



Areté Learning Trust Child Protection Policy 2024 – 2025

Person Responsible:	Yearly
Updated:	Trust Safeguarding Lead
Approved by:	Trust Board
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Important School Safeguarding Information and Key contacts

1. Named school personnel with designated responsibility for Child Protection and Safeguarding

ROLE/ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Headteacher/Head of School	Rebecca Bainbridge	rbainbridge@millhill-alt.uk
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Rebecca Bainbridge	Rbainbridge@millhill-alt.uk
Deputy DSL(s)	Lynsey Button	ajones@millhill-alt.uk lbutton@millhill-alt.uk
Designated Teacher	Rebecca Bainbridge	
Mental Health Lead	Lynsey Button	
Chair of governors	Gwen Burn	Via millhill@arete.uk
Safeguarding governor	Gwen Burn	Millhill@arete.uk



2. Local Safeguarding Key Safeguarding Contacts

LOCAL AUTHORITY: NORTH YORKSHIRE	
LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP: NORTH YORKSHIRE CHILDREN'S PARTNERSHIP NYSCP	
ROLE/ORGANISATION	CONTACT DETAILS
Early Help Service Lead (or equivalent) for area	Jon Coates 01609 5348829
MAST (or equivalent)	03001312131
Professional's Consultation Line (or equivalent)	
Duty LADO	
CME Coordinator	
CAMHS single point of access	
CAMHS crisis	0800 0516171 (option 2 then 3)

The Areté Learning Trust Child Protection Policy

3. Introduction and Aims

This policy applies to all adults, including volunteers, working in or on behalf of the school. It will provide a framework for staff to meet their statutory duties and to ensure consistency of good practice. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school provision and off-site activities.

This policy has been devised in accordance with the Department for Education's Statutory Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed with local safeguarding partners. It is also based on the principles established by the following statutory legislation and guidance.

Department for Education's statutory guidance publications for schools and local authorities, including:

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)

Keeping children Safe in Education (2024)

Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children (2018)

Human Rights Act (1998) and Equality Act (2010), including the Public Sector Equality Duty

Data Protection Act (2018) and UK GDPR

Prevent Duty Guidance (2023)

NYSCP (safeguardingchildren.co.uk)

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 order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.

Safeguarding includes the establishment and implementation of procedures to protect children from deliberate harm, however, safeguarding also encompasses all aspects of pupils' health, safety and well-being.



Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children - defined for the purposes of this guidance as: *'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)'*

- **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 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.
- **Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children.**
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes **in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.**

Child Protection - Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

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 extra-familial contexts 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 another child or children.

(Children includes everyone under the age of 18 or 25 if a care leaver).

4. Our commitment and values

Areté Learning Trust Schools are committed to ensuring the welfare and safety of all children in our schools. We will protect and support our vulnerable children, children who need support through early help, children in need and children who have a child protection plan.

We recognise that children who are abused may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. Whilst at school, their behaviour may be challenging. We recognise that some children who have experienced abuse may harm others. We will always take a considered and sensitive approach in order that we can support all of our pupils.

We will adopt a child-centred approach to our work, we will act in the best interests of our children, and we will ensure that everyone is aware of their safeguarding responsibilities.

The school will, normally, endeavour to discuss all concerns with parents or carers about their child or children. However, there may be circumstances when the school will discuss concerns with Social Care and/or the Police without parental knowledge (in accordance with Child Protection procedures and in line with Part 2 of KCSIE). The school will, of course, always aim to maintain a positive relationship with all parents. This school's child protection policy is available publicly via our website



5. Working Together to Safeguard Children, Our Multi-Agency Commitment

All schools within North Yorkshire follow the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance and procedures.

Our school is a committed partner to the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NYSCP) and the North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership (NYCSP) and is committed to understanding its pivotal role in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in line with the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.'

Furthermore, we commit to:

- Understanding and following the processes for early help assessments (or equivalent) and the criteria, including level of need, for when cases should be referred for assessment and for statutory services under S47 and S17.
- Understanding and following the procedures and processes for cases relating to exploitation of children, children managed in the youth secure estate and disabled children.
- Working with social care, the police health services, and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm, including providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans.
- Providing robust professional challenge to all multi-agency partners and responding positively when challenge is offered to us in the best interests of the child.

6. Information Sharing

We recognise that information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation, in promoting children's welfare, including educational outcomes. We understand our powers and duties to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

We understand that The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about the sharing of information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

Furthermore, we commit to:

- Ensuring that arrangements are in place to set out the processes and principles for sharing information within the school, with children's social care, safeguarding partners and other organisations, agencies and practitioners as required.
- Sharing of information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns regarding the safety and welfare of children.

7. Roles and responsibilities

a. The Trust

The Trust board have a strategic leadership responsibility for safeguarding and will comply with their duties under the legislation and guidance. They will facilitate a whole trust approach to safeguarding and ensure that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development and that all systems, processes, and policies operate with the **best interests** of the child at their heart.

The Trust Board is responsible for all aspects of the implementation, maintenance and review of this policy and will ensure that staff receive appropriate levels of training and support to undertake their roles as outlined in this policy and that a log of their training is maintained.



The Trust will ensure that:

- All safeguarding related policies and procedures are transparent, clear and easy to understand for staff, visitors, pupils, parents and carers and are provided to all staff on induction, along with Part 1, Part 5 and Annex B of KCSIE and the role and identity of the DSL.
- A designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children is in place in each school.
- We have sought assurances that Child Protection Files are maintained in line with Annex C of KCSIE.
- Appropriate Safer Recruitment Procedures are in place in line with Part 3 of KCSIE 2024, that adequate safer recruitment training has been undertaken and that procedures are embedded and effective.
- Schools hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil (where reasonably possible).
- That appropriate risk assessments that keep children safe are in place with assurance that mitigations are followed.
- This child protection and safeguarding policy and school practice reflects a whole school approach to child-on-child abuse, including child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment, regardless of whether or not this has been reported.
- The child protection procedures are in accordance with government guidance and follow local safeguarding procedures.
- That procedures reference online safety, including in relation to filtering and monitoring and special educational needs and disabilities discretely.
- Schools have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place to respond to children who are absent from education, particularly for prolonged periods of time and/or on repeat occasions.
- Staff safeguarding training (including online safety and also an appropriate understanding of the expectations, applicable roles, and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) is integrated, regular, aligned and considered as part of the whole school safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning, particularly during induction.
- All Governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training that equips them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in school are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding, that this training is regularly updated and that training records are maintained.
- Schools contribute to multi-agency working in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) and meet their statutory duty to co-operate and will act in accordance with the arrangements published by their Safeguarding Partnership.
- That access is allowed to children's social care services from the host local authority, and where appropriate, a placing local authority, to conduct, or consider whether to conduct, a Section 17 (S17) or a Section 47 (S47) assessment.
- That children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, and recognise that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some children with SEND might be needed.
- That the school has an appropriate online filter system in place in order to safeguard children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material whilst accessing school technology and that the school does all they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's IT system.
- That online access is routinely and rigorously monitored by all staff in addition to the monitoring that is carried out to check that the school's filtering system is working and fit for purpose.
- That the DSL is a member of the School Leadership Team (SLT), is adequately trained to carry out their role and is provided with adequate time to fulfil their role. Furthermore, the governing body is responsible for ensuring that the role of the DSL is explicit in the individual's job description and that their job description is in line with KCSIE 2024 Annex C.
- This policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and updated if needed and made available publicly via the school website.



In order to carry out their role, the Trust board is responsible for ensuring that they understand the following:

- Their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty) specifically those outlined in KCSIE 2024 para 84-91. All governors are responsible for reading and ensuring that para 84-91 of KCSIE 2024 are adhered to.
- The obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), and the duty to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. All governors are responsible for reading and ensuring that para 92-93 and 114-122 of KCSIE 2024 are adhered to.

The Chair of the Trust board is responsible for receiving concerns/allegations about the CEO and agreeing any appropriate course of action for investigation. This includes liaison with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if the matter meets the criteria for being considered as an allegation.

The CEO of the Trust is responsible for receiving concerns/allegations about any member of the Central Team and agreeing any appropriate course of action for investigation. This includes liaison with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if the matter meets the criteria for being considered as an allegation.

b. Local governing bodies (school committees)

Governors on the school committee will review the school-specific elements of the policy. They will also:

- Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of the policy.
- Appoint a member of each school committee to act as the governor responsible for safeguarding, to liaise with the school DSL on local safeguarding issues and report to the safeguarding trustee.

Additionally, the Chair of the School Committee is responsible for receiving concerns/allegations about the Headteacher or Head of School and agreeing any appropriate course of action for investigation. This includes liaison with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if the matter meets the criteria for being considered as an allegation.

c) The Headteacher/Head of School

The Headteacher will support staff and governors to understand their individual roles and responsibilities by ensuring that:

- All safeguarding related policies and procedures approved by the Trust Board are fully implemented and followed by all staff, pupils, and visitors.
- They liaise with the LADO and partner agencies in the event of allegations being made against a member of staff or volunteer other than themselves (this role sits with the Chair of the School Committee in the event of an allegation being made against themselves).
- They ensure all staff (including themselves) receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated.
- They provide adequate support and resources for the DSL to be able to fulfil their role, including ensuring cover for this role should the named person be absent or away from school.
- The curriculum that is in place supports children to understand how to keep themselves safe, including online.
- They promote a strong, open and positive culture of safeguarding across the school.



d) The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputies

The roles and responsibilities for the DSL for this school are set out in full in KCSIE 2024 Annex C. Governors and the Headteacher/Head of School are responsible for ensuring that the DSL is given adequate resources to fulfil their role. However, it is also the responsibility of the DSL to share any concerns that they have if they feel that they do not have the capacity or capability to fulfil their role fully and effectively.

The DSL and Deputies are responsible for following the guidance as laid out in Annex C of KCSIE 2024 (pages 170-176), pertaining specifically to the following.

- Management of referrals
- Working with others
- Information sharing and managing the child protection file.
- Raising awareness
- Training, knowledge, and skills
- Providing support to staff
- Understanding the views of children
- Holding and sharing information

Furthermore, the DSL and Deputies must ensure that they make themselves available to respond to urgent safeguarding matters and for ensuring that they comply with statutory duties in line with Annex C.

e) All School staff and volunteers

All School staff are responsible for ensuring that they:

- **Understand that where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately and know how to make a referral in the unlikely event that they are unable to speak with the DSL or deputy DSL.**
- Understanding that 'it could happen here' and remain vigilant to signs and indicators.
- Know the systems in school which support safeguarding and ensuring that these are explained to them as part of staff induction. This includes the;
 - Child protection policy and recording systems
 - Behaviour policy
 - Staff behaviour policy/code of conduct
 - Safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and / or for prolonged periods.
 - Role of the DSL (including the identity of the DSL and deputies).
- Have read and confirmed that have received, read, and understood the school safeguarding policies and procedures for at least Part 1, Part 5, and Annex B of KCSIE 2024 (or Annex A, if appropriate).
- Have read and understood this policy and how it relates to KCSIE 2024.
- Are aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it.
- Are aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially Section 17 (S17) and section 47 (S47) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.
- Know what to do if a child tells them he/she/they is/are being abused, exploited, or neglected.
- Know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the DSL and children's social care. Staff never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.



- Are able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim is never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence, or sexual harassment. Nor is a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

- 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. This will not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. Staff will always determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.
- Understand that they have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- Are prepared and trained to identify children who may benefit from early help.

8. Staff Training

All staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including Prevent and online safety, which includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles, and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) at induction. This training is regularly refreshed. Induction and training is in line with any advice from the safeguarding partners.

All staff receive additional safeguarding and child protection training via weekly emails, discussion in staff meetings, e-bulletins, contextual updates and National College as required, and at least annually, to ensure that all staff have the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training is updated at least every two years. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) also undertake enhanced Prevent training and Operation Encompass training.

A safeguarding training log is held in the school recording the training that has been undertaken by the DSL, all staff, volunteers, contractors and other third parties and governors. This log is monitored and updated regularly.

9. Opportunities to teach safeguarding

All schools within the Areté Learning Trust teach about safeguarding, including online safety and healthy relationships and recognise that effective education is tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse and children with special educational needs or disabilities.

The safeguarding curriculum is considered as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum, including covering relevant issues for schools through Relationships Education (for all primary pupils) / Relationships and Sex Education (for all secondary pupils) and Health Education. In teaching these subjects we commit to ensuring that we comply with statutory guidance.

We recognise that school plays a crucial role in preventative education, in the context of a whole-school approach that prepares pupils for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia and sexual violence/harassment. We have a clear set of values and standards, these are upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life. They are underpinned by the school's behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of effective PSHE delivered and reinforced throughout the whole Personal Development curriculum. Our programme is fully inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate (particularly when considering the needs of children with SEND and other vulnerabilities).



Where we invite external organisations and / or visitors to enrich our safeguarding curriculum, ensure that we review the educational value and age appropriateness of what they will deliver.

Our programme tackles safeguarding issues (at an age-appropriate stage) in line with KCSIE 2024 para 128-133.

10. Online Safety

All schools within the Areté Learning Trust have an effective whole school approach to online safety which includes ensuring an understanding of:

- Roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.
- Educating pupils, students, and staff in their use of technology in line with the taught safeguarding curriculum (outlined above) and ensuring that staff understand the four areas of risk for online safety outlined in para 135 of KCSIE 2024.
- Mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

All schools within the Areté Learning Trust are committed to considering how online safety is reflected in:

- all relevant policies
- the planning of the curriculum
- staff training
- the roles and responsibilities of the DSL and all staff
- Information and guidance provided to parents.

11. Use of Mobile and Smart Technology in School

All schools within the Areté Learning Trust recognise the importance of having clear policies, for both adults and children, on the use of mobile devices and smart technology (mobile phones, cameras and smart devices, including smart watches and fitness watches) to safeguard our pupils.

We carefully consider how these devices and technology are managed on our premises and therefore our school policies include the use of Mobile devices/Smart Technology [Acceptable Use Policy \(Staff\) June 2023.pdf](#) [Pupil Acceptable Use Policy June 2023.pdf](#) (add link to any other relevant policy- e.g behaviour policy).

12. Remote Education

Where children are being asked to learn online at home, the school will use the information provided by DfE, NSPCC and PSHE Association to do so. Regular communications with parents and carers will be used to reinforce the importance of children being safe online and we will help them understand what systems school is using to filter and monitor online use. We will ensure that parents and carers are aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

13. Online Information Security, Filters, Access and Monitoring

All schools within the Areté Learning Trust have appropriate filters in place to reasonably limit exposure to risks from the use of school's technology. In applying appropriate controls, we consider the number of and age range of our children, those who are potentially at greater risk of harm and how often children are accessing technology. Filtering is monitored routinely to ensure that it is working in line with the factors outlined above. This is recorded and shared with governors. The appropriateness of any filters and monitoring systems will be informed in part, by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty.



Staff are trained to understand their role in ensuring that they remain vigilant to the risks associated with accessing technology within school and understand their role in monitoring use as part of their role as much as is reasonably possible.

The governing body commits to ensuring that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place, without “over blocking” to avoid unreasonable restrictions as to what children can access in order to use technology effectively to support their learning.

The trust board and governing body have reviewed the [Department of Education filtering and monitoring standards](#) and [Cyber Security standards for Schools and Colleges](#) and ensured that what needs to be done to meet this standard has been implemented.

The leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.

All schools within the Areté Learning Trust will apply the appropriate level of security protection and procedures in place, in order to safeguard our systems, staff and children. These arrangements will be reviewed periodically to ensure their effectiveness and to keep up to date with evolving cyber-crime technologies.

All schools within the Areté Learning Trust will carry out an annual review of their approach to online safety, including in relation to filtering and monitoring, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks our children face.

14. Artificial Intelligence (AI)

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

All schools within the Areté Learning Trust recognise that AI has many uses, including enhancing teaching and learning and in helping to protect and safeguard pupils. However, AI also has the potential to facilitate abuse (e.g., through bullying and grooming), allowing for false accusations to be made against other pupils or staff (e.g., through the use of ‘deepfakes’) and/or expose pupils to harmful content. We will respond to any misuse of AI in line with this policy and our behaviour policies.

All staff must be aware of the risks and capabilities of using AI tools and should carry out risk assessments for any new AI tool being used by the school.

15. Addressing Child-on-Child Abuse, including Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

All staff are trained to recognise that children are capable of abusing other children (including online). We expect all staff to read Part 5 of KCSIE 2024 to ensure that they have a secure understanding of the types of abuse that can occur, including harmful sexual behaviour between children.

We will address child-on-child abuse and minimise the risk of this occurring by:

- Implementing a curriculum that teaches children about healthy relationships and positive influences in an age-appropriate way and signposts children as to what to do if they think they are in an unhealthy relationship or need to address negative influences.
- Ensuring that there are systems in place for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously which are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible.
- Having clear processes of how allegations of child-on-child abuse will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with in line with Part 5 of KCSIE 2024.
- Having clear processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported.
- Training staff to recognise that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place (and probably is) and is simply not being reported.
- Making clear our zero-tolerance approach to abuse, in line with Part 5 of KCSIE 2024.



Recognising that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators, but that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

16. Identifying Children and Young People who may Need Early Help

Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. It is not an individual service, but a system of support delivered by local authorities and their partners working together and taking collective responsibility to provide the right provision in their area. Some early help is provided through "universal services", such as education and health services. They are universal services because they are available to all families, regardless of their needs.

Other early help services are coordinated by a local authority and/or their partners to address specific concerns within a family and can be described as targeted early help. Examples of these include parenting support, mental health support, youth services, youth offending teams and housing and employment services.

Early help may be appropriate for children and families who have several needs, or whose circumstances might make them more vulnerable. It is a voluntary approach, requiring the family's consent to receive support and services offered. These may be provided before and/or after statutory intervention (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023).

All schools within the Areté Learning Trust will support local organisations and agencies to work together to support families within the early help service and will:

- Identify children and families who would benefit from early help.
- Undertake an assessment of the need for early help which considers the needs of all members of the family.
- Ensure good ongoing communication, for example, through regular meetings between practitioners who are working with the family.
- Co-ordinate and/or provide support as part of a plan to improve outcomes. This plan will be designed together with the child and family and updated as and when the child and family needs change.
- Engage effectively with families and their family network, making use of family group decision-making to help meet the needs of the child.

17. Identifying Children and Young People who are Suffering or Likely to Suffer Significant Harm

Our staff understand that behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, unexplained and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can indicate that children are at an increased risk of harm.

Our requirements of staff are aligned to para 19-28 of KCSIE 2024, to ensure that:

- All staff understand Abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- All staff are aware of indicators of abuse, neglect or exploitation to assist in the early identification of abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- All staff are aware that harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing the ill treatment of others, for example, all forms of domestic abuse.
- If staff are unsure, they understand that they must speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or deputy.
- All staff are aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, therefore staff should always be vigilant and always raise any concerns with their Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) as per the procedures outlined in Appendix 1).



• All staff are aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments.

- All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation in situations outside their families.
- All staff are aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

In all cases, if staff are unsure, they must always speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) who will follow the child protection procedures outlined in Appendix 1. Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, the DSL will complete a referral to local authority children's social care team (and if appropriate the police).

18. Supporting Children and Young People Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm

We ensure that all staff understand that whilst all children should be protected, we also recognise that some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm, including those with a social worker. 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, we ensure that all staff understand the full impact of this and are trauma informed in their approach to all children.

Furthermore, for children potentially at risk of further harm, we commit to:

- Working with the Local Authority and other statutory and non-statutory partners to make decisions in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes.
- Taking swift and decisive action where there are early indicators of potential harm such as, responding to unauthorised absence or children absent from education where there are known safeguarding risks.
- Ensuring appropriate and swift sharing of information with partners in line with information sharing legislation.
- Promoting the welfare of our children potentially at greater risk of harm in a holistic way (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

19. Children Absent from Education

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from school or missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future.

This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

20. Elective Home Education (EHE)

We recognise that many home educated children have an overwhelmingly positive learning experience and expect the parents' decision to home educate be made with their child's best education at the heart of the decision. However, this is not the case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

We will inform the Local Authority of all deletions from their admission register when a child is taken off roll and will work with key professionals work to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible. Ideally, this will be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child.



We recognise that the school has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils and recognise 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 recognise also that poor mental health can pose a significant safeguarding risk for children.

Each school within the Areté Learning Trust has a Senior Mental Health Lead whose responsibility it is to develop a whole-school approach to supporting mental health and wellbeing by;

- developing a whole-school approach to support mental wellbeing and social and emotional wellbeing, which is tailored to the needs of our pupils.
- promoting good mental health and emotional wellbeing for pupils and staff.
- ensuring clear processes to report mental health concerns.
- ensuring clear systems and processes for identifying and managing mental health concerns including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems which are in line with local safeguarding procedures.
- delivering appropriate training.
- liaising with the DSL where a mental health problem could indicate that a pupil has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

22. Supporting Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children, Including Care Leavers

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe and they understand that the most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation. We will ensure that staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order) and the child's contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.

Furthermore, we commit to:

- Ensuring that staff are aware that a previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe.
- Sharing information swiftly with social workers, the virtual school, care leavers personal advisors and other key partners.

23. Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs, Disabilities (SEND) or Health Issues

All schools within the Areté Learning Trust recognise that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect or exploitation for some children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges.

Furthermore, we commit to:

- Training staff to understand the additional barriers that can exist for some children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions.
- Ensuring that we consider what additional and different measures we can put in place in order to support these children to recognise and communicate abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Adhering to the safeguarding guidance laid out in the SEND code of practice and the supporting pupils at school with medical conditions guidance.

24. Supporting Children who are Lesbian, Gay, Bi, or Trans (LGBTQ+)

Whilst the fact that a child or a young person who may be LGBTQ+ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, we recognise that children who are LGBTQ+ can be targeted by other children and may not have a trusted adult with whom they can be open.



Therefore, we commit to ensuring that our curriculum prepares children for life in modern Britain and to creating an inclusive environment where LGBTQ+ children feel safe to raise any concerns.

25. Alternative provision and Children at risk of exclusion

All schools within the Areté Learning Trust recognise that the cohort of pupils in Alternative Provision often have complex needs and we are aware of the additional risk of harm that our pupils may be vulnerable to. We will have regard for DfE statutory guidance for commissioners of Alternative Provision and will work to local protocols.

When considering use of exclusion or suspension all schools within the Areté Learning Trust are mindful of the exclusions and suspensions [guidance](#) and aware of the potential negative impact of exclusion on mental health and safeguarding risk of being excluded from school. In particular we will consider the preventative measures to exclusion outlined in para 32-52.

All schools within the Areté Learning Trust know it is their responsibility to quality assure Alternative Provision and ensure the safeguarding arrangements are in place for any pupil they place there, including attendance monitoring and follow up of any absence, and retain the duty of care as well as ensuring that the provision meet the pupil's needs.

26. The use of 'Reasonable Force' to Safeguard Children

'Reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed.' The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom. We will ensure that our staff are trained in de-escalation and positive handling to ensure that they are able to undertake this role safely.

The school does not have a 'no contact' policy as this can leave staff unable to fully support and protect their pupils and students. The school adopts policies, which allow and support the staff to make appropriate physical contact. The decision on whether or not to use reasonable force to control or restrain a child is down to the professional judgement of the staff concerned within the context of the law and should always depend on individual circumstances including consideration of whether the child has Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND), mental health or with a medical condition. These decisions will also align with our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

27. Safer recruitment

All schools within the Areté learning trust have full regard to the safer recruitment, selection and pre-employment vetting procedures as outlined in part three of KCSIE and the Areté learning Trust recruitment Policy [Recruitment Policy September 2023.pdf](#)

28. Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations about any Staff, Volunteers, or Contractors

All schools within the Areté Learning Trust have procedures in place to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) and provides training to staff so that they understand their responsibility to demonstrate professional curiosity and challenge.

Concerns and allegations that may meet the harm threshold will be addressed as set out in Section one of Part 4 of KCSIE and in line with local safeguarding procedures.

All allegations about staff, volunteers and/or contractors should be reported without delay to the Headteacher. Where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the headteacher, this should be reported directly to the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO).



Where the headteacher is the subject of an allegation, the report should be made directly to Chair of the School Committee.

Part 4 of KCSIE sets out the definition of an allegation:

Where it is alleged that a person who works or volunteers with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold against staff including supply staff and volunteers and contractors (known as Low Level Concerns) will be addressed as set out in Section 2 of Part Four of KCSIE and in line with local safeguarding procedures. All schools within the Areté Learning Trust will record any low-level concerns on the Low-Level Concern Log.

The Trust Board and governing body is aware that there is a legal duty in place to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned and failure to refer when the criteria are met is a criminal offence.

29. Adults Who Supervise Children on Work Experience

The Trust has detailed procedures to safeguard students undertaking work experience in accordance with the guidance in KCSIE 2024 and the Areté Work Experience Policy. [Work Experience Policy November 2023.pdf](#)

30. Use of School Premises for Non-School Related Activities

When any school within the Areté Learning Trust hires or rents out school facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) we will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

When services or activities are provided by the school, under the direct supervision or management of our school staff, this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply in relation to any safeguarding concerns or allegations.

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, we will seek assurance that the provider concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed) though aspects of this policy may not apply. Where this is the case, we will ensure that there are arrangements in place for the provider to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate as outlined in keeping children safe in out-of-school settings guidance 2023. [Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings guidance](#).

We will apply this approach regardless of whether or not there are children who attend any of these services whether or not the children are on our school roll or of a statutory school age. We will ensure that safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e., lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this will lead to termination of the agreement.

Where we receive an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using our school premises running activities for children, we will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO where appropriate.

31. External Monitoring of Safeguarding, including Ofsted Inspections

The Trust Board and governing body are aware of the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework and the guidance to inspectors on inspecting safeguarding and commit to ensuring that internal safeguarding procedures are in line with the requirements laid out within this guidance.



16. Policy References

This policy draws on the following legislation and guidance:

- The Education Act 2002 (sections [157](#) / [175](#))
- [Section 157](#) of the Education Act 2002 and [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#) applies to the proprietors of independent schools, including academies and city technology colleges
- [Sections 175](#) of the Education Act 2002 and [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#) applies to local education authorities and the governors of maintained schools and Further Education Colleges
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children HM Government 2023](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\) DfE 2024](#)
- School's duty under the Children Act 2004, to co-operate with other organisations and agencies.
- [What To Do If You Are Worried a Child is Being Abused 2015](#)
- Recommendations from national and local Serious Case Reviews
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
- Sections [26](#) & [29](#) of the Counter Terrorism Act 2015
- Sections [1](#) and [5B](#) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 & Section [70](#) of the Serious Crime Act 2015
- Section [3](#) of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- [SEND Code of Practice](#)

[North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership \(NYSCP\) Safeguarding Procedures and Practice Guidance](#)

Appendix 1: Child protection processes and procedures

Staff must immediately report:

- Any suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way which is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play;
- Any explanation given which appears inconsistent or suspicious;
- Any behaviours which give rise to suspicions that a child may have suffered harm (e.g., significant changes in behaviour, worrying drawings or play);
- Any concerns that a child may be suffering from inadequate care, ill treatment, or emotional maltreatment;
- Any concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse, neglect or exploitation;
- Any significant changes in a child's presentation, including non-attendance;
- Any hint or disclosure of abuse, neglect or exploitation received from the child, or from any other person, including disclosures of abuse, neglect or exploitation perpetrated by adults outside of the family or by other children or young people;
- Any concerns regarding person(s) who may pose a risk to children (e.g., staff in school or person living in a household with children present) including inappropriate behaviour e.g., inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images;
- Any concerns related to exploitation and serious crime, including knife crime;
- Any concerns relating to child-on-child abuse;
- Any concerns relating to youth produced sexual imagery (sexting); and
- Any concerns relating to a child's engagement with extremist groups or ideologies.

Responding to a Disclosure



All staff must maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and must always act in the best interests of the child.

Disclosures or information may be received from pupils, parents, or other members of the public. Such information cannot remain confidential and staff will immediately communicate what they have been told to the DSL and make a contemporaneous record on Cpoms. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss this with the DSL.

Principles

Staff must **not** investigate but will, wherever possible, elicit enough information to pass on to the DSL in order that they can make an informed decision of what to do next.

Staff should:

- Stay calm.
- Listen to and take seriously any disclosure or information.
- Try not to show signs of shock or disbelief.
- Do not express feelings or judgements.
- Allow the child to talk freely and avoid asking leading questions (TED questions are advised – tell me, explain and describe).
- Reassure the child and explain that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Never promise confidentiality, you have a duty to refer.
- Explain to the child, what you have to do next and who you have to contact.
- Record the information / disclosure immediately in the child's 'own words.'
- Record the facts and do not put your own judgement within the record. Always record who was present, date, time, the questions you asked and what the child has said in their own words.
- Report the incident to the DSL.
- Do not disclose this information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process.

If you discover that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) has taken place, or a pupil is at risk of FGM.

If a member of staff suspects a child is at risk of, has already undergone, or receives a disclosure about FGM, they must be careful to respond in an appropriate and sensitive manner. The member of staff should discuss it with the school's DSL and follow the school's policy and procedures. Efforts should be made to establish the full facts from the child before any action is taken.

School staff should not attempt to investigate the case themselves or attempt to speak to the child's parents, as this may place the child at an increased risk of harm.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) - Statutory duty to report under section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions.

In these circumstances, the DSL will support the teacher to report the matter to the Police. The DSL will complete the referral to MAST.

Action by the DSL (or Deputy DSL in their absence)

The following actions will be taken where there are concerns about significant harm to any child, including where there is already an open case to Children's Social Care, (e.g. Looked after Child).

Following any information raising concern, the DSL will consider:

- If they believe there is immediate risk of significant harm to a child and therefore should contact the police on 999
- If they should report a crime that does not need an emergency response by calling 101



- If there is an urgent safeguarding concern and they should call 0300 131 2 131
- Any urgent medical needs of the child
- Whether to make an enquiry to establish if the child is or has been subject of a Child Protection Plan
- Discussing the matter with other agencies involved with the family
- Consulting with appropriate persons for further guidance
- The child's wishes and any fears or concerns they may have

Then decide:

- Wherever possible, to talk to parents, unless to do so may place a child at risk of significant
- Whether to make a referral to statutory services as the child may be in need or because a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm and if this needs to be undertaken immediately

OR

- Not to make a referral at this stage
- If further monitoring is necessary and if so what this will look like

- If it would be appropriate to undertake an early help assessment and/or make a referral for other services.

Consent

It is good practice that agencies work in partnership with parents and carers and they are informed of your concerns with consent obtained for referrals. Consent is always required for referrals to services such as Early help Service, without it, the services available to the family may be limited.

Consent is not required should you believe informing the parents or carers would place a child at significant risk of harm. It would be legitimate to share information without consent where: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; and, if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

Where consent has not been obtained, and professionals feel that a referral is still warranted, they should submit a referral detailing their actions and inform parent and carers of their actions. In cases of suspected Child Sexual Abuse in the family and Fabricated or Induced Illness it is best practice NOT to inform the family of the referral.

All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented.

Recording and Monitoring

The importance of accurate record keeping cannot be overstated and is frequently highlighted as an area for improvement in both national and local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing using the school's agreed processes. Records should include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern completed on Cpoms in a timely manner. The record should be objective and include:
 - Statements, facts and observable things (what was seen/heard)
 - Relevant diagrams indicating position, size and colour of any injuries (not photographs)
 - Words child uses, (not translated into 'proper' words)
 - Non-verbal behaviours
 - A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
 - Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved (DSL)

Any original notes should be given to the DSL

The DSL should review all monitoring arrangements in the timescale and manner determined by circumstances and ensure that this is recorded and clearly understood by all concerned.

Professional Resolutions



Professional disagreements may arise between any agencies and resolving problems is an integral part of co-operation and joint working to safeguard children. As part of the shared responsibility for safeguarding children, all partners must be prepared to challenge each other if they feel that responses to concerns, assessments, or the way in which plans are implemented are not safeguarding the child and promoting their welfare.

Supporting the Child and Partnership with Parents and Carers

School recognises that the child's welfare is paramount, however good child protection practice and outcome relies on a positive, open and honest working partnership with parents and carers. Whilst we may, on occasion, need to make referrals without consultation with parents and carers, we will make every effort to maintain a positive and supportive working relationship with them whilst fulfilling our duties to protect any child.

We will provide a secure, caring, supportive and protective relationship for the child.

Children will be given a proper explanation (appropriate to age & understanding) of what action is being taken on their behalf and why.

We will endeavour always to preserve the privacy, dignity and right to confidentiality of the child, parents and carers. The DSL will determine which members of staff 'need to know' personal information and what they 'need to know' for the purpose of supporting and protecting the children.