

SAFEGUARDING POLICY 2023-24

Policy Information:

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Policy owner:	Nicola Redhead	Date of next review:	

Updates made since the last review:

Review date:	Changes made:	By whom:
12.09.2023	Update from KCSIE, DDSL added,	Nicola Redhead – Headteacher Elysha Hughes- PW&EL

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Local Academy Council on an annual basis (or sooner if required).

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Key contacts – specific safeguarding roles in school

	Name	Contact details
Nominated Safeguarding LAC member	TBA	TBA
Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection (DSL) & SPOC for PRE	Nicola Redhead -Headteacher	n.redhead@heights.fet.ac
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) & Designated Teacher for CIC	Louise Thomas – Deputy Headteacher	l.thomas@heights.fet.ac
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Elysha Hughes- PE&WL	e.hughes@heights.fet.ac
Forward Education Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Debbie Bailey	d.bailey@fet.ac
Forward Education Trust Safeguarding Lead	Cavelle Burris	c.burris@fet.ac
LADO Service	Lesley Hudson	07795 128 638 lado@solihull.gov.uk The LADO service is based at: Child Protection and Review Unit Bluebell Centre Chelmsley Wood B37 5TN LADO referrals: should be made via Telephone: 0121 788 4310 Secure email: cpru@solihull.gcsx.gov.uk (please put 'LADO referral' in subject line)
Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)		The MASH Team - 0121 788 4333 opt 2
Emergency Duty Team (EDT)		0121 605 6060
School Nurse Service		0121 301 4550
CAHMS		0121 301 2730
Solihull Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership (LSCP)		Website – www.solihullscp.co.uk Email – lscp@solihull.gov.uk Tel: 0121 788 4325
West Midlands Police	Solihull Partnerships Team PC Naiyer Khan, Young Persons Officer	Emergency 999 Non-emergency 111 101 Extension 891 3040 naiyer.khan@westmidlands.police.uk
NSPCC		Helpline 0800 800 5000 help@nspcc.org.uk Whistleblowing helpline 0800 028 0285
National Counter Terrorism Helpline		0800 789 321 counter.extremism@education.gov

The Headteacher, Nicola Redhead, leads on safer recruitment work. (In the event of the recruitment of a headteacher, The Trust CEO will lead the recruitment, in conjunction with the Local Academy Council Chair and Trustees, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation.)

The **case manager for dealing with allegations of abuse made against school staff members** is the headteacher and should be contacted directly and immediately in the event of a concern. The managing allegations policy details procedures.

The **case manager for dealing with allegations against the headteacher** is Debbie Bailey, the Trust Director of Education/ Trust DSL who should be contacted directly and immediately in the event of a concern. The managing allegations policy details procedures.

The **Personal, Social and Health Education** lead is Nicola Redhead- HT and DSL and Louise Thomas- DHT and DDSL

The **Medicines in school lead** is Joanne Skinner- Office Manager

The **First Aid** lead is Joanne Skinner- Office Manager.

The **Online safety** lead is Elysha Hughes- PW&EL and DDSL with support from Nicola Redhead- HT and DSL

The **Preventing radicalisation** lead is Nicola Redhead- HT/DSL (SPOC)

The **Behaviour and anti-bullying** lead is Elysha Hughes- PW&EL and DDSL

The **Equality and Diversity** lead is Louise Thomas- DHT and DDSL

The **Health and Safety** lead is Nicola Redhead- HT and DSL

The **Environmental Health** (particularly food hygiene) lead is Louise Thomas- DHT and DDSL

The **Educational Visits** lead is Nicola Redhead- HT and DSL

The **Attendance** lead is Elysha Hughes- PW&EL and DDSL

The **Whistleblowing** lead is Nicola Redhead- HT and DSL

In the event of an emergency, please dial 999 immediately.

Part 1: Safeguarding Policy

1.1 Introduction

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. The policy applies to all children between the ages of 0-18 whose care and education comes within the remit of The Heights Academy. All children regardless of age, gender, race, ability, sexuality, religion, culture or language have a right to be protected from harm.

In particular, for pupils in a Special School like The Heights Academy, safeguarding is absolutely paramount. The Heights Academy is a special school for children who have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) and associated Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. Our pupils may have communication difficulties and so face additional barriers when it comes to sharing their worries or concerns. The additional needs of children with SEND could mean that they are more vulnerable to abuse and/or speak out if something isn't right. Some children may be vulnerable because they:

- have additional communication needs
- they do not understand that what is happening to them is abuse
- need intimate care or are isolated from others
- are dependent on adults for care
- adults may mistake the indicators of abuse for signs of a child's disability.

It is vital that everyone who works with children with SEND understands how to protect them against people who might take advantage of their increased vulnerability. At The Heights Academy we fully understand the role we have to play in this. Our focus is to create as calm, safe and secure of an environment for our diverse and, in many cases vulnerable, pupil population.

1.2 Policy Statement

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play. Children have a right to feel safe and secure and cannot learn effectively unless they do so.

The welfare of our pupils is our paramount concern. Our school is a community and we all (staff, LAC members, parents, families and pupils) have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure. This includes maintaining an attitude of "it could happen here" where safeguarding is concerned.

At The Heights Academy we believe that:

- All children/young people have the right to be protected from harm.
- Children/young people need to be safe and to feel safe in school.

- Children/young people need support that matches their individual needs, including those who may have experienced abuse.
- All children/young people have the right to speak freely and voice their values and beliefs.
- All children/young people must be encouraged to respect each other's values and support each other.
- All children/young people have the right to be supported to meet their emotional, and social needs as well as their educational needs – a happy, healthy, sociable child/young person will achieve better educationally.

The Heights Academy can and does contribute to the prevention of abuse, victimisation, bullying (including homophobic, bi-phobic, trans-phobic and cyberbullying), exploitation, extreme behaviours, discriminatory views and risk-taking behaviours.

All staff and visitors have an important role to play in safeguarding children and protecting them from abuse.

We make every effort to provide a safe and welcoming environment, underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, able to talk and believe they are being listened to.

Sometimes we may need to share information in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a pupils' welfare. We will ensure that our concerns are discussed with the pupils' parents/carers first unless we have a reason to believe that such a move would be contrary to the pupils.

1.2.1 Aims:

- To identify key roles and responsibilities for all staff in relation to safeguarding and emphasise the need for good levels of communication between ALL members of staff.
- To provide staff with the framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and in doing so ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities and clear expectations on how this should be adhered to. This demonstrates our commitment to safeguarding; ensuring consistency in practice across the school and links with other relevant policies to safeguard the general welfare of children; (including managing allegations and safer recruitment). This includes appropriate work around safeguarding in the curriculum.
- To raise awareness of how we expect all staff and volunteers to respond in the event of a concern about a child or young person, including their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse, in order to safeguard children and young people.
- To ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the education provision prospectus. This policy is made available to parents on request and published on the education provider name website.

1.2.2 Purpose

The Heights Academy fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children and child protection.

Our policy applies to all staff, volunteers, Local Academy Council members and visitors in the school.

We will:

- Ensure we practice safe recruitment in line with national legislation by using at least one suitably trained recruiter on all interview panels and by checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children and ensuring any unsuitable behaviour is reported and managed using the Allegations Management procedures including online checks for shortlisted candidates.
- Raise awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep themselves safe.
- Develop and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Support pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establish a safe environment in which pupils can learn and develop.
- We recognise that because of the day-to-day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse.

The Heights Academy will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities across the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

1.2.3 Statutory Framework

In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, we will act in accordance with the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- The Children Act 1989 & 2004
- The Education Act 2002 (section 175)
- The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005
- Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff (DfE, 2011)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, July 2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2023)
- 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
- Procedures set out by the Solihull Safeguarding Children Board.

1.3 Vulnerable Pupils

The Heights Academy recognises the importance of identifying vulnerable pupils that may be at risk of abuse, or that may have additional support needs. We recognise that a pupils may be classed as vulnerable for a variety of reasons, and this may not be permanent. Specifically, we realise that as a specialist provision, with our all our pupils having an EHCP with a diagnosis of autism, a higher-than-average percentage of our pupils may be from these vulnerable groups (although not exclusively):

- Pupils with Special Educational Needs
- Pupils with emotional/behavioural/attachment disorders
- Looked after children and those subject to private fostering arrangements
- Pupils missing education/school avoiders/low attendance
- Pupils dealing with issues around domestic abuse
- Pupils who have experienced or are currently experiencing bereavement
- Pupils in receipt of FSM or PPG
- Pupils at risk from neglect or physical, sexual and emotional abuse
- Pupils with disabilities
- Pupils at risk from and issues around bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying
- Pupils at risk of child on child abuse
- Pupils at risk from up skirting and down-blousing
- Pupils at risk from the impact of new technologies on sexual behaviour, for example sexting
- Female pupils at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Pupils at risk of being drawn into terrorism and radicalisation
- Pupils at risk of exploitation, sexual exploitation and trafficking
- Pupils at risk of honour based violence or forced marriage
- Pupils at risk of serious violent crime
- Pupils affected by substance misuse (drugs, alcohol)
- Pupils affected by mental health issues

- Pupils affected by faith abuse
- Pupils affected by gender-based violence or violence against women and girls
- Pupils affected by fabricated or induced illness
- Pupils affected by crime
- Pupils affected by gang activity
- Pupils affected by issues relating to gender identity or sexuality (LGBT).

The Heights Academy will recognise vulnerable pupils and support them through:

- a) The curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation
- b) The Heights Academy ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all a sense of being respected and valued.
- c) The implementation of The Heights Academy's behaviour management policies
- d) The consistent upholding of our Pupils Code of Conduct
- e) Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies that support the pupils and their families
- f) A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents and carers, whenever it is in the pupils' best interest to do so
- g) The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in safeguarding situations
- h) Recognition that, statistically, pupils with disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse so our staff will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse
- i) Recognition that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug abuse or alcohol abuse, individuals may also be vulnerable and in need of support and/or protection.

1.4 Responsibility and Accountability

1.4.1 Local Academy Council

The **Local Academy Council (LAC)** is collectively responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within the school's ethos and reflected in the school's day to day practice.

The Local Academy Council have regard to the KCSIE 2023 guidance and will ensure The Heights Academy policies, procedures and training is effective and complies with the law at all times.

The Heights Academy has a nominated LAC member for safeguarding, and they will support the DSL and have oversight in ensuring that we have an effective policy which interlinks with other related policies, that locally agreed procedures are in place and being followed, and that the policies are reviewed at least annually and when required.

All members of the Local Academy Council receive appropriate safeguarding training at induction and training is updated as required.

The Local Academy Council (LAC) is responsible for:

- Ensuring there is a nominated safeguarding LAC member.
- Liaising with the Headteacher and/or designated staff over safeguarding matters. This is a strategic role rather than operational; LAC members will not be involved in concerns about individual pupils.
- Supporting the Headteacher and staff (such as the DSL) in their role by ensuring the allocation of funding and resource is sufficient to meet the current safeguarding activity, through a safeguarding action plan.
- Ensuring school leaders report to the Local Academy Council at least annually. This should include feedback on self-evaluation activity and the local authority annual review of safeguarding.
- Ensure the Local Academy Council receive safeguarding training, and the safeguarding LAC member attends appropriate training in order to guide LAC members on their strategic responsibilities in order to provide appropriate challenge and support for any action to progress areas of weakness or development in the education provision's safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensuring the school has effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place, including a child protection policy and a staff behaviour policy.
- Ensuring that training is undertaken at the required frequency by all staff and LAC members.
- Ensuring the school has a broad and balanced curriculum that incorporates safeguarding.
- Ensuring the school complies with relevant legislation and local guidance around safeguarding.
- Ensuring that there are clear lines of accountability within the school's leadership for safeguarding.
- Under no circumstances should the schools LAC members or trustees be given details of individual cases. LAC members may, however, be provided with a report outlining the number of cases dealt with and other statistics which do not identify individual children.

1.4.2 Staff

All staff members, LAC members, volunteers and external providers:

- Are subject to Safer Recruitment processes and checks in relation to their role in the education provision.
- Are expected to behave in accordance with the code of conduct and act on any breach of the code of conduct or any concern about a member of staff or volunteer.
- Should know how to recognise, respond and take appropriate and timely action to a safeguarding concern.

The *Teacher Standards 2012* state that teachers, including Headteachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

All staff:

- a) Have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

- b) All staff have a responsibility to identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.
- c) All staff then have a responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed.

1.4.3 Trust Safeguarding Lead & DSL

The Trust Safeguarding Lead and DSL will provide strategic leadership within the Trust for all aspects of safeguarding children and young people.

The Trust Safeguarding Lead will:

- ensure that all policies and procedures are reviewed and updated in line with national and local requirements and appropriate changes disseminated to all schools;
- ensure that there are systems in place to support the effective management of safeguarding, especially the role of DSLs, training for all staff and supervision as appropriate
- ensure that there is someone available to school Headteachers who can offer appropriate advice and support with safeguarding concerns, especially when they are complex and/or relate to allegations against staff
- ensure quality assurance processes are in place and oversee the information they produce to measure the progress and effectiveness of existing safeguarding frameworks
- produce information to the Trust Board in relation to Safeguarding in order to ensure that the Board can demonstrate that it is discharging its safeguarding obligations appropriately
- Support school headteachers with the management of allegations made against adults, staff or volunteers within the School community

1.5 Record-keeping

We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded.

Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child using Child Protection Online Monitoring System (CPOMS). If staff are in any doubt about whether to record something, they will discuss it with the DSL.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome

1.6 Staff Induction, Training and Development

1.6.1 All Staff Training and Induction

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including

- child protection training

- basic and health and safety training
- familiarisation with the suite of safeguarding policies including the child protection policy
- staff code of conduct,
- chapter one of Keeping Children Safe In Education (DfE 2023)
- whistle-blowing procedures
- online safety.

This training is to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect and how to report their concerns. Staff will also be trained on what to do if a child makes a disclosure of abuse, how to respond to and record the disclosure.

This training and induction is proportionate to their role and responsibilities.

Long Term Supply

All supply and agency staff will be given induction advice, training, and resources. In accordance with statutory guidelines, all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, will be provided with a first day induction training to include:

1. The school's Safeguarding Policy indicating the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and a copy of Part One/Annexe A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
2. Health and Safety Information
3. The Staff Code of Conduct
4. Behaviour recording information
5. Access to profiles of pupils that staff will be working with.

All other Adults including Short Term Supply/Work Experience / volunteers

All other adults working in school will complete the first day induction checklist and adhere to the school safeguarding policy. Staff are expected to adhere to the school's code of conduct. Expectations are made clear at the start of the day or on first arrival to the school. Staff must complete the induction checklist before starting work.

1.6.2 Professional Development and Training

A programme of regular professional development and training is provided to Directors and staff at every level. This ensures everyone has the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role and responsibilities safely and with confidence.

Across the Trust and its schools all staff are aware of the systems, policies and procedures used to support child protection and safeguarding. These are explained as part of staff induction and reviewed with all staff at the start of each academic year.

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
- 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 being drawn into 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).

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

1.6.3 DSL and Deputy DSL Training

The DSL and deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training 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.

Part 2: Suite of Safeguarding Policies and Procedures

2.1 Equality and Diversity

Our equality and diversity policy emphasises our inclusive approach and sets clear expectations around equality and diversity.

We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity for every pupil and equality of access to learning through a curriculum that is free from discrimination, prejudice, harm, stereotyping, harassment, victimisation, and any other form of discrimination, whilst raising awareness of these. This is reflected in:

- The organisation of learning
- Our curriculum
- Our approach to teaching and learning
- How we treat each other, including how we manage behaviour

This commitment is in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 which offers legal protection based on a number of characteristics. These protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Any form of behaviour that discriminates against individuals or groups of people based on these protected characteristics will not be tolerated. We recognise that other people experience discrimination or disadvantage because of other characteristics and factors (including political beliefs, trade union status, criminal record, employment status, social class, home address, culture, language, HIV status, or responsibility for dependents) and will work to minimise discrimination on these basis.

2.2 Behaviour and Anti-Bullying

All staff are familiar with our behaviour and anti-bullying policy. This is issued at induction and revisited periodically. Our behaviour and anti-bullying policies provide clear guidance to staff, pupils and parents on rewarding positive behaviour and the use of sanctions for inappropriate behaviour.

2.3 Child Protection

Our separate child protection policy sets out the education provision's approach to dealing with any child protection concerns. It includes specific safeguarding issues including sexual violence and sexual harassment, contextual safeguarding, children missing from education (which includes attendance), child sexual exploitation, honour based violence (including female genital mutilation and forced marriage), preventing radicalisation, domestic abuse, substance misuse (drugs and alcohol), radicalisation and extremism, gangs, serious violence including youth violence (including knife crime) and child on child abuse.

2.4 Relationships and Sex Education

Our Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy outlines the school approach to teaching sex and relationships education across the school and meeting the statutory responsibilities in this area.

2.5 Drug and Alcohol Education/Managing Substance Related Incidents

Our Drug and Alcohol Education/Managing Substance Related Incidents policy outlines the school's approach to teaching about drugs and alcohol across the school and meeting the statutory responsibilities in this area. It includes our approach to managing substance related incidents.

2.6 Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after by the local authority is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. We ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep looked after children safe. We ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (this includes whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.
- Appropriate staff have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her.
- The designated safeguarding lead has the details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

The designated teacher for looked after children is responsible for ensuring a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is in place for each looked after child in the school and liaising with the home local authority virtual school for looked after children to ensure the highest expectations around educational attainment. This includes ensuring that the Pupil Premium Plus for looked after children is appropriately allocated to meeting the

aspirational objectives in the PEP. The designated teacher works in partnership with the designated safeguarding lead and the social work team of the home local authority around any safeguarding concerns and placement stability issues. The designated teacher receives appropriate training to undertake the role effectively.

The virtual school for looked after children can be contacted on 0121 704 8622

2.7 Attendance

We ensure all pupils attend school regularly and act swiftly to address any non-attendance and persistent absence in line with our attendance policy. We acknowledge that attendance issues can be warning signs of various safeguarding concerns.

2.8 Safer Recruitment and Safer Working Practice

Education providers have a responsibility to ensure staff are safely recruited and appropriately vetted in line with their roles and responsibilities. The safer recruitment policy outlines our approach which includes online checks for shortlisted candidates.

We maintain a single central record which is reviewed regularly. The single central record includes:

- Identity check
- Right to work in the UK check
- Disclosure and barring service check
- Barred list check
- Prohibition from teaching check
- Section 128 Check Prohibition from management check (for independent schools and academies:)
- EU National Right to Work Check
- Overseas check
- Uptake of two references

We ensure visitors to the site are appropriately checked in relation to the purpose of their visit. This includes:

- The level of supervision required while on site.
- The level of vetting in relation to the purpose of the visit.
- We also have a responsibility to ensure safe working practice in our provision.

2.9 Staff Code of Conduct (also known as staff behaviour)

All staff are familiar with the code of conduct. This is issued at induction and revisited periodically. Any breach of the code of conduct should be brought to the attention of the Headteacher where:

- A staff member self-reports that they have breached the code of conduct.

- A staff member is concerned by the behaviour of another member of staff who has breached the code of conduct.
- It has come to the attention of a member of staff via another source that a staff member has breached the code of conduct.

2.10 Managing Allegations

All staff are familiar with the provisions procedures for managing allegations against staff, volunteers, visitors and outside organisation to the school follows the local authority managing allegations policy.

- An allegation about a member of staff, volunteer or visitor (or outside organisation) should be brought to the immediate attention of the Headteacher.
- An allegation about the Headteacher should be brought to the immediate attention of Debbie Baily, the Trust Director of Education/ Trust DSL.
- Allegations can be brought directly to the attention of the local authority duty office.

All concerns should be recorded, and a chronology of concerns kept by the case manager (Headteacher or Debbie Baily). We ensure parents are clear about how to raise a concern about a member of staff, volunteer or a pupil (e.g., details on school website, letters to parents, parent induction meetings).

The Headteacher (allegation against a member of staff or volunteer) or Debbie Baily (allegation against the Headteacher) should ensure a timely response, and as case manager, maintain oversight of allegations, including oversight of LADO referrals and ensure a timely response to any allegations raised.

2.11 Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which adults can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. 'Whistleblowing' is the term ordinarily used to describe the disclosure of information by an employee about malpractice that is occurring within the organisation. This will include any illegal, immoral, irregular, dangerous or unethical activity under their employer's control. This can cover a broad range of matters, including mismanagement, bribery, fraud and health and safety failures.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 amended the Employment Rights Act 1996 to protect workers from being dismissed or subjected to a detriment because they have made a 'protected disclosure'.

Protected disclosure is information that, in the reasonable belief of the worker, tends to show that one of the following has occurred, or is occurring, or is likely to occur:

- A criminal offence
- Breach of any legal obligation

- Miscarriage of justice
- Danger to the health and safety of any individual
- Damage to the environment
- Deliberate concealing of information about any of the above

All staff and volunteers are able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the provision's safeguarding regime through the whistleblowing policy.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are identified in the whistleblowing policy. The NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline has been developed to provide support to employees wishing to raise concerns over how child protection issues are being handled in their own or other organisations.

The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line can be reached on **0800 028 0285**. (The Home Office and Department for Education commissioned the NSPCC to manage the advice line after a firm commitment to do so was made by the Government in its Tackling CSE report in March 2015. The advice line is not intended to replace any current practices or responsibilities of organisations working with children. The helpline advisors would encourage professionals to raise any concerns about a child to their own employer in the first instance. However, the advice line offers an alternative route if whistleblowing internally is difficult, or professionals have concerns around how matters are being handled.)

2.12 Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy

The LSCP domestic abuse workplace policy provides guidance for staff on how to act if they are concerned about domestic abuse. The policy provides information of indications of domestic abuse amongst colleagues and gives guidance on the appropriate steps to take to safeguard staff in school. The full policy can be viewed on Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council website.

2.13 Online and digital safety

2.13.1 Keeping Children Safe in Education

Our online safety policies and procedures are framed within *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023*

We have a whole academy approach to online and digital safety which empowers us to protect our community and educate using technology safely. We have mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any online or digital safety incident where appropriate.

We follow the guidance set out in the [Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

2.13.2 Online and digital safety in the curriculum

Online and digital safety is a focus in all areas of the curriculum and our staff reinforce safety messages throughout the curriculum. Our online safety curriculum is broad, relevant and provides progression, with opportunities for creative activities.

2.13.3 Working with parents and carers

We work with parents and carers to raise awareness of online and digital safety, including them as much as possible in this process so that parents and carers can help ensure their children are also safe at home.

2.13.4 Online safety policy

We have an overarching **online safety policy**, which applies to all members of our community (staff, pupils and visitors) – *anyone* who has access to any of our digital technology systems, both inside and outside the school. *Visitors* also includes parents and carers, LAC members and community users.

2.13.5 Acceptable use policies

We have **acceptable use policies** for pupils, staff and visitors. Each of these includes the sanctions that will be applied should a user fail to follow their AUP. Staff will not use technology in school to view materials that is illegal, inappropriate, or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling, and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.

2.13.6 Filtration and monitoring

We do all that we reasonably can to limit users' exposure to online risks when using our IT systems and we ensure we have appropriate filtration and monitoring systems in place. We take into account the age range of our pupils, the number of pupils, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs balanced against risks. We include risk assessments as required by the Prevent Duty. We have procedures that support filtering and monitoring and also to help us deal with incidents where there has been potential misuse or inappropriate/illegal activities.

The senior leadership team and DSLs are responsible for

- procuring filtering and monitoring systems
- documenting decisions on what is blocked or allowed and why
- reviewing the effectiveness of your provision
- overseeing reports

They are also responsible for making sure that all staff:

- understand their role
- are appropriately trained

- follow policies, processes and procedures
- act on reports and concerns

The DSL will work with CompuTeam to ensure that the filtering and monitoring software is effective and appropriate and also oversee and act on:

- filtering and monitoring reports using Securly
- safeguarding concerns
- checks to filtering and monitoring systems

All staff in school are responsible for:

- Monitoring pupils whilst using It equipment
- Teaching pupils about e-safety
- Reporting any concerns

2.13.7 Use of social media

The staff code of conduct makes clear what standards are expected of anyone who works for us and uses social media. It also explains what actions will be taken when it is considered a member of staff may have breached this policy. The policy covers social media use: on behalf of school; as part of working with pupils; in their wider professional work; and in their personal life.

We have a code of conduct and a social media policy for our Local Academy Council members which makes clear what standards are expected of LAC members and their use of social media. It also explains the consequences of inappropriate behaviours.

2.13.8 Mobile technologies – using connected and recording devices

These include (as examples) mobile phones, smartphones, tablets, cameras (still and video), audio recording devices, wearable technology and IOT devices.

All mobile technology used on our premises or by our staff and pupils on school activities elsewhere is covered by our **mobile technology policy**.

2.13.9 Media recordings – audio, image and video (including digital files)

Appropriate media recordings are taken (including pupils) to capture curriculum activities, wider activities or as celebrations of school life. We have separate guidelines that must be followed when making media recordings on our premises or as part of our activities elsewhere. However, for clarity:

- Written permission from parents or carers must be obtained before media recordings of pupils are published on the school website and social media sites or in the press.

- Staff and volunteers are allowed to take media recordings to support educational aims, but must follow school policies concerning the sharing, distribution and publication of the media or files. Those media recordings should only be taken on school equipment unless there is prior agreement with the Headteacher.
- All school media recordings will only be stored, edited or archived onto school systems and equipment unless there is prior agreement with the Headteacher.
- Pupils must not take, use, share, publish or distribute media recordings of others without their permission.

2.14 Information and data security

We take information and data security seriously. We have a separate **data protection policy**, setting out how we comply with data protection legislation.

2.15 Alternative Provision

“Where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the provider meets the needs of the pupil. Schools should obtain written confirmation from the alternative provision provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, i.e., those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff”.

(KCSIE 2023, DfE)

Where we contract with an alternative provider to provide part of or all of a pupil's education, we ensure:

- The provision is a registered provider (providers must be registered if five or more full time pupils are on roll, or one special education needs pupil).
- Clarity on the contract arrangements (e.g., through a service level agreement).
- Pupils attend the provision and have clear arrangements for reporting non-attendance.
- Clear plans around behaviour, recording and reporting inappropriate or declining behaviour.
- Requirement to report of pupil achievement.
- Appropriate health and safety and safeguarding arrangements are in place
- Appropriate vetting procedures for staff, volunteers and visitors are in place

2.16 Site and Premises Security and Site Safety

Our health and safety policy outlines our procedures in ensuring the site and premises are safe and secure.

This includes our risk assessment procedures, including:

- The safety of staff, pupils and visitors to the school site.
- Fencing and boundary security.

- Procedures around the security of external doors and access to the site.
- Storage of hazardous substances.

We ensure an annual fire risk assessment takes place, and any actions are swiftly addressed. Regular fire evacuation drills take place and are logged on the fire evacuation log. Any actions identified through fire evacuation drills are addressed.

We will undertake to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation with regard to the provision of first aid for pupils, staff and visitors and will make sure that procedures are in place to meet that responsibility.

2.17 Educational Visits

Our educational visits policy provides staff with guidance on planning educational visits and undertaking risk assessments. A Trust-wide E-visits system exists, with a Service Level Agreement providing external advice and support for all activities, but especially high-risk activities.

2.18 Emergency Advice and Support for Educational Establishments (EASEE)

Incidents and emergencies can occur at any time. Our education settings and young people are not immune from such incidents and often the impact of an incident can have far-reaching effects in the wider community. For this reason we have utilised the 'Emergency Advice and Support for Educational Establishments' (EASEE) guidance and produced: School Emergency and Business Continuity Plan templates and used EASEE guidance material to plan for a range of critical incidents.

This includes emergency school lockdown procedure guidance and bomb and suspicious package information.

2.19 Procedures for uncollected children

In the event of a child not being collected at the end of the school day, every effort should be made by the school to contact the parents and emergency contacts. In the event that contact with parents and emergency contacts cannot be established and the child remains uncollected, the police should be contacted.

If non-collection or late collection is a regular occurrence, early help should be offered by the school in the first instance through a formal meeting with parents. If the situation does not improve a referral to Solihull multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) might be considered if a wider picture of neglect is emerging. The child protection policy should be followed in such an event.

2.20 Complaints

Our procedures for dealing with complaints are clearly set out in our complaints policy and are available to parents via the school website. In the first instance we work to resolve any misunderstanding or concern.

2.21 Barring of individuals from school premises

On extremely rare occasions, school leaders do need to seek to bar a person from the school site. The DfE 2012 advice on school security: access to and barring from school premises, should be followed and legal advice sought.

2.22 The Use of Reasonable force

We recognise that it is important to allow children to do what they can for themselves but depending on age and circumstances (i.e. a child who is hurt, who needs instruction in the use of a particular instrument / piece of equipment, safety issues such as the need to prevent a child hurting themselves, running into the road etc.), it may be necessary for some physical contact to take place. Advice on the use of reasonable force in schools is provided in the document Use of Reasonable Force in Schools (DfE 2015).

Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (DfE, January 2016), advice for headteachers and school staff states:

- Members of staff have the power to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing an offence, injuring themselves or others, or damaging property, and to maintain good order and discipline in the classroom.
- Head teachers and authorised school staff may also use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances when conducting a search without consent for knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images or articles that have been or could be used to commit an offence or cause harm.
- Schools can also identify additional items in their school rules which may be searched for without consent. Force **cannot** be used to search for these items.

All staff will be trained in Team Teach which gives staff the confidence and strategies needed to de-escalate challenging situations and reduce the needs for physical intervention. Where physical intervention is necessary, staff will have the training on how to do this safely and appropriately.

2.23 Medicines in School/Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions

This school is an inclusive community that welcomes and supports pupils with medical conditions. We provide all pupils with any medical condition the same opportunities as others at school. All staff understand the medical conditions that affect pupils at this school. Staff receive training on the impact medical conditions can have on pupils. Further information can be found in our Medicines in School Policy.

It is important that the lead for medicines in schools works closely with the designated safeguarding lead and the special education needs co-ordinator to ensure appropriate information is shared to safeguard pupils.

Part 3: Evaluating and Monitoring Process

The Heights Academy will review this policy at least annually (as a minimum) and will update it as needed, so that it is kept up to date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve, including lessons learnt. The policy will also be revised following any national or local updates, significant local or national safeguarding events and/or learning, and/or any changes to our own procedures.

Our Safeguarding Policy will be monitored and evaluated by:

- Line management and task management of staff.
- Audits of safeguarding records.
- Discussions with staff involved in safeguarding work.
- Pupil surveys, questionnaires and evidence of the pupil voice in safeguarding work.
- Scrutiny of data sets.
- Scrutiny of range of risk assessments and information (including attendance, bullying logs, behaviour records, health and safety risk assessments, fire risk assessment, educational visit risk assessment, safer recruitment information, to ensure a coordinated approach).
- Review of parental concerns and parent questionnaires.

All staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) will be provided with a copy of this policy and Part One and/or Annex A of KCSIE 2023 as appropriate.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads and Head Teacher will ensure regular reporting on safeguarding activity and systems to the Local Academy Council. The Local Academy Council will not receive details of individual situations or identifying features of families as part of their oversight responsibility.

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Appendix – Decision flow chart

