✓ There is a proactive approach to substance misuse. Issues of drugs and substance misuse are recorded, there are related policies and a curriculum which is robustly delivered throughout the school.

- Support and planning for children in custody and their resettlement back into the school community is undertaken, where necessary, as part of our inclusive approach.
- We comply with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2023 and support the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership (CESCP) multi-agency threshold framework, this document supports professionals to access the right help and support for children and their families at the right time.
- We systematically monitor pupil welfare, keeping accurate records, speaking to parents and notifying appropriate agencies when necessary.
- All staff are aware of children with circumstances which mean that they are more vulnerable to abuse/less able to easily access services and are proactive in recognising and identifying their needs.
- All staff are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened; this could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. Staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication whilst ensuring safer working practices.
- The voice of the child is paramount; therefore, our pupils are actively involved in safeguarding development. There is an established pupil group/pupil involvement mechanism which works with and challenges staff in order to develop aspects of safeguarding e.g. through the curriculum, approaches and displays. Our pupil Safeguarding Officers work alongside the Pastoral and Welfare lead (Miss Lockitt).
- We consult with, listen and respond to pupils; our school's arrangements for this are through the school council, pupil leadership groups and regular pupil interviews as part of our ongoing monitoring systems. As a school, we feel that building positive relationships with trusted adults is paramount and pupils know who they can go to for support. We also have a worry box in place for the children to use if they do not feel they can share their worries out loud
- We use research evidence to inform our prevention work.



What is Operation Encompass?

Have you seen the posters in school?



This means that staff at school are able to give proactive support to those children and their families where domestic abuse is identified by the police.

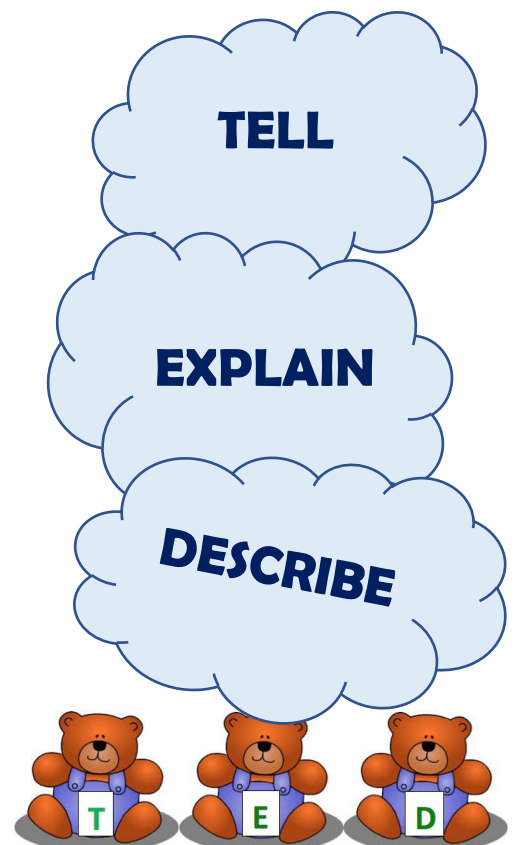
Once we have received an Operation Encompass notification, a member of the pastoral team will contact with the family and check in with the child to discuss this further and offer support from the school, this is different to each case dependant on need.

What if a conversation needs recording?

Our recording procedures are in line with those outlined in Cheshire East's "Recording and Reporting Guidance." 2022; the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Lead are aware of this document.

Where a member of staff is concerned that a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm they should report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or their Deputy, without delay. A written record should be made of these concerns as soon as possible following the disclosure/concern being raised; this must be on the same working day. At Leighton Academy, we record all concerns on CPOMS which is an electronic reporting system.

Staff are aware that they should not question the child; other than to respond with TED - Tell me what you mean by that, Explain what you mean by that, Describe that. Staff will observe and listen, but do not probe/ask any leading questions.



Moving to a new school

We ensure that information is transferred safely and securely when a pupil with a safeguarding record transfers to another school. For paper files, a written receipt of transfer is completed and kept on file and for CPOMs records, a digital transfer receipt is logged. We also ensure that key workers or social workers are notified where a child leaves the school (as appropriate).

Where do we store information?

Safeguarding Records are held electronically on CPOMS

For information prior to July 2016, hard copies of records or reports relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection concerns are kept in a separate, confidential file, securely stored away from the main pupil file. Authorisation to access these records is controlled by the Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead. All records provide a factual, accurate, evidence-based account. Paper records are signed and dated and electronic versions are logged on staff accounts, detailing the date and time

The school ensures that safeguarding information, including Child Protection information, is stored and handled in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) ensuring that information is:

- ✓ *Used fairly and lawfully*
- ✓ *For limited, specifically stated purposes*
- ✓ *Used in a way that is adequate, relevant and not excessive*
 - ✓ *Accurate*
 - ✓ *Kept for no longer than necessary*
- ✓ *Handled according to people's data protection rights*
 - ✓ *Kept safe and secure*

Teachers need teaching, too!

ALL members of staff at Leighton Academy have, AT LEAST, basic safeguarding training.


All staff undertake Cheshire East Safeguarding Children Partnership (CESCP) 'endorsed' Basic Awareness in Safeguarding and Child Protection training within the first term of their employment/placement.

We use the Cheshire East SCIEs team/LSCB as training providers for this. This training is refreshed every 3 years; to enable them to understand and fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

All staff receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

Mrs Thompson and Miss Lockitt have completed specific training such as Designated Safeguarding Lead Training to carry out the duties of the role and attend (CESCP) multi agency Safeguarding and Child Protection training on an annual basis.

We make sure that our staff:

- 
- A stylized illustration in the bottom left corner shows a teacher figure on the left and three child figures on the right, all in light green and blue tones. The teacher figure is larger and has a speech bubble-like shape around it, which contains the list of guidelines.
- ✓ Listen rather than directly question, remain calm
 - ✓ Never stop a child who is recalling significant events
 - ✓ Never ask a child if they are being abused
 - ✓ Make a record of discussion to include time, place, persons present and what was said (child language – do not substitute words)
 - ✓ Advise you will have to pass the information on
 - ✓ Avoid coaching/prompting
 - ✓ Never take photographs of any injury
 - ✓ Never undress a child to physically examine them
 - ✓ Allow time and provide a safe haven / quiet area for future support meetings.
 - ✓ At no time promise confidentiality to a child or adult
 - ✓ All victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward and that they will be supported and kept safe.
 - ✓ Nor should a victim ever be made to feel they are a problem or ashamed for making a report.
 - ✓ Where abuse has occurred online or outside of the school or college it will not be downplayed and will be treated equally seriously

What happens if a child is missing from education?

At Leighton Academy we follow Cheshire East's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from lessons and/or school. All staff are aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities.

Where a child's destination is unknown when they have left our school we ensure we carry out all necessary checks and refer them as Children Missing Education (CME), using the appropriate notification form on the Cheshire East website, so that they can be followed up on. Staff are aware of the trafficking of children and the importance of rigour around our attendance procedures to reduce this as a threat to our children's safety.

Early Help, Child in Need, Child Protection

Children may need a social worker or family service worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs.

A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads will be aware of the fact a child has a social worker and will use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes.

Where children need a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).



We recognise that schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils.

We acknowledge 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. We ensure we have specific training and clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.

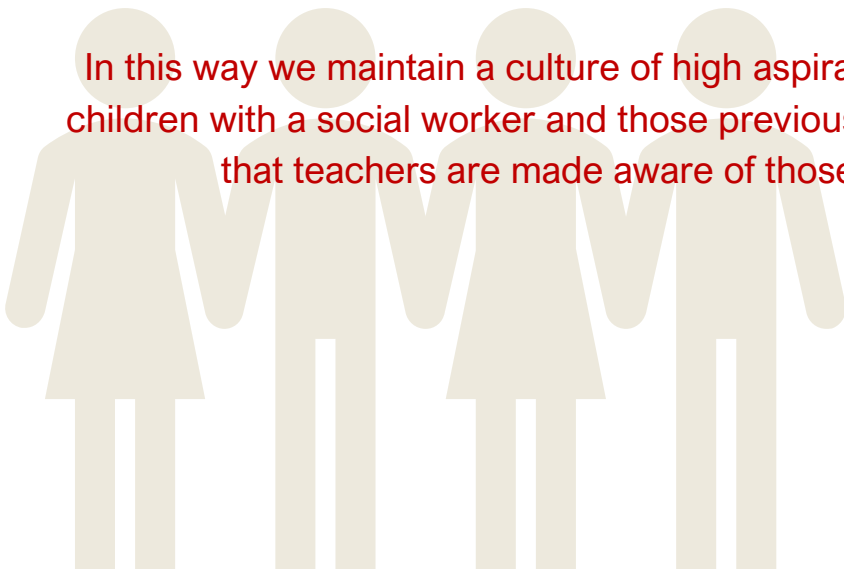
Your Mental Health Lead: Mrs Schofield

What if safeguarding affects ability to learn?

For further information on the school's approach to supporting mental health, see our policy: https://leighton.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/key_information/health-and-well-beingpolicy.pdf?t=1596702860

Mrs Thompson and Miss Lockitt ensure that staff know the children who have experienced or are experiencing welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues so that, as relevant, we know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment; this means that we are able to make necessary adjustments to help these children to achieve.

In this way we maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort. This includes children with a social worker and those previously known to social care; we ensure that teachers are made aware of those children in this category.



They are aware that these safeguarding issues may not directly involve the child in our school but could be happening to their siblings or parents.

As a listening school, staff would pick up on these issues and would know how to identify and respond to:

- **Physical Abuse • Sexual Abuse including sexual violence and sexual harassment • Emotional • Neglect • Child abduction/community safety issues • Children and the Court System • Children with family member in prison • Homelessness • Drug/substance/alcohol misuse (both pupil and parent) • Child sexual exploitation / trafficked children Page 15 of 35 September 2022 • Criminal Exploitation including county lines and serious violence • Extremism and Radicalisation • Children missing education • Domestic abuse • Child on child relationship abuse/Teenage Relationship Abuse • Child on child abuse**
- **Risky behaviours • Problematic and Harmful Sexual Behaviour • Sexual health needs • Obesity/malnutrition • On line grooming • Inappropriate behaviour of staff towards children • Bullying, including homophobic, racist, gender and disability. Breaches of the Equality Act 2010 • Mental health issues including Self Harm • Honour based violence including - Female Genital Mutilation, Breast Ironing, Forced Marriage • Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children • Child Trafficking • Modern Day Slavery**


ALL members of staff at Leighton Academy have an awareness of safeguarding issues

Cared for Children

Your Designated 'Cared For' Teacher: Miss Lockett

Sometimes children cannot live with their parents for a number of different reasons. In this case, children would become 'cared for' and looked after by a family member or a foster carer.

At Leighton Academy we ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep Cared for Children safe as we are aware that children often become cared for as a result of abuse and/or neglect. We work closely with the Virtual School to make sure that children in care have their educational needs met despite not living at home with their parents.



...and finally,...

Staff at Leighton Academy take the safeguarding of each and every child very seriously.

This means that, should they have any concerns of a safeguarding nature, they are expected to report, record and take the necessary steps to ensure that the child is safe and protected.

This is never an easy action, nor one taken lightly. They are aware that it can lead to challenge from parents/carers, but at all times staff have the child at the heart of all their decisions and act in their best interests.

Further information on our safeguarding and related policy documents and procedures is available on request from the Principal or Designated Safeguarding Lead.



- ✓ **Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility**
- ✓ **Always report a safeguarding concern**
- ✓ **Make sure you know who the safeguarding team are**
- ✓ **Always be kind, as you never know somebody's circumstance**

Policy lead:	Miss P Lockitt
Approval date:	03.09.26
Next review date:	03.09.27
Approval needed by:	LGB