



SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY PART 1 SEPT 25

Version 3.1

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Contents

Aims	3
Legislation and Statutory Guidance	3
Equality Statement.....	3
Definitions	3
Roles and Responsibilities	4
Recognising Abuse and Taking Action	8
Recording and Reporting	8
Training	8
Confidentiality, Consent and Anonymity	9
Safer Recruitment	10
Complaints and Concerns.....	10
Appendix A.....	10
Appendix B.....	11

Aims

Esteem Multi Academy Trust (EMAT) aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding.
- Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues.

Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#), and the [Governance Handbook for Academies is the Academy Trust Governance Guide](#). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners. Please see Appendix A for further associated legislation.

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

Equality Statement

Some children are at an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

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

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm.

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

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams. This also includes pseudo-images that are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

Pupils includes all young people who access education at an Esteem Academy.

The following 3 **safeguarding partners** are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- The local authority (LA)
- A clinical commissioning group for an area within the LA

- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

In some localities they are referred to as a Safeguarding Partnership and in others a Safeguarding Board.

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

Alleged perpetrator(s) and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the academy and is consistent with the procedures of the 3 safeguarding partners in the locality of the academy. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

The DSL is a member of the academy senior leadership team and takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the academy.

The academy plays a crucial role in preventative education. This is in the context of a whole-school approach to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain, and a culture of zero tolerance of sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia and sexual violence/harassment. This will be underpinned by our academies:

- Behaviour policy.
- Pastoral support system.
- Planned program of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:
 - Healthy and respectful relationships.
 - Boundaries and consent.
 - Stereotyping, prejudice and equality.
 - Body confidence and self-esteem.
 - How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour).
 - The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honor-based violence such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) and how to access support.
 - What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they're always unacceptable.

All staff will:

identify and recognise all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation and shall be alert to the potential need for support for a child who

- Is disabled
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education health and care (EHC) plan)
- Is a young carer
- Is bereaved

- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including being affected by gangs and county lines and organised crime groups and/or serious violence, including knife crime
 - Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or home
 - Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
 - Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
 - Is viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online
 - Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
 - Is misusing drugs or alcohol
 - Is suffering from mental ill health
 - Has returned home to their family from care
 - Is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage
 - Is a privately fostered child
 - Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending
 - Is missing education, or persistently absent from school, or not in receipt of full-time education
 - Has experienced multiple suspensions and is at risk of, or has been permanently excluded
- Read and understand part 1 and annex A of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and review this guidance at least annually.
 - Sign a declaration or completed an assessment at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed / understood the guidance. This will be signed off and stored on My Concern or the academy training records.
 - Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents. This includes making parents aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online).
 - Provide a safe space for pupils who are LGB and gender questioning to speak out and share their concerns.
 - Be aware of systems which support safeguarding, including this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, The Academy Safeguarding Procedures, Staff Professional Expectations Framework, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and the deputy/deputies (DDSL's), the Pupil Behaviour Policy and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.
 - Be aware of the early help assessment process and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment.
 - Be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play.
 - Be aware of what to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals.
 - Understand the signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, being at risk of becoming involved with or supporting terrorism and

serious violence (including that linked to county lines). Understand the importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

- Understand the fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online.
- Understand the fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT) can be targeted by other children.
- Know what to look for to identify children who need help or protection.
- Understand their responsibility to raise concerns about staff and understand the process to do this, including about the headteacher

Academy Designated Safeguarding Lead will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters.
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so.
- Contribute to the assessment of children.
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel Program, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly
- Have a clear understanding of harmful sexual behaviour, the assessment of the risk and support required to the alleged perpetrator, victim and witnesses.
- Ensure the headteacher is informed of any issues.
- Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate.
- Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children's social care colleagues to prepare the school's policies.
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support.
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search.
- Understand the filtering and monitoring systems used and ensure that they are effective.

The full responsibilities of the DSL and deputy/deputies are set out in their job description.

The Governing Board will:

- Be aware of the contents of and the importance of Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety.
- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
- Be aware of this Trust policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.
- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- Appoint a senior board level link governor to monitor the effectiveness of this policy and the academy procedures in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL.
- Ensure the DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support.
- Ensure online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies.
- Review the DfEs standards [filtering and monitoring standards](#) and will ensuring that the filtering and monitoring systems used are safeguarding pupils without negatively impacting access to educational resources
- Ensure the leadership team and relevant staff are aware of and understand the IT filters and monitoring systems in place, manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns.

- Ensure the school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors).
- Ensure that the academy procedures reflect that children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised.

Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll) the Governing Board will:

- Seek assurance, following the guidance on [keeping children safe in out-of-school settings](#) that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed
- Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate
- Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply

The chair of governors will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate. Support and guidance will be provided by members of Esteem Central Team. Please refer to Esteem Managing Allegations and Low-Level Concerns Statement

The Trustees will:

- Ensure there is a link Safeguarding Trustee appointed who works alongside the Director or Safeguarding and offers support and challenge to them.
- Safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Have regard to any statutory guidance on safeguarding issued by the Secretary of State.
- Ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff, volunteers, contractors and proprietors.

The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction and ensuring that they all understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect.
- Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the school and via the school website.
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent.
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, and updating the content of the training regularly.
- Appointing a 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns and thresholds for escalation to LADO, social care and / or the police; they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this.

Early years providers and primary schools

- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable

Early years providers

- Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person

Recognising Abuse and Taking Action

Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures for each academy in the event of a safeguarding concern. Individual Academy Procedures have been developed to meet the needs of their pupils, families and community whilst ensuring they are compliant with Keeping Children Safe in Education and their Local Safeguarding Board / Partnership.

Recording and Reporting

All Esteem academies use My Concern to record any safeguarding concerns about young people.

Esteem Director of Safeguarding can access these records for QA purposes and uses an additional system to monitor and track trends and safeguarding data from across the Trust.

All teachers at Esteem academies understand their mandatory duty to refer directly any concerns relating to Female Genital Mutilation.

See Appendix B for Esteem Safeguarding Recording and Reporting Guidance.

Training

All Staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including on whistle-blowing procedures and online safety, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse, exploitation or neglect.

This training will be regularly updated and will:

- Be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning
- Be in line with advice from the 3 safeguarding partners
- Include online safety, including an understanding of the expectations, roles and responsibilities for staff around filtering and monitoring
- Have regard to the Teachers' Standards to support the expectation that all teachers:
 - Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment
 - Have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils

All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of becoming involved with or supporting terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideas.

Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including on online safety, as required but at least annually (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings).

Contractors who are provided through a private finance initiative (PFI) or similar contract will also receive safeguarding training.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads will undertake child protection and safeguarding training designed for those leading in this area at least every 2 years.

In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).

They will also undertake Prevent awareness training and be able to demonstrate an understanding of FGM, HBV, VAWAG, online safety risks and any contextual safeguarding risks pertinent to their academy.

Governors and Trustees receive training about safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) at induction, which is regularly updated. This is to make sure that they:

- Have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge.
- Can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school / trust to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding.

As the chair of governors may be required to act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, they receive training in managing allegations for this purpose. Support and guidance will be provided by members of Esteem Central Team.

Confidentiality, Consent and Anonymity

Please refer to Esteem MAT Confidentiality Policy

All staff must be aware that:

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.
- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children.
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.
- If they need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.
- They should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests.
- If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:
 - There's no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies.
 - The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children.
 - The DSL should consider that:
 - Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
 - The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care
 - Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains.

All staff will:

- Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system.
- Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved.
- Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumors and exposing victims' identities.

The government's [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#) includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information

Safer Recruitment

At least 1 person conducting any interview for any post will have undertaken safer recruitment training and will have been involved in the shortlisting process. Online checks will be completed for all candidates proceeding to interview. All interviews will have a safeguarding related question.

All academies work within the Esteem Recruitment Policy, which includes Safer Recruitment and DBS checks.

Complaints and Concerns

Complaints / concerns raised against academy staff, including the central team, trustees and members.

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for managing allegations of abuse made against staff. All allegations against staff, including low level concerns are recorded on Confide. Allegations against the headteacher are reported to the Esteem CEO.

Please refer to:

- Esteem Whistleblowing Policy
- Esteem Managing Allegations and Low-Level Concerns Statement
- Esteem Code of Conduct
- Esteem Disciplinary Policy
- Esteem Grievance Policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage (paragraph 3.75).

Appendix A

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least 1 person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children

- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment
- [The Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination
- Part 3 of the schedule to the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school

For Our Academies with Pupils under 8 years old.

- The [Childcare \(Disqualification\) and Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) \(Extended Entitlement\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018](#) and [Childcare Act 2006](#), which set out who is disqualified from working with children

For Our Early Years providers

- This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#)

Appendix B

SAFEGUARDING REPORTING AND RECORDING GUIDANCE

Disclosures and Concerns

Disclosure is the process by which a child will let someone know that abuse is taking place. This may not happen all in one go and may be a slow process that takes place over a long period of time.

Children may disclose abuse in one or more of several different methods, each of which is likely to be very difficult for them and so when working with children, it is important to know how to support a child through what is likely to be a distressing time.

The types of disclosures:

- **Direct disclosure:** this is a specific statement made by a child about the abuse that is happening to them.
- **Indirect disclosure:** one or more ambiguous statements, which imply that something is wrong.
- **Behavioural disclosure:** deliberate or inadvertent behaviour that indicates that something is wrong.
- **Non-verbal disclosure:** writing letters, drawing pictures or trying to communicate in any other way than verbal to let someone know that something is wrong.

Sometimes, a partial disclosure of abuse will take place, but this does not mean that it should be taken less seriously than a full disclosure.

Noticing changes in a child's presentation, mood, behaviour and wellbeing is also important in building a picture of what life is like for that young person. Your Designated safeguarding Lead is skilled at reviewing all the information that you share and making an informed decision on thresholds and next steps.

Recording Disclosures and Concerns

What to do...

- ✓ Listen fully, be supportive, take the child seriously.
- ✓ Let the child lead the conversation.
- ✓ Reassure the child it's not their fault and they'll be kept safe.
- ✗ **Don't** give the child the impression they're creating a problem by telling you about abuse.
- ✓ Ask open questions.
- ✓ Reflect back what they're saying.
- ✓ Be honest that you can't keep it confidential. Be clear about what you'll do next.
- ✗ **Don't** talk to the alleged abuser or investigate yourself.
- ✗ **Don't** view any images yourself

How to write a robust safeguarding report

Esteem academies use My Concern to record any concerns about children. This system is only for logging concerns about children and not about staff behaviours.

My Concern ensures the name, address and date of birth of the child is populated for you.

- ✓ Think who, what, when and where.

✓ Include as much detail as possible – ensure you clearly record the child’s words. If other parties were present when the disclosure was shared, or the concern was noted, make this clear in the report. Include any facts about the circumstances that you feel may be relevant.

✓ If you refer to a member of staff or another child, ensure you use their full name in the first instance (initials are fine after) and ensure you include what their role is (i.e., pupil in class, teacher)

✓ Stick to the facts. If there is an injury, you must fully describe it – location, size, shape, colour.

✗ **DO NOT TAKE A PHOTOGRAPH** ✗

✓ Make the report as soon as possible. This must be recorded in the first person on My Concern, but if the concern is significant and requires an immediate response, you must share this with the DSL immediately. If there is a delay in making the report, this must be indicated with an explanation on My Concern

✓ Ensure that the language you use is professional and accessible to non-specialists.

Consider how the report would be perceived by a parent but DO NOT dilute the severity of the concern you are raising.

✗ **Don’t** use terms or phrases that are open to interpretation i.e., kicking off, having a tantrum, messing around.

If in doubt speak to someone in your school Safeguarding Team

If your Safeguarding Lead has concerns about the standard, accuracy or timing of your safeguarding reporting – they will discuss this with you.

**Safeguarding
is everyone's
responsibility**