

# Trust Policy Statement for Safeguarding, incorporating Child Protection



**Approved by:** Trust Board of Directors

**Reviewed:** September 2024

**Next review:** September 2025

## Overview

Each school within Synergy Multi Academy Trust maintains a local safeguarding policy. This outlines how each school delivers safeguarding at a local level and is reviewed on an annual basis by the Local Governing Body.

This document provides the safeguarding policy statement for the whole Trust, under which each local school is delivering their safeguarding policy and practice. This policy statement is also reviewed on an annual basis by the Board of Directors and disseminated to local schools. All schools within the Trust adopt the model safeguarding policy provided by the Norfolk County Council Safeguarding Team.

## Policy Consultation and Review

All local policies are made available on each school's website. This policy statement is made available on the Synergy Multi Academy Trust website. Hard copies of policies are also made available on request from each school's office. Parents and carers are also informed about safeguarding policy when their children join one of our schools and through school websites.

We recognise the expertise our staff build by undertaking safeguarding training and managing safeguarding concerns on a daily basis and we therefore invite staff to contribute to and shape this policy and associated safeguarding arrangements.

The policy is provided to all staff at induction alongside our Staff Code of Conduct, behaviour policy and the safeguarding response to those pupils who are absent from education. In addition, all staff are provided with Part One of the statutory guidance ['Keeping Children Safe in Education'](#), DfE (2023).

Local policies for safeguarding will be reviewed on an annual basis by each school's Local Governing Body.

## 1. PURPOSE AND AIMS

1.1 The purpose of the Trust's safeguarding policy is to ensure every child who is a registered pupil in one of our schools is safe and protected from harm. This means we will always work to:

- Protect children and young people in our schools from maltreatment
- Prevent impairment of our children's and young people's mental and physical health or development
- Ensure that children and young people in our schools grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Undertake that role so as to enable children and young people in our schools to have the best outcomes.

1.2 This policy will give clear direction to all staff including supply staff, volunteers, visitors and parents about expected behaviour and our legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in our schools.

1.3 Our schools fully recognise the contribution they can make to protect children from harm and supporting and promoting the welfare of all children who are registered pupils in one of our schools. The elements of our policy are prevention, protection and support.

1.4 We recognise that our safeguarding responsibilities are clearly linked to our responsibilities for ensuring that appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for children who are absent from school or who go missing from education, particularly for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions. The attendance leads in each school will regularly liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead in each school to discuss all persistently absent pupils, and those who go missing, to identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation, and to ensure that appropriate safeguarding responses have been put in place to reduce the risk of future harm.

1.5 This policy applies to all pupils, staff, parents, governors, volunteers and visitors.

## 2. OUR ETHOS

2.1 The child's welfare is of paramount importance. Our schools will establish and maintain an ethos where pupils feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and are safe. Children at our schools will be able to talk freely to any member of staff in their school if they are worried or concerned about something. All staff will reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. Victims will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment.

2.2 Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. We recognise that staff in our schools play a particularly important role as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children to prevent concerns from escalating. **All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where Safeguarding is concerned.** When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members must always act in the **best interests** of the child.

2.3 We ensure that safeguarding and child protection is at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. We operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

2.4 Where there is a safeguarding concern, the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. The systems we have in place are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.

2.5 All staff and regular visitors will, through training and induction, know how to recognise indicators of concern, how to respond to a disclosure from a child and how to record and report this information. We will not make promises to any child, and we will not keep secrets. Every child will know what the adult will have to do with any information they have chosen to disclose. All staff will be trained to recognise 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.

2.6 Throughout the broad and balanced curriculums delivered in our schools, we will provide activities and opportunities for children to develop the knowledge, values and skills they need to identify risks, including knowing when and how to ask for help for themselves and others to stay safe (this includes online). The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum) will cover relevant topics in an age and stage appropriate way, enabling pupils to learn about their rights and responsibilities to behave and stay safe in a variety of contexts on and offline. This will provide further reinforcement to help children identify risks, know when to seek support and develop the skills to ask for help from trustworthy, reliable sources.

Further information can be found in the DfE guidance '[Teaching online safety in school](#)' and '[Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education](#)'. This education is underpinned by each school's behaviour policy and pastoral support system.

2.7 At all times we will work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) (2018) and the [Norfolk Multi Agency Safeguarding Partnership arrangements](#).

2.8 As part of our responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, we will provide a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified. These may include if a child:

- Is disabled and has specific additional needs
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan)
- Has a mental health need
- Is a young carer
- Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- Is a privately fostered child
- Has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- Is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

2.9 We understand the importance of working in a way that adheres to the following legislation:

- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Public Sector Equality Duty.

This means we do not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics).

For further details, please see the safeguarding policy documents held by each school within our Trust. This includes:

- Roles and Responsibilities
- Training and Induction
- Procedures for Managing Concerns
- Specific Safeguarding Issues
- Recording and Information Sharing
- Working with Parents and Carers
- Child Protection Conferences
- Safer Recruitment
- Safer Working Practice
- Managing Allegations and Concerns
- Use of premises for non-school/college activities
- Other relevant policies
- Statutory Framework
- Appendices:
  1. Recording form for reporting concerns
  2. Induction checklist for staff and volunteers
  3. Local Safeguarding Procedures
  4. Advice for schools, colleges and alternative education providers where there are concerns about an adult who works within the setting.

### **3. MONITORING**

Local Governing Boards will monitor compliance with this policy through safeguarding reports to governors and the safeguarding compliance checklist for governors.

The Trust Board will appoint a Director to act as the Safeguarding Lead. This is Gill Pegg.

The Trust Board will monitor compliance with this policy through reports to the Audit and Risk Committee, drawing on the following:

- Monitoring of safeguarding reports to Local Governing Boards on GovernorHub
- Compliance checklists
- CPOMS StaffSafe monitoring
- SCR Monitoring
- External Safeguarding Audits
- Ofsted reports.