

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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Key Safeguarding Contacts

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During office hours: 01253 477299

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Blackpool Safeguarding Children Partnership

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Lancashire Children's Social Care

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Emergency Contacts

Police, Fire or Ambulance: 999

Police (non-emergency): 101

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

About Blackpool Skills Academy

Blackpool Skills Academy is an independent specialist secondary school providing education for young people aged 11 to 16.

The Academy provides a small, highly supportive learning environment where strong relationships, aspiration and preparation for adult life are central to every student's experience.

The curriculum combines high-quality academic learning with vocationally contextualised education and practical industry experiences, including Construction, Hair and Beauty and other vocational pathways. Through partnerships with employers, local authorities, commissioning schools and community organisations, students are supported to develop the knowledge, skills, confidence and personal qualities required for successful adult lives.

Many students join the Academy following disrupted educational experiences and may have experienced poor attendance, social, emotional and mental health needs, SEND or other barriers to learning. The Academy recognises that these factors can increase vulnerability and that behaviour, attendance, emotional presentation and changes in engagement may provide important safeguarding information.

Safeguarding therefore underpins every aspect of Academy life and is everyone's responsibility. The Academy is committed to creating a culture in which every child feels safe, valued, respected and listened to and knows how to seek help when they are worried.

Safeguarding is embedded throughout the curriculum, pastoral and therapeutic support, behaviour and attendance systems, staff training, recruitment, online safety and day-to-day practice.

1. Policy Statement

Blackpool Skills Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child. The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Every adult working for or on behalf of the

Academy must remain alert to the possibility that a child may be experiencing abuse, neglect, exploitation or other harm and must know how to recognise concerns, respond safely, record accurately, report promptly, act appropriately and escalate where concerns remain.

Staff must act on safeguarding concerns without waiting for certainty or assuming that another person will take responsibility.

Recording and Reporting Concerns

All safeguarding concerns, disclosures and relevant safeguarding information must be recorded promptly and accurately on CPOMS, which is the Academy's safeguarding recording system and single safeguarding chronology. Bromcom is not used as the safeguarding incident log.

Where a concern is urgent or significant, recording the concern on CPOMS is not sufficient on its own. The member of staff must also speak directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) as soon as possible.

If a member of staff believes that appropriate safeguarding action has not been taken, or remains concerned about a child's safety, they have a responsibility to escalate the concern through the safeguarding procedures and, where necessary, to Children's Social Care or other appropriate agencies.

What Safeguarding Means

The Academy recognises that safeguarding includes:

- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that harm occurs within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Professional Curiosity and Vulnerability

The Academy recognises that safeguarding concerns may be identified through a child's behaviour, attendance, relationships, emotional or mental health presentation, online activity, peer associations, disclosures or changes in circumstances.

Particular professional curiosity will be maintained where pupils have SEND or SEMH needs. Behaviour associated with a pupil's needs will never be used to dismiss, minimise or normalise indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation or other harm.

The Academy uses therapeutic and PACE-informed approaches to support safe and positive relationships with pupils. These approaches support safeguarding practice but do not replace statutory safeguarding action, appropriate professional boundaries,

recording, referral, information sharing or professional challenge.

The Academy maintains an open and vigilant safeguarding culture in which concerns are identified early, children are listened to, information is recorded accurately, appropriate action is taken promptly and staff are expected to challenge or escalate where risk remains.

Safeguarding is not a standalone process. It is integral to the Academy's leadership, governance, curriculum, attendance, behaviour, SEND, recruitment, online safety, staff conduct and quality assurance arrangements.

2. Purpose

This policy sets out how Blackpool Skills Academy safeguards and promotes the welfare of children and ensures that safeguarding responsibilities are understood and implemented consistently throughout the Academy.

The policy aims to:

- Protect all pupils from abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of harm.
- Ensure that the welfare and best interests of the child remain paramount.
- Ensure all staff understand their individual safeguarding responsibilities.
- Enable staff to recognise safeguarding concerns and respond safely and promptly.
- Ensure safeguarding information is recorded accurately on CPOMS and reported to the appropriate safeguarding lead.
- Ensure urgent or significant concerns are communicated directly to the DSL or DDSL.
- Promote early identification, Early Help and timely intervention.
- Ensure children are listened to and provided with accessible opportunities to raise concerns.
- Ensure staff understand their responsibility to escalate concerns where they believe a child remains at risk.
- Recognise the additional safeguarding vulnerabilities that may affect pupils with SEND and SEMH needs.
- Recognise the relationship between safeguarding and attendance, behaviour, mental health, online safety, exploitation and contextual risk.
- Support effective information sharing and partnership working with parents, carers, commissioning schools, Children's Social Care, the police, health services and other agencies.
- Ensure safeguarding practice complies with current legislation and statutory guidance.
- Ensure safeguarding remains central to leadership, governance and Academy improvement.

3. Legislative and Statutory Framework

This policy has been developed with reference to current legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.
- Education Act 2002.
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004.
- Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and the Prevent Duty.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Human Rights Act 1998.
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).
- Independent School Standards.
- Current statutory guidance relating to Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education.
- Blackpool Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures and relevant local safeguarding arrangements.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 comes into force on 1 September 2026. All staff are required to read and understand Part One of KCSIE in full and to confirm that they have done so. The Academy will ensure that staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and updates to support their understanding of the guidance and its application in practice.

Where legislation or statutory guidance changes, the Academy will implement revised requirements as necessary without waiting for the next scheduled annual review of this policy.

4. Safeguarding Principles

Blackpool Skills Academy believes that:

- Every child has the right to feel and be safe.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount.
- Staff should act on concerns without waiting for certainty.
- Early identification and intervention can prevent concerns from escalating.
- Children should be listened to, taken seriously and given appropriate opportunities to communicate concerns.
- The absence of a disclosure does not mean that abuse or harm is not occurring.
- Safeguarding concerns must never be dismissed because of a pupil's behaviour, SEND, SEMH needs or previous presentation.
- Safeguarding concerns should be considered in the context of the child's family, peers, community, education and online experiences.
- Abuse and exploitation may occur inside or outside the home and may be perpetrated by adults or other children.
- Online and offline risks frequently overlap and should not be considered in isolation.
- Effective safeguarding depends upon appropriate information sharing and strong partnership working.

- All concerns should be reported, however small they may initially appear.
- Staff must maintain professional curiosity and respectfully challenge or escalate where they believe safeguarding action has been insufficient.

The Academy expects staff to follow a clear safeguarding approach:

Recognise risk → Respond safely → Record accurately → Report promptly → Act on concerns → Escalate if risk remains.

Safeguarding practice will be child-centred, proportionate and informed by the individual circumstances and vulnerabilities of each pupil.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Every adult working for or on behalf of Blackpool Skills Academy has a responsibility to protect children from harm and to act where they have concerns about a child's welfare.

All Staff

All staff will:

- Read and understand Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) in full and confirm annually that they have done so.
- Undertake safeguarding and child protection training as part of induction and receive regular safeguarding updates thereafter.
- Understand the Academy's safeguarding systems, including the role of the DSL and DDSLs, CPOMS, Early Help, whistleblowing and procedures for concerns about adults.
- Recognise indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation, child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, online harm and other safeguarding risks.
- Remain professionally curious, particularly where changes in behaviour, attendance, relationships, appearance, emotional wellbeing or engagement may indicate a concern.
- Listen carefully to children and take what they say seriously.
- Know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.
- Record safeguarding information promptly, accurately and factually on CPOMS.
- Speak directly to the DSL or DDSL where a concern is urgent or significant.
- Never assume that recording a concern on CPOMS means that no further action is required.
- Act immediately where they believe a child is at risk of significant harm.
- Share information appropriately where this is necessary to safeguard a child.
- Escalate concerns if they believe appropriate action has not been taken or they remain worried about a child's safety.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times.

Staff do not need to be certain that abuse or harm has occurred before raising a concern. Safeguarding concerns should be shared at the earliest opportunity so that the DSL or DDSL can consider the information alongside the child's wider safeguarding chronology.

The Proprietor

The Proprietor has strategic responsibility for ensuring that the Academy's safeguarding arrangements comply with legislation, statutory guidance and the Independent School Standards and are effective in practice.

The Proprietor will:

- Ensure appropriate safeguarding policies, systems and procedures are in place and reviewed regularly.
- Ensure sufficient DSL and DDSL capacity and appropriate safeguarding cover.
- Ensure safer recruitment arrangements and the Single Central Record are compliant and subject to appropriate oversight.
- Ensure staff receive appropriate safeguarding induction, training and updates.
- Seek assurance that safeguarding concerns are being identified, recorded, acted upon and reviewed appropriately.
- Ensure arrangements for allegations and concerns about adults, including the Headteacher, are clear and effective.
- Provide appropriate challenge and oversight of safeguarding practice.
- Ensure safeguarding information, trends and risks inform Academy improvement.

Proprietor oversight will focus not only on whether policies and procedures exist but whether they are understood by staff, experienced positively by pupils and implemented effectively in day-to-day practice.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are implemented effectively throughout the Academy.

The Headteacher will:

- Promote a strong and open safeguarding culture.
- Ensure safeguarding remains a priority in leadership and decision making.
- Ensure staff understand and fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Ensure the DSL and DDSLs have sufficient time, resources, authority and support to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Ensure safeguarding is appropriately connected with attendance, behaviour, SEND, mental health, online safety, curriculum and staff conduct.
- Ensure appropriate action is taken where safeguarding practice or systems require improvement.
- Support effective partnership working with external agencies.
- Ensure safeguarding arrangements are regularly reviewed and quality assured.

6. Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Academy has an appropriately trained Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), supported by Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs).

The DSL takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within the Academy and will carry out the role in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

The DSL is responsible for:

- Managing and responding to safeguarding and child protection concerns.
- Providing advice, support and guidance to staff.
- Making or supporting referrals to Children's Social Care, the police and other agencies where appropriate.
- Supporting Early Help arrangements.
- Maintaining secure, accurate and comprehensive safeguarding records through CPOMS.
- Ensuring safeguarding chronologies demonstrate concerns, decisions, rationale, actions, outcomes and review.
- Reviewing patterns and emerging concerns across individual pupils and the Academy.
- Considering safeguarding information alongside attendance, behaviour, SEND, mental health, online safety and other relevant information.
- Ensuring the wishes and feelings of children are considered when determining appropriate action.
- Liaising with parents and carers where appropriate and where doing so would not place a child at increased risk.
- Liaising with commissioning schools, local authorities and other professionals where appropriate.
- Ensuring safeguarding information is transferred securely when a pupil moves to another education setting.
- Supporting staff involved in safeguarding cases.
- Promoting preventative safeguarding through the curriculum and wider Academy practice.
- Supporting the Headteacher and Proprietor in monitoring the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements.

DDSLs will be trained to the appropriate standard and will carry out safeguarding responsibilities where required, including when the DSL is unavailable.

The Academy will ensure that an appropriately trained safeguarding lead is available whenever pupils are on site or participating in Academy activities.

Safeguarding Records and CPOMS

CPOMS is the Academy's designated safeguarding recording system and provides the central safeguarding chronology for each pupil. Bromcom is not used as the safeguarding incident log.

Safeguarding records should clearly distinguish fact, observation, disclosure and professional opinion and should record relevant decisions, actions and outcomes.

The DSL/DDSL will regularly review safeguarding records to identify patterns, repeated lower-level concerns, changes in risk and cases requiring further action.

CPOMS records do not replace professional communication. Where a concern is urgent, significant or requires immediate action, staff must make direct contact with the DSL or DDSL in addition to recording the concern.

Safeguarding records will be confidential, securely maintained and shared only where there is a lawful and legitimate safeguarding purpose.

7. Early Help

Blackpool Skills Academy recognises that effective safeguarding includes providing help and support as soon as problems emerge.

Staff should be alert to any child who may benefit from Early Help and should discuss emerging concerns with the DSL or DDSL rather than waiting for difficulties to become more serious.

Early Help may be particularly appropriate where a child:

- Has poor, deteriorating or irregular attendance.
- Has experienced repeated suspensions, exclusions or disruption to education.
- Has SEND or SEMH needs that may increase vulnerability.
- Is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing concerns.
- Shows signs of self-harm, self-neglect or other significant changes in presentation.
- Is affected by domestic abuse.
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol.
- Is at risk of child criminal exploitation or child sexual exploitation.
- May be involved in county lines or other organised criminal activity.
- Is vulnerable to financial exploitation.
- Is at risk of trafficking or modern slavery.
- Is frequently missing from education, home or care.
- Is experiencing difficulties within family or peer relationships.
- Is associating with older individuals or peer groups who may present a risk.
- Is a young carer.
- Has a parent or carer in custody.
- Is at risk of radicalisation or other forms of exploitation.
- Has experienced bereavement, family breakdown, homelessness or other significant changes in circumstances.

Where appropriate, the Academy will work with the child, parents or carers, commissioning schools, local authorities and relevant external agencies to provide coordinated support.

Early Help does not replace child protection action. Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, appropriate safeguarding referrals will be made without delay.

Where Early Help or other support does not appear to be improving the child's circumstances, the DSL/DDSL will review the situation and consider whether further safeguarding action or escalation is required.

8. Recognising Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

All staff must be able to recognise that children may experience abuse, neglect, exploitation or other harm and that safeguarding concerns do not always involve a direct disclosure.

Abuse may occur within or outside the family home, within the Academy, in the community or online. Harm may be caused by adults or by other children.

Staff should remain alert to changes in a child's behaviour, attendance, appearance, relationships, emotional wellbeing, engagement or circumstances.

Possible indicators may include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour.
- Declining, irregular or unexplained attendance.
- Repeated lateness or missing episodes.
- Deterioration in appearance or personal hygiene.
- Unexplained injuries.
- Significant changes in eating, weight or physical presentation.
- Anxiety, withdrawal or marked changes in emotional wellbeing.
- Self-harm or suicidal thoughts or behaviour.
- Changes in friendship groups or association with older individuals.
- Unexplained gifts, money, possessions or access to resources.
- Sexualised behaviour that causes concern.
- Drug or alcohol misuse.
- Fearfulness or apparent coercion or control.
- Concerning online activity.
- Changes in use of mobile phones or online accounts.
- Signs of neglect or inadequate care.
- A disclosure by the child or another person.

No single indicator necessarily means that abuse or harm has occurred. Equally, staff must not wait for a collection of indicators or proof before reporting a concern.

Staff should consider the child's circumstances as a whole, maintain professional curiosity and share concerns promptly with the DSL or DDSL.

Types of Abuse

Staff must understand the four recognised categories of abuse:

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child that causes severe and adverse effects on their emotional development. It may include making a child feel worthless or unloved, imposing inappropriate expectations, bullying, exploitation or preventing normal social interaction.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities,

whether or not the child understands what is happening. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact or non-contact activities and can occur online.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs and is likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Staff should not attempt to investigate suspected abuse themselves. Their responsibility is to recognise, respond appropriately, record and report so that the DSL/DDSL and relevant agencies can determine the appropriate action.

9. Child-on-Child Abuse

Blackpool Skills Academy recognises that children can abuse other children and that this can happen inside or outside the Academy and online.

All staff must understand that the absence of reported incidents does not mean that child-on-child abuse is not occurring. The Academy will maintain a culture in which pupils know how to report concerns and are confident that they will be listened to and taken seriously.

Child-on-child abuse may include:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying.
- Physical abuse.
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- Harmful sexual behaviour.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos.
- Abuse within intimate personal relationships between children.
- Upskirting.
- Initiation or hazing-type behaviour.
- Threats, intimidation or coercion.
- Abuse involving weapons or serious physical harm.
- Online abuse and exploitation.

The Academy operates a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse. This means that abuse will never be dismissed or minimised as "banter", "just a laugh", "part of growing up", "boys being boys" or simply a consequence of SEMH or behavioural needs.

A zero-tolerance approach does not mean that every incident will result in the same response or sanction. Responses will be proportionate, child-centred and informed by safeguarding risk, individual circumstances and the needs of all children involved.

Responding to Child-on-Child Abuse

Where child-on-child abuse is reported or suspected:

- The immediate safety and welfare of all children involved will be considered.
- The concern will be recorded on CPOMS.

- Urgent or significant concerns will be reported directly to the DSL/DDSL.
- The DSL/DDSL will consider whether immediate separation, increased supervision or other safety measures are required.
- The wishes and feelings of the child who has experienced harm will be considered.
- The needs and vulnerabilities of the child alleged to have caused harm will also be considered.
- Parents or carers will normally be involved where appropriate, unless doing so may increase risk.
- Children's Social Care, the police or specialist services will be consulted or referred to where appropriate.
- Appropriate risk assessments and safety plans will be established and reviewed.
- Behaviour consequences may be applied where appropriate but will not replace safeguarding action, support or referral.
- Other pupils who witnessed or were affected by the incident will be supported where necessary.

The Academy recognises that a child who displays harmful or abusive behaviour may themselves have experienced abuse, trauma, exploitation or exposure to harmful material. Safeguarding consideration will therefore extend to all children involved.

Repeated incidents that may individually appear low level will be reviewed collectively to identify patterns of behaviour, peer-group dynamics, locations, online activity or wider cultural concerns.

The Academy will use pupil voice, safeguarding information, behaviour information and curriculum evidence to understand and reduce the risk of child-on-child abuse and to ensure pupils have accessible ways of seeking help.

10. Harmful Sexual Behaviour, Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

Blackpool Skills Academy recognises that sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour between children are safeguarding concerns and must never be dismissed as normal behaviour, banter or an inevitable part of growing up.

The Academy recognises that harmful sexual behaviour can occur between children of any age and sex and may take place in person or online. It may be a single incident or form part of a pattern of behaviour.

Staff should be particularly alert to the increased vulnerability that some pupils may experience because of SEND, communication needs, previous trauma, social or emotional needs or other circumstances.

Harmful sexual behaviour may indicate risk to other children. It may also indicate that the child displaying the behaviour has experienced abuse, trauma, exploitation or exposure to harmful or inappropriate material.

The Academy will respond through safeguarding action, appropriate therapeutic support, proportionate behaviour measures and multi-agency advice where required.

Responding to Sexual Harm

Where sexual violence, sexual harassment or harmful sexual behaviour is reported or suspected, the Academy will:

- Prioritise the immediate safety and welfare of the child who may have experienced harm.
- Consider whether children need to be separated or whether supervision arrangements need to change while initial safeguarding decisions are made.
- Listen carefully to the child and avoid asking leading or unnecessary questions.
- Record the concern promptly on CPOMS.
- Ensure urgent or significant concerns are communicated directly to the DSL/DDSL.
- Consider the needs and vulnerabilities of all children involved.
- Consider any power imbalance, including differences in age, developmental stage, SEND, communication needs, social status or peer-group influence.
- Consider risks arising from locations, peer groups, travel, social media and other online environments.
- Undertake and regularly review appropriate safeguarding risk assessments and safety plans.
- Consider whether Children's Social Care, the police or specialist services should be contacted.
- Involve parents and carers where appropriate and where doing so would not place a child at additional risk.
- Provide appropriate support to the child harmed, the child alleged to have caused harm and any other children affected.

Behaviour or disciplinary action may form part of the Academy's response but will never replace appropriate safeguarding action.

The Academy will avoid language that unnecessarily labels or shames children and will recognise that the needs and risks associated with each child may change over time.

Nude and Semi-Nude Images

Concerns involving the sharing, creation or possession of nude or semi-nude images or videos involving children will be treated as safeguarding matters and managed in accordance with current safeguarding guidance.

Staff must not intentionally view, copy, print, save, forward or share sexual imagery involving children unless specifically required as part of an authorised safeguarding process and in accordance with appropriate guidance.

Staff who become aware of such material should report the matter immediately to the DSL/DDSL and follow their instructions. The concern and subsequent safeguarding decisions will be recorded appropriately on CPOMS.

11. Child Criminal Exploitation, Child Sexual Exploitation and Other Forms of Exploitation

The Academy recognises that exploitation can take many forms and may occur within families, peer groups, communities, organised networks and online.

Children may be exploited by adults or by other children. A child involved in exploiting another child may themselves be experiencing exploitation, coercion or abuse.

Forms of exploitation may include:

- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE).
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).
- County lines.
- Trafficking.
- Modern slavery.
- Financial exploitation.
- Exploitation through organised criminal networks.
- Peer exploitation.
- Online exploitation and coercion.

Exploitation may involve children receiving or being promised money, gifts, drugs, status, affection, protection, accommodation, friendship or a sense of belonging in return for activity or behaviour.

Children may not recognise themselves as victims of exploitation and apparent compliance does not mean that exploitation or coercion is absent.

The Academy recognises that children who are exploited may also become involved in criminal activity. Staff will consider the possibility that apparently offending behaviour may have occurred as a result of coercion, control or exploitation.

Indicators of Exploitation

Possible indicators may include:

- Unexplained money, gifts or possessions.
- Repeated absence, lateness or missing episodes.
- Changes in friendship or peer groups.
- Relationships with older individuals.
- Increased secrecy or changes in mobile phone use.
- Unexplained travel or use of transport.
- Drug or alcohol misuse.
- Unexplained injuries.
- Fearfulness, anxiety or withdrawal.
- Changes in behaviour or emotional wellbeing.
- Sexualised behaviour.
- Deterioration in education or engagement.
- Evidence of coercion, debt or financial pressure.

Attendance and missing-education patterns will be considered alongside other safeguarding information where exploitation is suspected.

Where repeated indicators emerge, the DSL/DDSL will review the child's safeguarding chronology and consider information from CPOMS, attendance, behaviour, online safety, pupil voice and other relevant sources.

The Academy will consult or make referrals to Children's Social Care, the police and specialist services where appropriate. Where trafficking or modern slavery may be involved, the DSL will consider the appropriate safeguarding and National Referral Mechanism arrangements.

12. Mental Health, Self-Harm and Suicide Risk

Blackpool Skills Academy recognises the close relationship between mental health and safeguarding.

Mental health difficulties may be a safeguarding concern in themselves, may indicate that a child has experienced or is experiencing abuse, neglect or exploitation, or may increase a child's vulnerability to other forms of harm.

Staff should be alert to concerns including:

- Self-harm.
- Suicidal thoughts or suicidal behaviour.
- Significant changes in mood or emotional presentation.
- Marked withdrawal.
- Signs associated with eating disorders or disordered eating.
- Self-neglect.
- Significant sleep difficulties where these become known to the Academy.
- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour.
- Expressions of hopelessness or an intention to harm themselves.

Staff are not responsible for diagnosing mental health conditions. Their responsibility is to observe, listen, respond appropriately, record concerns and report them to the DSL/DDSL.

Where a pupil's mental health presentation indicates a safeguarding concern, relevant information will be recorded on CPOMS and considered as part of the child's safeguarding chronology.

A pupil's SEMH needs or existing mental health support must never be used to normalise or minimise indicators of increased risk.

Where there is an immediate risk of serious self-harm or suicide, staff will take urgent action to secure the child's safety and obtain appropriate safeguarding, medical or emergency assistance.

The DSL/DDSL will consider communication with parents or carers, external agencies, therapeutic support and appropriate safety planning according to the circumstances and level of risk.

Pupils will be supported to identify trusted adults and will be given appropriate opportunities to express their wishes, feelings and concerns.

13. Serious Violence, Weapons and Contextual Risk

Blackpool Skills Academy recognises that serious violence and involvement in criminal activity are safeguarding concerns and that children may be victims, perpetrators or both.

Staff should be alert to indicators that a child may be at risk of involvement in serious violence, including:

- Increased or unexplained absence from education.
- Changes in friendship or peer groups.
- Association with older individuals or groups.
- Unexplained money, possessions or clothing.
- Unexplained injuries.
- Evidence of coercion, intimidation or threats.
- Drug or alcohol involvement.
- Significant changes in behaviour or emotional wellbeing.
- Self-harm or increased risk-taking behaviour.
- Unexplained travel or changes to journeys to and from the Academy.
- Possession of, interest in or discussion about weapons where this causes concern.
- Online activity associated with violence, threats, gangs or exploitation.

Within an SEMH setting, aggression, dysregulation, threats or discussion of weapons may sometimes occur within a wider pattern of behaviour or emotional need. This must not prevent staff from considering whether there is also a safeguarding risk.

Behaviour systems do not replace safeguarding processes. Where an incident or pattern raises a safeguarding concern, it must also be recorded and considered through the Academy's safeguarding arrangements.

The DSL/DDSL will consider the wider context of concerns, including peer groups, family circumstances, community risks, online activity, travel and known local safeguarding intelligence.

Where appropriate, the Academy will work with Children's Social Care, the police, commissioning schools, local authorities and other agencies to assess and reduce risk.

14. Attendance, Children Missing Education and Safeguarding

The Academy recognises that attendance is an important safeguarding indicator.

Repeated or prolonged absence from education, unexplained absence, patterns of lateness and sudden changes in attendance may indicate abuse, neglect, exploitation, mental health difficulties or other safeguarding concerns.

Staff responsible for attendance and safeguarding will work closely together so that emerging patterns are identified and acted upon.

Where attendance causes concern:

- The child's circumstances and known vulnerabilities will be considered.
- Relevant safeguarding information will be reviewed.
- Patterns of absence, lateness or missing episodes will be considered alongside behaviour and other available information.
- The pupil's voice will be sought where appropriate.
- Parents, carers and commissioning schools will be contacted as appropriate.
- The DSL/DDSL will consider whether Early Help, Children's Social Care or another agency should be involved.
- Concerns will be escalated where risk remains or increases.

Attendance, behaviour and CPOMS information will be triangulated by safeguarding leaders at least termly and more frequently for pupils where vulnerability or emerging risk requires closer oversight.

The Academy will follow statutory and local procedures relating to children missing education and will not allow pupils to disappear from education without appropriate enquiry, safeguarding consideration and communication with relevant agencies.

Reduced Timetables and Off-Site Arrangements

The Academy will not use reduced timetables, part-time arrangements, off-site education or other alternative arrangements as a means of informally excluding a pupil or removing them from education.

Where an individualised or reduced arrangement is considered necessary, it will have:

- A clear educational and welfare rationale.
- Appropriate safeguarding oversight.
- Clearly identified responsibilities.
- A written education plan.
- A defined review date.
- Appropriate communication with parents or carers, commissioning schools and relevant professionals.

Safeguarding arrangements will remain in place for pupils receiving education away from the Academy site.

15. Online Safety, Mobile Phones and Emerging Technology

The Academy recognises that safeguarding risks increasingly move between online and offline environments and that technology can facilitate abuse, exploitation, bullying, coercion and other forms of harm.

Online safety is therefore an integral part of the Academy's safeguarding

arrangements, curriculum, staff training and day-to-day practice.

Risks may include:

- Online grooming and exploitation.
- Sexual harassment and sexual abuse.
- Sharing of nude or semi-nude images.
- Cyberbullying.
- Radicalisation.
- Criminal exploitation.
- Financial exploitation and scams.
- Coercive or controlling behaviour.
- Exposure to harmful or inappropriate content.
- Contact with unsafe individuals or groups.
- Artificial intelligence-generated or manipulated images, video, audio or other content.
- Misuse of social media, messaging platforms, gaming services and other online environments.

Staff must report online safeguarding concerns through the same safeguarding processes as concerns arising offline.

Filtering and Monitoring

The Academy will maintain appropriate filtering and monitoring arrangements for Academy technology and internet access.

Safeguarding leaders and relevant staff will understand their responsibilities for filtering and monitoring and will review arrangements appropriately to ensure that they remain effective.

Filtering and monitoring systems support, but do not replace, effective supervision, education, professional curiosity and appropriate staff response.

Concerns identified through filtering or monitoring will be considered as safeguarding information and referred to the DSL/DDSL where appropriate.

Mobile Phones and Personal Devices

The Academy will maintain clear expectations for the use of mobile phones and personal devices by pupils and staff.

Staff will remain alert to safeguarding concerns involving mobile phones, including bullying, sexual imagery, grooming, coercion, exploitation, inappropriate recording, harmful content and contact with unsafe individuals.

Where a mobile phone or personal device is involved in a safeguarding incident, staff will follow safeguarding procedures and seek advice from the DSL/DDSL rather than independently searching, copying, forwarding or deleting potentially relevant material.

16. Preventing Radicalisation

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation forms part of the Academy's wider safeguarding responsibilities.

The Academy will fulfil its responsibilities under the Prevent Duty and will support pupils to develop the knowledge, confidence and critical thinking skills needed to challenge extremist narratives and recognise manipulation and misinformation.

Staff will be alert to changes in behaviour, relationships, online activity or expressed views that may indicate vulnerability to radicalisation.

Concerns about possible radicalisation will be reported to the DSL/DDSL and considered in accordance with the Academy's safeguarding procedures and current Prevent guidance.

Where appropriate, the DSL will seek advice from relevant safeguarding partners and consider whether referral to appropriate external services is required.

The Academy recognises that safeguarding pupils from radicalisation should be proportionate and based on vulnerability and risk. The expression of a political, religious or controversial opinion does not in itself demonstrate radicalisation. Staff should consider the context, nature and pattern of concerns and seek safeguarding advice where necessary.

17. Children with SEND and Additional Vulnerabilities

Blackpool Skills Academy recognises that children with SEND, SEMH needs or communication difficulties may face additional safeguarding challenges.

Staff must remain alert to the possibility that:

- Indicators of abuse or neglect may be incorrectly attributed to a child's SEND or SEMH needs.
- Changes in behaviour, communication or emotional presentation may indicate harm.
- Children may experience greater difficulty recognising unsafe situations or communicating concerns.
- Children may be more vulnerable to bullying, child-on-child abuse, exploitation, coercion and online harm.
- Children may have fewer opportunities to disclose concerns or may communicate distress in ways that are not immediately recognised.
- Assumptions about behaviour may result in safeguarding concerns being overlooked.

The Academy will ensure that safeguarding arrangements take account of each pupil's individual communication needs, vulnerabilities, triggers, trusted adults and protective factors.

Information will be shared with staff on a need-to-know basis where this is necessary to safeguard and support the pupil.

The Academy's therapeutic and PACE-informed approach supports staff to understand behaviour and build trusted relationships. It must not result in safeguarding concerns being explained solely as behaviour, trauma, SEND or SEMH.

18. Restrictive Intervention and Safeguarding

The Academy recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances in which reasonable force or restrictive intervention is required to prevent a pupil harming themselves or others or in other circumstances permitted by law.

Any use of restrictive intervention must be necessary, reasonable, proportionate and for the minimum time required.

The use of restrictive intervention will be recorded and reported in accordance with the Academy's procedures.

Following an incident, consideration will be given to:

- The welfare of the pupil and other individuals involved.
- Whether injuries or medical attention need to be recorded.
- The pupil's account and wishes and feelings.
- Whether the incident reveals a new or increased safeguarding concern.
- Whether the intervention itself raises any safeguarding concern.
- Whether behaviour, risk assessments or support plans require review.
- Whether parents, carers, commissioning schools or external professionals need to be informed.
- Whether the incident forms part of a wider pattern.

Where an incident raises a safeguarding concern, this will be recorded on CPOMS and considered by the DSL/DDSL.

Behaviour or restrictive intervention records do not replace safeguarding records where safeguarding concerns are present.

19. Concerns and Allegations About Adults

Blackpool Skills Academy is committed to maintaining a culture in which concerns about adults working with children are identified, reported and acted upon appropriately.

This applies to employees, agency staff, contractors, volunteers, trainees and any other adults working for or on behalf of the Academy.

Staff must report any concern that an adult may have:

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

to work with children.

Concerns that meet, or may meet, the harm threshold will be managed in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education and relevant local safeguarding arrangements, including consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate.

Staff must not investigate allegations themselves or discuss them unnecessarily with colleagues.

Concerns About the Headteacher

Any safeguarding allegation or concern about the Headteacher must be reported directly to the Proprietor and must not be reported to the Headteacher.

The Proprietor will follow the appropriate safeguarding and LADO procedures.

Concerns About the Proprietor

Where a safeguarding allegation or concern relates to the Proprietor, staff must follow the Academy's safeguarding escalation arrangements and contact the appropriate LADO or Children's Social Care directly where required.

No member of staff should feel prevented from raising or escalating a safeguarding concern because of the position or seniority of the individual involved.

Low-Level Concerns

The Academy operates a culture in which staff are encouraged to report concerns about adult behaviour even where the behaviour does not appear to meet the harm threshold.

A low-level concern is any concern that an adult working in or on behalf of the Academy may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the Employee Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside work.
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or otherwise warrant referral to the LADO.

Low-level concerns will be recorded confidentially and reviewed appropriately so that patterns of behaviour or wider safeguarding issues can be identified.

The purpose of reporting low-level concerns is to promote an open and transparent safeguarding culture, protect children and ensure concerning or inappropriate adult behaviour is addressed at the earliest opportunity.

20. Whistleblowing and Escalation

All staff must feel able to raise concerns about safeguarding practice within the Academy.

Where a member of staff believes that safeguarding arrangements are unsafe, concerns have not been acted upon appropriately or a child remains at risk, they have a responsibility to raise and escalate the matter.

Staff should normally raise concerns through the Academy's safeguarding and whistleblowing arrangements. However, where necessary, concerns may be raised directly with Children's Social Care, the LADO or another appropriate safeguarding body.

Staff will not be subject to detrimental treatment for raising genuine safeguarding concerns in good faith.

Professional disagreement must never prevent action being taken to protect a child.

21. Information Sharing, Confidentiality and Safeguarding Records

Effective safeguarding depends upon relevant information being shared with the right people at the right time.

The Academy will share information where necessary and proportionate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and in accordance with current legislation and statutory guidance.

Data protection legislation does not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

Staff must not promise confidentiality to a child who makes a disclosure. Children should be reassured that information will only be shared with people who need to know in order to help keep them or others safe.

Safeguarding information will be:

- Accurate and factual.
- Recorded promptly.
- Stored securely.
- Shared only for appropriate purposes.
- Accessible to authorised staff when required.
- Retained and transferred in accordance with statutory requirements and Academy procedures.

CPOMS provides the Academy's central safeguarding chronology. Records should enable safeguarding leaders to understand what the concern was, what decisions were made, the rationale for those decisions, what action was taken, the outcome and whether further review is required.

Where a pupil transfers to another school or education setting, safeguarding records will be transferred securely and separately from the main pupil file in accordance with statutory guidance.

The Academy will work appropriately with commissioning schools and other agencies

to ensure that safeguarding information follows the child and that responsibility for safeguarding is clear.

22. Safer Recruitment and the Single Central Record

Blackpool Skills Academy is committed to ensuring that people who work with children are suitable to do so.

Recruitment will be undertaken in accordance with the Academy's Safer Recruitment Policy, current statutory guidance and relevant legal requirements.

Appropriate pre-employment and safeguarding checks will be completed before an individual begins work, subject to any specific arrangements permitted by statutory guidance.

The Academy will maintain a Single Central Record (SCR) containing the information required by Keeping Children Safe in Education and the Independent School Standards.

The SCR will record the completion of required recruitment and safeguarding checks for relevant individuals working at the Academy, including employees, agency workers, contractors, volunteers and others where required.

The Headteacher will ensure that the SCR is maintained accurately and is subject to regular internal quality assurance and periodic safeguarding audits to verify its completeness, accuracy and compliance with statutory requirements.

The Academy will ensure that individuals involved in recruitment receive appropriate safer recruitment training and that safeguarding remains central to recruitment and selection decisions.

23. Contractors, Agency Staff, Volunteers and Visitors

The Academy will take appropriate steps to ensure that contractors, agency staff, volunteers, visitors and other adults working with or around pupils do not present an unacceptable safeguarding risk.

The level of checks, supervision and safeguarding information provided will reflect the individual's role, the nature of their contact with children and current statutory requirements.

Agency and third-party organisations will be required to provide appropriate confirmation that relevant safeguarding and recruitment checks have been completed.

All adults working regularly within the Academy will be made aware of:

- The Academy's safeguarding expectations.
- How to report a safeguarding concern.
- The identity of the DSL and DDSs.
- Expectations regarding professional conduct and boundaries.

- Relevant emergency and safeguarding procedures.

Concerns about contractors, agency workers, volunteers, trainees or other third-party adults will be managed through the same safeguarding principles as concerns about Academy employees, including referral to the LADO where appropriate.

The Academy will apply current statutory requirements when determining whether a role constitutes regulated activity and what checks are required.

24. Safeguarding Training and Induction

All staff will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction and regularly thereafter.

From 1 September 2026, all staff will be required to read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 in full.

Staff will also receive appropriate training and updates relating to the safeguarding risks relevant to the Academy and its pupils, including:

- Child-on-child abuse.
- Sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour.
- Child criminal and child sexual exploitation.
- County lines, serious violence and contextual safeguarding.
- Mental health, self-harm and suicide risk.
- Online safety and emerging technology.
- Attendance and children missing education.
- SEND and SEMH vulnerability.
- Prevent and radicalisation.
- Concerns and allegations about adults.
- Low-level concerns.
- Whistleblowing and escalation.
- The use of CPOMS.
- Information sharing and confidentiality.

Training will reflect the needs and safeguarding context of the Academy and will be updated where legislation, statutory guidance, local risks or Academy practice changes.

The Academy will maintain appropriate evidence of safeguarding induction, training, KCSIE reading and staff understanding.

Safeguarding training will focus on staff being able to apply safeguarding expectations in practice, not simply confirming that training has been completed.

25. Safeguarding Through the Curriculum

The Academy will provide pupils with age-appropriate and accessible opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills needed to recognise risk, build healthy relationships, make informed decisions and seek help.

Safeguarding education will be embedded appropriately across the curriculum and personal development programme and will include relevant learning about:

- Healthy and respectful relationships.
- Consent and personal boundaries.
- Child-on-child abuse.
- Sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour.
- Online safety.
- Mobile phones and social media.
- Sharing sexual images.
- Grooming and exploitation.
- Criminal exploitation and county lines.
- Bullying and discrimination.
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Substance misuse.
- Radicalisation and extremism.
- Financial exploitation and scams.
- How and where to seek help.

Teaching will be appropriate to pupils' ages, developmental stages, SEND, SEMH needs and individual vulnerabilities.

Pupils will be taught that abuse and exploitation are never acceptable and that they can speak to a trusted adult if something worries them.

26. Pupil Voice and Reporting Concerns

The Academy recognises that an effective safeguarding culture must be experienced by pupils as well as described in policies.

Pupils will be supported to understand:

- Who they can speak to if they are worried.
- Who the Academy's safeguarding leads are.
- That concerns will be taken seriously.
- That they will not be blamed for abuse or exploitation they have experienced.
- That there are different ways to ask for help.
- What may happen after they report a safeguarding concern.

The Academy recognises that some children may find it difficult to make a direct verbal disclosure. Staff will therefore remain alert to behaviour, communication, attendance, emotional presentation and other indicators that a pupil may need help.

Particular consideration will be given to accessible reporting arrangements for pupils with SEND, communication difficulties or other additional needs.

Safeguarding leaders will use pupil voice as part of the Academy's safeguarding quality assurance arrangements to understand whether pupils feel safe, know trusted adults and understand how to report concerns.

27. Safeguarding Quality Assurance and Governance

The Academy will regularly evaluate whether safeguarding arrangements are working effectively in practice.

The Headteacher, DSL and Proprietor will use a range of evidence to monitor safeguarding, including:

- CPOMS records and safeguarding chronologies.
- Safeguarding case sampling.
- Attendance information.
- Behaviour information.
- Child-on-child abuse and harmful sexual behaviour concerns.
- Restrictive intervention records.
- Online safety and filtering and monitoring information.
- Concerns about adults and low-level concerns.
- Single Central Record checks.
- Staff training and induction records.
- Pupil voice.
- Information relating to vulnerable pupils and cohorts.
- Referrals, Early Help and multi-agency involvement.

Safeguarding case sampling will consider whether records demonstrate a clear sequence of concern, recording, DSL decision, rationale, action, outcome and review.

Attendance, behaviour and safeguarding information will be considered together so that patterns or emerging risks are not overlooked.

The DSL will undertake a formal safeguarding policy-to-practice audit at least termly. This will include appropriate CPOMS case sampling and consideration of whether Academy practice reflects the requirements of this policy.

Findings from safeguarding monitoring and audits will inform staff training, supervision, policy development and Academy improvement.

The Proprietor will receive sufficient safeguarding information to provide effective oversight and challenge while maintaining appropriate confidentiality.

The Academy's safeguarding arrangements will be judged by whether they are understood by staff, experienced by pupils, evidenced through records and subject to effective leadership and governance oversight.

28. Working with Parents and Carers

Blackpool Skills Academy recognises that effective partnership with parents and carers is an important part of safeguarding children.

The Academy will normally seek to work openly and constructively with parents and carers and will share safeguarding concerns where it is appropriate and safe to do so.

Parents and carers will be encouraged to:

- Share information that may affect their child's safety, welfare or wellbeing.
- Inform the Academy of significant changes in circumstances.
- Work with the Academy and relevant professionals where support or safeguarding intervention is required.
- Raise concerns if they are worried about their child's safety or the safety of another pupil.

There may be circumstances where the Academy needs to share information with Children's Social Care, the police or another safeguarding agency before speaking to a parent or carer. This may occur where informing the parent or carer could place a child at increased risk, prejudice an investigation or otherwise compromise safeguarding action.

The welfare and safety of the child will determine the Academy's response.

29. Multi-Agency Working and Referrals

The Academy recognises that effective safeguarding requires strong partnership working.

The DSL and DDSLs will work appropriately with:

- Children's Social Care.
- The police.
- Health professionals.
- Local safeguarding partners.
- Commissioning schools and local authorities.
- Early Help services.
- Mental health and therapeutic services.
- Prevent and Channel services where appropriate.
- LADO services.
- Other education providers.
- Specialist safeguarding and exploitation services.

Where a safeguarding referral is required, the DSL/DDSL will provide relevant information to support appropriate assessment and decision making.

The Academy will contribute appropriately to safeguarding assessments, strategy discussions, child protection conferences, reviews and other multi-agency processes.

Where another agency is involved, the Academy will continue to monitor and support the child. Referral to another service does not end the Academy's safeguarding responsibility.

If the Academy believes that another agency's response does not adequately address the risk to a child, the DSL/DDSL will challenge and escalate the matter through appropriate professional escalation arrangements.

30. Work Experience, Off-Site Education and Alternative Arrangements

Safeguarding responsibilities continue when pupils participate in work experience, vocational learning, educational visits, off-site activities or education delivered by another organisation.

Before a pupil begins an off-site arrangement, the Academy will consider:

- The suitability of the placement or provider.
- The individual pupil's safeguarding needs and vulnerabilities.
- Appropriate safeguarding and supervision arrangements.
- Relevant safer recruitment or vetting requirements.
- How attendance will be monitored.
- How safeguarding concerns will be reported.
- How the pupil can contact a trusted adult at the Academy.
- What information needs to be shared with the placement or provider.
- How the arrangement will be reviewed.

The Academy will maintain appropriate oversight of pupils educated away from the Academy site and will respond to concerns about attendance, welfare, behaviour or safeguarding.

The use of an external provider does not transfer or remove the Academy's responsibility to satisfy itself that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place.

31. Site Security and Visitors

The Academy will maintain appropriate arrangements to ensure that pupils are safe while on Academy premises.

Visitors will be managed in accordance with the Academy's visitor and site security arrangements.

Visitors who are not appropriately checked for unsupervised access to children will be supervised as required.

Staff should challenge or report any unidentified or unauthorised person on Academy premises where it is safe to do so.

Safeguarding concerns relating to visitors will be reported immediately to the DSL/DDSL or another appropriate senior member of staff.

32. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually by the Headteacher and Proprietor and sooner where:

- Legislation or statutory guidance changes.

- Local safeguarding procedures change.
- An incident or safeguarding review identifies learning.
- Academy systems or safeguarding arrangements change.
- Monitoring identifies that policy or practice requires improvement.

The DSL will monitor the implementation of this policy throughout the year and will ensure that safeguarding practice remains consistent with current statutory guidance.

Changes to safeguarding systems, procedures or expectations will be communicated promptly to staff and reflected in training and induction where necessary.

A record of significant policy changes will be maintained to demonstrate how the Academy has responded to changes in statutory guidance and safeguarding practice.

33. Related Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read alongside relevant Academy policies and procedures, including:

- Safer Recruitment Policy.
- Recruitment and Selection Policy.
- Employee Code of Conduct.
- Behaviour Policy.
- Attendance Policy.
- SEND Policy.
- Online Safety Policy.
- Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Whistleblowing Policy.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- Staff Attendance and Wellbeing Policy.
- Data Protection and Privacy arrangements.
- Educational Visits procedures.
- Work Experience procedures.
- Restrictive Intervention procedures.
- Complaints Policy.

Operational safeguarding procedures, including CPOMS recording expectations, referral processes, child-on-child abuse arrangements and emergency safeguarding actions, support the implementation of this policy.

34. Policy Review

This policy is approved by the Headteacher and Proprietor and will be formally reviewed at least annually.

The next scheduled review is 28 August 2027.

The Academy will not wait for the scheduled review date where changes to legislation, statutory guidance, local safeguarding arrangements or Academy practice require the

policy to be amended sooner.

Safeguarding arrangements will remain under continuous review to ensure that policy reflects practice and that pupils are effectively protected.

with the DSL.

CASPAR briefing guidance also clarifies that low level concerns which are shared about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers; and schools and colleges should consult with their LADO if unsure whether low-level concerns shared about a member of staff meet the harm threshold.

Part five child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment

This section has been expanded to incorporate guidance previously covered in the DfE's Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges advice. It also provides new information, emphasising:

- the importance of explaining to children that the law is in place to protect them rather than criminalise them.
- the importance of understanding intra-familial harms, and any necessary support for siblings following incidents
- the need for schools and colleges to be part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners.

Updated definition of early help

- Early help is now defined as 'support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse' (paragraph 497)
- This reflects the Working together to safeguard children guidance, linked above

Statistical clarification

- The guidance says that **children with disabilities** are 3 times more likely to be abused than their peers. This previous wording was 'children with special educational needs and disabilities' (paragraph 456)

1. Implementation Stages

Our safeguarding Policy is embedded within the company and is implemented via a range of policies and procedures within the organisation. These include:

- Whistleblowing – The Ability to inform on staff/ practices within the organisation.
- Grievance and disciplinary procedures – to address breaches of procedures/ policies.
- Health and Safety Policy - Mitigating risks to staff and students
- Equal Opportunities Policy – ensuring safeguarding procedures are in line with this policy, around discriminatory abuse and ensuring that the safeguarding policy and procedures are not discriminatory.

- Data protection (how records are stored and access to those records)
- Confidentiality (or limited confidentiality policy) ensures that service users are aware of our duty to disclose.
- Staff induction.
- Staff training.

2. Communications and discussion of safeguarding issues

Commitment to the following communication methods ensure effective communication of safeguarding issues and practice:

- Provision of a clear and effective reporting procedure which encourages reporting of concerns.
- Encouraging open discussion to identify any barriers to reporting so that they can be addressed.
- Inclusion of safeguarding as a discussion prompt during supervision meetings/appraisals to encourage reflection.
- Weekly wellbeing meetings are conducted with staff to ensure they are up to date with the latest information.

Typical support mechanisms would include:

- Debriefing support for staff so that they can reflect on the issues they have dealt with.
- Seeking further support as appropriate, e.g. Access to counselling.

Reporting and allegations management

If someone tells you about the abuse, they have experienced:

- Remain calm, no shock or disbelief.
- Listen.
- Be empathetic.
- Do not ask probing questions.
- Tell them to report the concerns to a manager or the school leader.

DO NOT

- Put yourself at risk.
- Be judgmental.
- Make promises you cannot keep.
- Tell anyone who does not need to know.
- Stage an interview.
- Contact the alleged perpetrator.

Immediate actions

- Do not handle evidence.
- Separate the perpetrator and the victim.

- Is anyone at immediate risk? If so, call an ambulance/ Police.
- Make a written account as soon as possible with facts, not opinions, date, and sign it.

If a member of staff is suspected

- Follow the whistleblowing procedure or if a manager is suspected, alert social services.
- A manager must support the alleged victim.
- Support the wider staff team.
- Support the investigation.
- Be fair to the alleged perpetrator.
- Implement disciplinary procedures and possible suspension without prejudice.

All staff have a responsibility to cooperate with management to ensure that BSA offers a safe learning environment for students. Safeguarding is a permanent agenda item at management meetings and staff meetings; all staff can raise safeguarding issues at these meetings; however staff must not wait to report a safeguarding issue if they feel it is urgent.

5.1. Confidential Pupil Voice and Safeguarding Reporting

Blackpool Skills Academy is committed to ensuring that all students feel safe, listened to, and able to raise concerns confidentially.

To support this, the Academy provides clear and confidential ways for students to share feedback or report safeguarding concerns, including worries about bullying, behaviour, wellbeing, or safety.

How students can raise concerns:

- Speaking directly to a trusted member of staff
- Requesting a private meeting with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a member of the safeguarding team
- Using a confidential reporting method, which may include:
 - A written concern form
 - A secure email or digital reporting option
 - A confidential worry/feedback box

Key principles:

- Students can raise concerns in confidence
- All concerns are taken seriously and sensitively
- Students will not get into trouble for raising concerns

- Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis, in line with safeguarding procedures
- Immediate action is taken where there is a risk of harm

Pupil voice:

- Student feedback is used to improve safeguarding, behaviour, and wellbeing provision
- Pupil voice is gathered through regular check-ins, discussions, and structured feedback opportunities
- Outcomes and improvements are shared with students where appropriate

3. Prevention and Awareness

- A code of Conduct – Which provides the standards expected from everyone in the organisation.
- Safer recruitment guidance – which outlines how your organisation minimises risks of harm to others from the people you recruit.
- Communication Guidance – which outlines acceptable and safe ways to communicate within your organisation.
- Digital Technology and social media guidelines – which outlines how to use technology safely and your organisation's standards for using social media.
- Photographs, films, and media guidance – which outline how you will take, store, and use media safely and ethically.

BSA will ensure an appropriate level of safeguarding training is available to its Students, Employees, Volunteers, and any relevant persons linked to the organisation who requires it.

For all employees who are working or volunteering with children, this requires them as a minimum to have awareness training that enables them to:

- Understand what safeguarding is and their role in safeguarding children.
- Recognise a child potentially in need of safeguarding and act.
- Understand how to report a Safeguarding Alert.
- Understand dignity and respect when working with children.
- Have knowledge of the Safeguarding Children Policy.

4. Management of Safeguarding

Students in our training School

All BSA staff have a collective responsibility for the safeguarding of our students when they are in our training School. Students are informed about safeguarding during induction and safeguarding is then embedded throughout the 'Students Journey'. Continually raising awareness is part of the BSA approach to the 'Safer Learner Concept' and Equality and Diversity ethos.

Students on industry placement

Safeguarding is embedded through delivery in the workplace and forms part of our placement vetting processes, raising awareness of the importance of safeguarding with employers. Where learners are educated off-site or in Alternative Provision, BSA retains safeguarding oversight and sets expectations with the provider, including named contacts, reporting routes and DSL availability.

Escalation Policy (where appropriate)

Occasionally situations arise when staff feel that the decision made by a colleague on a safeguarding case is not a safe decision. Disagreements could arise in several areas, but are most likely to arise around:

- Levels of Needs.
- The need for action.
- Roles and responsibilities.
- Communication.

The safety of individuals is the paramount consideration in any professional disagreement, and any unresolved issues should be addressed with due consideration to the risks that might exist for the individual.

5. Equality Impact Statement

BSA is committed to the promotion of equality, diversity, and providing a supportive environment for all members of its community. Our commitment means that this policy has been reviewed to ensure that it does not discriminate (either intentionally or unintentionally) any of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender (including gender identity), race, religion or sexual orientation and meets our obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Appendix A - Code of Conduct for External Guests/Visitors

To ensure the safety of our service users, all personnel working with BSA will comply with the code of conduct below.

It is the responsibility of all adults to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. The supplier is asked to ensure that any person directly employed by them or through a subcontractor agrees to comply with the following:

- A. Work safely and take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour. Avoid any contact which would lead any reasonable person to question your motivation and intentions.
- B. Avoid contact with children/ vulnerable adults.
- C. Never give your personal contact details to children or young people, including your mobile phone number. Contact via Social media sites are also unacceptable.
- D. Work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way.
- E. Never be in contact with children without supervision from a representative for the site undergoing work.
- F. Stay within the agreed work area and access routes.
- G. Obtain permission if you need to go outside the agreed work area or access routes from a representative for the site undergoing work.
- H. Keep staff informed of where you are and what you are doing.
- I. Do not use profane or inappropriate language.
- J. Dress appropriately, i.e., Dress in the way that:
 - I. Is unlikely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative.
 - II. Does not distract, cause embarrassment, or give rise to misunderstanding.
 - III. Is absent of any political or contentious slogans.
 - IV. Is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive.

Appendix B: Dealing with a disclosure of trauma or abuse for adults.

Key principles for adult safeguarding

In the safeguarding of adults, BSA is guided by the principles set out in The Care Act 2014 and aim to demonstrate and promote these principles in our work.

- **Empowerment-** People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- **Prevention-** It is better to act before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality-** The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Protection-** Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Partnership-** Local solutions through services working with their communities.
- Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting, and reporting neglect and abuse.
- **Accountability-** Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

Recognising the signs of abuse

Staff may be particularly well-placed to spot abuse and neglect; the adult may say or do things that hint that all is not well. It may come in the form of a complaint, or an expression of concern. All BSA staff must understand what to do, and where to go locally to get help, support, and advice. It is vital that everyone within the organisation is vigilant on behalf of those unable to protect themselves.

Physical Abuse

The physical mistreatment of one person by another which may or may not result in physical injury, this may include slapping, burning, punching, unreasonable confinement, and pinching, force-feeding, misuse of medication, shaking, inappropriate moving and handling.

Signs and indicators

Over or under use of medication, burns in unusual places; hands, soles of feet, sudden incontinence, bruising at various healing stages, bite marks, disclosure, bruising in the shape of objects, unexplained injuries or those that go untreated, reluctance to uncover parts of the body.

Sexual Abuse

Any form of sexual activity that the adult does not want and or has not considered,

a sexual relationship instigated by those in a position of trust, rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendos, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing a sexual act, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Signs and indicators

Signs of being abused may include recoiling from physical contact, genital discharge, fear of males or females, inappropriate sexual behaviour in presence of others, bruising to thighs, disclosure, and pregnancy. Abusers may take longer with personal care tasks, use offensive, work alone with students, or show favouritism to clients.

Financial or material abuse

Financial or material abuse- including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.

Signs and Indicators

This may include not allowing a person access to their money, not spending allocated allowance on the individual, denying access to their money, theft from the individual, theft of property, misuse of benefits. There may be an over protection of money, lack of money, forged signatures, disclosure, inability to pay bills, lack of money after payments of benefits or other, unexplained withdrawals. An abuser may be evasive when discussing finances, goods purchased may be in the possession of the abuser. There may be over-keenness in participating in activities involving an individual's money.

Self-Neglect

This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding, and lack of self-care to the extent that it threatens personal health and safety. Another type is having the inability to avoid self-harming and failure to seek help or access services to meet health and social care needs.

Signs and Indicators

- Very poor personal hygiene
- Unkempt appearance
- Lack of essential food, clothing, or shelter
- Malnutrition and/or dehydration
- Living in squalid or unsanitary conditions
- Hoarding

- Collecting a large number of animals in inappropriate conditions
- Non-compliance with health or care services
- Inability or unwillingness to take medication or treat illness or injury.
- Neglecting household maintenance.

Discriminatory Abuse

This includes forms of harassment, slurs, or similar treatments; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, and religion or health status and may be the motivation factor in other forms of abuse. It can be personal, a hate crime or institutional.

Signs and indicators

There may be withdrawal or rejection of culturally inappropriate services, e.g., food, mixed gender groups, or activities. Individuals may simply agree with the abuser for an easier life; there may be disclosure, or someone may display low self-esteem. An abuser may react by saying “I treat everyone the same”, have inappropriate nicknames, be uncooperative, use derogatory language, or deny someone social and cultural contact.

Domestic abuse

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 and over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- Sexual
- Emotional
- Financial
- Psychological

A new offence of coercive and controlling behaviour in intimate and familial relationships was introduced into the serious crime act 2015. The offence will impose a maximum 5-year imprisonment, a fine or both.

Signs and Indicators

May include many of those indicators listed under previous categories in this document, including unexplained bruising, withdrawal from activities, work, or volunteering, not being in control of finances, or decision making.

Who might abuse?

Abuse of adults at risk may be perpetrated by a wide range of people including relatives, family members, professional staff, paid care workers, volunteers, other service users, neighbours, friends and associates, people who deliberately exploit

vulnerable people and strangers.

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and affect one person or more. Professionals and others should look beyond single incidents or individuals to identify patterns of harm.

Prevention of abuse

To assist in the prevention of abuse the following factors should be considered:

- Rigorous recruitment practices
- Internal guidelines for staff
- Training
- Making Safeguarding Personal and empowering service users

Making Safeguarding Personal

Making Safeguarding personal means it should be person-led and outcome-focused. It should engage the person in a conversation about how best to respond to their safeguarding situation in a way that enhances involvement, choice and control as well as improving quality of life, wellbeing, and safety.

We aim to empower our service users and provide them with the information they need to make decisions on how to be safe from abuse and reduce risks.

Adults must be assumed to have capacity to make their own decisions and be given all practicable help before anyone treats them as not being able to make their own decisions. Where an adult is found to lack capacity to decide then, any action taken, or any decisions made by, or on their behalf, must be made in their best interest.

Appendix D - What should I do if I have a concern with an adult or child?

Students are also able to raise safeguarding concerns through confidential pupil voice and reporting mechanisms, which are explained during induction and displayed around the school.

Staff members have concerns about a student's mental and/or physical health, development, safety, or welfare.

- Log a referral on the confidential safeguarding form, pathway: [Staff/BSA-Staff Folder/14-16 Provision/Student Reporting & Recording Information/Confidential Safeguarding Master Document](#) & alert the DSLs (and Tutor)
- Concerns can be high or low level.
- Speak directly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy (DSL) as soon as possible (certainly within 24 hours but immediately if you believe the student to be at risk if they leave at the end of the day).
- Inform the School Manager if no DSL/Deputy is available (and consider contacting Children's Social Care (CSC) directly where there is a serious risk if they are not available)



Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy considers:

- Context and history/information available.
- Explanations and contemporaneous life events.
- Uses Lancashire Continuum of Need & Thresholds Guidance.
- Evidence and nature of risk/need.
- Balance of Probabilities.



A Level of Need is Identified

- What level of need is identified (Managing Support internally via college pastoral processes, early help intervention, referral for statutory services)?
- What is the parent's/student's views?
- What services might be accessed:
 - In college; b) via the LA's early help; c) via direct referral to non-statutory agencies.
- Can these meet the level of need identified? If not refer to CSC.



Contact Details Social Care Referrals:

Blackpool Safeguarding
Child: 01253 477299
Child: 01253 477299 (out of hours)
Adult: 01253 477592
Adult: 01253 477600 (out of hours)

Prevent/Channel Referrals:

Local authority prevent team – 01254 585260

Police anti-terrorist hotline:

0800 789 321

In an emergency where there is an immediate safeguarding concern, the Police may need to be called on 999 or may need to contact on 101 where a criminal offence has also been committed/is suspected but there is no immediate danger.

Appendix E - Talking and listening to children and adults and recording/ notifying concerns.

1. If a child or adult wants to confide in you, you SHOULD:

- a. Be accessible and receptive and take what is said seriously; reassure victims of abuse that they are being taken seriously, will be supported, and are not creating a problem by reporting abuse of any kind.
- b. Listen carefully and uncritically, at the child or adult's pace.
- c. Reassure children or adults that they are right to tell and make sure that they are OK.
- d. Tell the child or adult that you must pass this information on and make a careful record of what was said.

2. You should NEVER

- a. Investigate or seek to prove or disprove possible abuse, but it is OK to ask for additional information regarding who, what, where and when but never the WHY.
- b. Make promises about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets' to children or adults.
- c. Assume that someone else will take the necessary action.
- d. Jump to conclusions, be dismissive or react with shock, anger, horror etc. or offer opinions.
- e. Speculate or accuse anybody.
- f. Investigate, suggest, or probe for information.

- g. Confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved or forget to record what you have been told.
- h. Fail to pass this information on to the correct person (the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy).

3. Children or adults with communication difficulties/ who use alternative or augmented communication.

- a. While extra care may be needed to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are interpreted correctly, any suspicions should be reported in the same manner as for other children or adults.
- b. Opinion and interpretation will be crucial.

4. Recording should

- a. State who was present, time, date, and place.
- b. Be recorded as a clear and comprehensive summary of concern and risk.
- c. Be passed to a DSL immediately (certainly within 24 hours); wherever possible, there should be a conversation with a DSL to ensure receipt of the referral. If a DSL is not available, the two Deputy DSLs can be contacted.
- d. If, in exceptional circumstances, the DSL or DDSLs are not available, advice can be sought from the Blackpool Council Social Care Duty Team
- e. Use the student's words wherever possible.
- f. Be factual and state exactly what was said.
- g. Differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/or allegation.
- h. Be a chronological account of events.
- i. Record also on the disclosure report form what the student would like to happen now and how they present.

5. What information do they need to obtain.

- a. BSA has NO INVESTIGATIVE ROLE.
- b. Never prompt or probe for information, your job is to listen, record and pass on.
- c. Ideally, you should be clear about what is being said in terms of WHO, WHAT, WHERE AND WHEN.
- d. If you feel this is a safeguarding concern or if you're not sure, record and pass on immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or DDSL.

DSL: Eloise.crossley@blackpoolskillsacademy.co.uk

DDSL: David.hodge@blackpoolskillsacademy.co.uk

6. If you need to ask questions, what is and isn't, OK?

- a. NEVER ask closed questions, i.e., ones which can be answered yes, or no e.g., did he touch you?
- b. NEVER make suggestions about who, how or where someone is alleged to have touched, hit etc.
- c. Use only MINIMAL PROMPTS such as 'tell me more about that/everything you remember about that.
- d. Timescales are very important: WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME THIS HAPPENED? Is an important question.

7. What else should we think about in relation to disclosure?

- a. Is there a suitable place for listening to students e.g. not too isolated, easily supervised, quiet etc.
- b. Be specific, i.e. Prearranged meetings.
- c. Think carefully about your own body language - how you present will dictate how comfortable a child feels in telling you about something which may be extremely frightening, difficult, and personal.
- d. Be prepared to answer the "WHAT HAPPENS NEXT" question.
- e. You should never make face-value judgements or assumptions about individual students.
- f. Think about how you might react if a student DID approach you. ALL staff need to be prepared to offer a student in this position what they need in terms of protection, reassurance, calmness, and objectivity.
- g. Students may disclose information whilst waiting for a prearranged meeting.