

Leigh Academy Marden



Leigh Academy
Marden

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for EYFS settings

This is a core policy that forms part of the induction for all staff. It is a requirement that all members of staff have access to this policy and sign to say they have read and understood its contents.

Date written: July 2025 (with KCSIE 2025 guidance which will come into effect September 1, 2025).

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Date of next review: July 2026 (or in response to any changes to local or national guidance or contextual Safeguarding themes/incidents).

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedure.

Key Contacts

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1. What to do if you have a welfare concern in Leigh Academy Marden

Why are you concerned?

For example:

- Something a child has said – e.g. allegation of harm
- Child's appearance – may include unexplained marks as well as dress
- Behaviour change
- Witnessed concerning behaviour

Act immediately and record your concerns. If urgent, speak to a DSL first.

Follow the academy procedure

- Reassure the child
- Clarify concerns, using open questions if necessary (TED: Tell, Explain, Describe)
- Use child's own words, record facts not opinions
- Record your concern on the academy system
- Seek support for yourself if required from DSL

Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead

(if not available inform another member of the Safeguarding Team/Principal/if no one is available report directly using details below)

Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Consider whether the child is at immediate risk of harm e.g. unsafe to go home
- Access the Kent Safeguarding Procedures <https://www.kscmp.org.uk/procedures/kent-and-medway-safeguarding-procedures>
- Refer to other agencies as appropriate e.g. Internal or community services, early help open access, LADO, Police or Request for Support for integrated children's services
- If unsure then consult with Front Door 03000 411 111

If you are unhappy with the response

Staff:

- Follow local escalation procedures
- Follow LAT Whistleblowing procedures

Learners and Parents:

- Follow academy complaints procedure

Record decision making and action taken in the learner's child protection/safeguarding file

Monitor

Be clear about:

- What you are monitoring e.g. behavior trends, appearance etc.
- How long you will monitor
- Where, how and to whom you will feedback and how you will record

Review and request further support (if necessary)

At all stages, the child's circumstances will be kept under review. The DSL/Staff will request further support if required to ensure the **child's safety is paramount**

1. Child Focused Approach to Safeguarding

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right.'

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2021

1.1 Introduction

- Leigh Academy Marden believes that all those directly involved with our setting have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure. Our setting aims to create the safest environment within which every child can achieve their full potential and we take seriously our responsibility to promote the welfare and safeguard all the children and young people entrusted to our care.
- Leigh Academy Marden recognises our statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everybody's** responsibility and everyone has a role to play. All members of our community (staff, volunteers, governors, leaders, parents/carers, wider family networks, and children) have an important role in safeguarding children and all have an essential role to play in making our community safe and secure.
- Leigh Academy Marden believe that the best interests of children always come first. All children (defined in law and in this policy as those up to the age of 18) have a right to be heard and to have their wishes and feelings taken into account and all children regardless of age, sex (gender), ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity or orientation, have equal rights to protection.
- This policy applies where there are any child protection concerns regarding children who attend the settings but may also apply to other children connected to the setting, for example, siblings or younger staff (under 18s) or children on student/work placements.
- This policy applies to all children, including those living with birth parents or extended family, those in kinship care, adopted children, looked after children, previously looked after children and care leavers. Where there are safeguarding concerns relating to pregnancy, staff will also consider the help, support and protection needs of unborn children.
- Staff working with children at Leigh Academy Marden will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff will always act in the best interests of the child and if any member of our community has a safeguarding concern about any child or adult, they should act and act immediately.

- In our Leigh Academy Marden children are respected and are encouraged to express themselves openly. We will ensure children's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what safeguarding action to take and what services to provide with an understanding that some children will require additional support or are not always ready to talk.
- Leigh Academy Marden recognises the importance of adopting a trauma informed approach to safeguarding; we understand there is a need to consider the root cause of children's behaviour and consider any underlying trauma.
- Leigh Academy Marden are committed to creating and maintaining an inclusive, anti-discriminatory safeguarding culture. Staff are expected to recognise and challenge racism, discrimination and prejudice, and to consider how these experiences may affect children's safety, welfare and access to support.
- As part of the safeguarding ethos of the setting we are committed to:
 - Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern.
 - Developing a child centred environment and fostering a culture in which children feel safe, secure, valued, and respected, confident to talk openly and are sure of being listened to.
 - Developing appropriate and positive relationships between children and the adults that care for them.
 - Providing suitable support and guidance so that children have a range of appropriate adults who they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties.
 - Using learning opportunities to increase self-awareness, self-esteem, assertiveness, and decision making, so young children can develop a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others.
 - Working with parents/carers to build an understanding of the setting's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children, including the need for referral to other agencies in some situations.
 - Collaborating with both parents, where possible, to ensure timely, appropriate communications and actions are undertaken when safeguarding concerns arise.
 - Ensuring all staff have regular and appropriate training (including induction) to enable them to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse, and ensure they are aware of our procedures and reporting mechanisms.
 - Monitoring children who have been identified as 'in need', including the need for protection and implementing specific interventions and taking action for those who may be at risk of harm.
 - Keeping confidential child protection records, which are stored securely and shared appropriately, including with other professionals.
 - Developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies to ensure children are safeguarded where concern arise.

- Our core safeguarding principles are:
 - Prevention: positive, supportive, safe culture, curriculum and pastoral opportunities for children, safer recruitment procedures.
 - Protection: following the agreed procedures, ensuring all staff are trained and supported to recognise and respond appropriately and sensitively to safeguarding concerns.
 - Support: adopt a child centred approach and provide support for all pupils, parents/carers and staff, and where appropriate, implement specific interventions for those who may be at risk of harm.
 - Collaboration: with both parents and carers where possible, and other agencies to ensure timely, appropriate communications and actions are undertaken when safeguarding concerns arise.
- The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, including governors, temporary or third-party agency staff and volunteers, and are consistent with those outlined within 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2024.
- The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, including trustees, temporary or third-party agency staff and volunteers.
- Leigh Academy Marden adheres KSCMP Safeguarding Procedures.

1.2 Policy context

- This policy is implemented in accordance with our compliance with the statutory guidance from the Department for Education, [Early Years and Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) 2025](#)
- This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the [Children Acts 1989](#) and [2004](#) and related guidance. This includes but is not limited to:
 - [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 \(KCSIE\)](#)
 - [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 \(WTSC\)](#)
 - [Ofsted: Education Inspection Framework](#)
 - [Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families 2011](#)
 - [Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Procedures](#)
 - [The Education Act 2002](#)
 - [The Human Rights Act 1998](#)
 - [The Equality Act 2010 \(including the Public Sector Equality Duty\)](#)
- Leigh Academy Marden will follow local or national guidance in response to any emergencies. We will amend this policy and our procedures as necessary but regardless of the action required, our safeguarding principles will always remain the same and the welfare of the child is paramount
- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires school governing bodies, local education authorities and further education institutions to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children who are pupils at a school, or who are students under 18

years of age. Such arrangements will have to have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

- Leigh Academy Marden will follow local or national guidance in response to any emergencies. We will amend this policy and our procedures as necessary but regardless of the action required, our safeguarding principles will always remain the same and the welfare of the child is paramount.
- Leigh Academy Marden recognise that as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, some members of our community may have been exposed to a range of adversity and trauma including bereavement, anxiety and in some cases experienced increased welfare and/or safeguarding risks. We will work with local services, such as health and the local authority, to ensure necessary support is in place.

1.3 Definition of safeguarding

- In line with ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ and KCSIE 2025, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:
 - 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, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the child(ren)
 - Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and is defined as activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.
- Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.
- We recognise that children may experience multiple and overlapping harms at the same time, including online harms, extra-familial harm and exploitation, and that safeguarding responses should take account of the full context of a child’s lived experience.

- 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. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.
- 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 include everyone under the age of 18.
- 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)
 - Integrated care boards (previously known as clinical commissioning groups) for an area within the LA
 - The chief officer of police for an area in the LA area
- 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.
- Our setting acknowledges that safeguarding includes a wide range of specific issues including (but not limited to):
 - Abuse and neglect
 - Bullying, including cyberbullying
 - Child-on-child abuse
 - Children with family members in prison
 - Children who are absent or missing from education
 - Child missing from home or care
 - Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
 - Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
 - Children and the Court System
 - Children who are lesbian, gay or bisexual or children who are perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, bisexual whether they are or not.
 - Contextual safeguarding (risks outside the family home)
 - County lines and gangs

- Domestic abuse
 - Drugs and alcohol misuse
 - Fabricated or induced illness
 - Faith abuse
 - Gender based abuse and violence against women and girls
 - Group-based exploitation
 - Hate
 - Homelessness
 - Human trafficking and modern slavery
 - Mental health
 - Nude or semi-nude image sharing, aka youth produced/involved sexual imagery or “Sexting”
 - Online safety
 - Preventing radicalisation and extremism
 - Private fostering
 - Relationship abuse
 - Serious violence
 - Sexual violence and sexual harassment
 - So-called ‘honour-based’ abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage
 - ‘Upskirting’
- Annex B of [‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’](#) (KCSIE 2025) contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. Staff at the setting who work directly with children will read part one and annex B of KCSIE.
 - If staff have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately. They should follow this policy and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy).

1.4. Equality statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, both online and offline, 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.

- We give special consideration to children who:
 - Have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or health conditions
 - Are young carers
 - May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
 - Have English as an additional language (EAL)
 - Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence

- Are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM), sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are looked after or previously looked after (see section 12)
- Are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or frequently
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated

1.5. Related safeguarding policies

Trust Policies	Academy Policies
Complaints	Emergency Procedures such as evacuations and lockdowns
Confidentiality	Risk assessments, such as school trips, use of technology, school reopening
Staff Code of Conduct	Behaviour Policy
Searching, screening and confiscation	Anti-Bullying policy
Online Safety	Acceptable Use Templates/Policy
Data protection and Information Sharing Policy	Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)
Health and Safety Policy including Risk Assessment Policy and including plans for Nursery reopening	Attendance Policy
Managing Allegations Against Staff, including Low Level Concerns	Personal and Intimate Care
Whistleblowing	Relationships and Sex Education (RSHE)
Safer Recruitment Policy	
First aid and accidents, including medication and managing illness, allergies, health, and infection	
Mobile and smart technology	

Personal and intimate care	
Social media and Image Use	

Supporting Guidance (to be read and followed alongside this document)

- “Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People in Education Settings” - [Safer Recruitment Consortium](#)
- “What to do if you are worried a child is being abused” – DfE, March 2015
- Early Years Foundation Stage 2025 Welfare Requirements
- UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) “Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations”
- These documents can be found on the staff virtual safeguarding site.

1.6. Policy compliance, monitoring and review

- Leigh Academy Marden 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.
- All staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) will be provided with a copy of this policy and Part One of KCSIE 2025 as appropriate. These documents can be found on the staff virtual safeguarding site.
- Parents/carers can obtain a copy of the Leigh Academy Marden Child Protection Policy and other related policies on request. Additionally, our policies can be viewed via the Leigh Academy Marden website: <https://leighacademymarden.org.uk/>
- The policy forms part of our development plan and will be reviewed annually by the Principal/Manager which has responsibility for oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and manager will ensure the Community Board receive regular reporting on safeguarding activity and systems. They will not receive details of individual children’s situations or identifying features of families as part of their oversight responsibility.

2. Key Responsibilities

2.1 Governance and leadership

- The Community Board, LAT Trust Executive and leadership team have a strategic responsibility for our safeguarding arrangements and will comply with their duties under legislation. The Community Board has regard to the KCSIE guidance and will ensure our policies, procedures and training is effective and complies with the law at all times.
- All Community Board members will read and work in accordance of the KCSIE 2025 and will attend the regular safeguarding training they are offered which will equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenges to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding.
- The setting has a nominated governor responsible for safeguarding. The nominated governor will support the DSL and have oversight in ensuring that the academy has 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. The setting safeguarding governor will make regular visits to review procedures that are in place and provide reports to the Community Board. A copy of the Link Governor for Safeguarding roles and responsibilities can be found [here](#).
- The Community Board, LAT Trust Executive and academy leadership team will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is supported in their role.
- The Community Board and setting leadership team will promote an inclusive, anti-discriminatory safeguarding culture and will ensure systems, training and policy implementation support staff to identify, understand and challenge racism, discrimination and disproportionality in safeguarding practice.
- The Community Board will facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding which involves everyone. They will ensure that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development, so that all systems, processes, and policies operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.
- The Community Board are aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and the local multi-agency

safeguarding arrangements set out by the Local Children's Partnership (Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership ([KSCMP](#))).

- o This includes but is not limited to safeguarding all members of the school community (for example, staff, pupils, parents/carers and other family members) identified with protected characteristics within the Equality Act; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.
- o For further information about our approaches to equality, diversity, and inclusion, please access our academy policies on our website.

<https://leighacademymarden.org.uk/about-us/policies/>

- The Community Board and leadership team will ensure that there are policies and procedures in place to ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- The Principal will ensure that our child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the Community Board are understood, and followed by all staff.
- The Community Board will ensure an appropriate senior member of staff, from the setting leadership team, is appointed to the role of designated safeguarding lead. The Community Board and leadership team will ensure that the DSL is supported in their role and is provided with sufficient time so they can provide appropriate support to staff and children regarding any safeguarding and welfare concerns.
- The setting has a nominated governor for safeguarding. The Community Board and the Safeguarding Governor will support the DSL and have oversight in ensuring that the Academy has 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.

2.2 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- The EYFS states; *'a practitioner must be designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children in every setting'*. The Community Board have appointed (Hannah Penning, Principal) as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for our setting; they are appropriately qualified and experienced to enable them to fulfil this role.
- Leigh Academies Trust maintains records of all designated staff for reference and use at Trust level.
- The DSL has overall responsibility for the day-to-day oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place). Whilst the activities of the DSL may be delegated to the deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL and this responsibility will not be delegated. The details of this role are explicit in the DSL's job description.

- The Academy has also appointed Deputy DSLs who will have delegated responsibilities and act in the DSLs absence. Any deputies are trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead and the role is explicit in their job description.
 - Nicola Bryant, Inclusion Lead
 - Georgina Rawling, Vice Principal
 - Vikki Holness, Office Manager

- The DSL (and any deputies) will be more likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and will be the most appropriate person to advise staff on the response to any safeguarding concerns.

- It is the role of the DSL to carry out their functions as identified in Annex C of KCSIE. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Acting as the central contact point for all staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
 - Maintaining a confidential recording system for safeguarding and child protection concerns.
 - Coordinating safeguarding action for individual children.
 - When supporting children with a social worker or looked after children, the DSL should have the details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child, with the DSL liaising closely with the designated teacher.
 - Liaising with other agencies and professionals in line with KCSIE and WTSC.
 - Ensuring that locally established procedures as put in place by the three safeguarding partners as part of the Local Children's Partnership procedures, including referrals, are followed, as necessary.
 - Ensuring that school safeguarding responses are coordinated with wider multi-agency planning, including Early Help plans, child in need planning, child protection planning and care planning, where applicable.
 - Representing, or ensuring the Academy is appropriately represented at multi-agency safeguarding meetings (including child protection conferences).
 - Managing and monitoring the Academy role in any multi-agency plan for a child.
 - Being available during term time (during school hours) for staff in the Academy to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
 - Ensuring adequate and appropriate DSL cover arrangements in response to any closures and any out of hours. This includes signposting to the appropriate outside agencies with capacity for managing high risk Safeguarding incidents.
 - Taking lead responsibility for online safety, including having oversight of the effectiveness of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place. This is accomplished through regular checks which are logged and triangulated to inform further support to children.
 - Helping promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and setting leadership staff.

- Ensuring all staff access appropriate safeguarding training and relevant updates in line with the recommendations within KCSIE.
- Liaising with the Principal to inform them of any safeguarding issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This includes being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult ([PACE Code C 2019](#)).
- The DSL will undergo appropriate and specific training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role. Deputy DSLs will be trained to the same standard as the DSL. The DSLs' training will be updated formally at least every two years, but their knowledge and skills will be updated through a variety of methods at regular intervals and at least annually.
- We recognise that in some settings there may be a different strategic lead for promoting the educational outcomes of children who have or have had a social worker. Where this is the case, the DSL works closely with the lead to provide strategic oversight for the outcomes of these children and young people.

The Principal and Manager

The Principal and Manager is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:
 - Are informed of our systems that support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
 - 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 setting and via the setting website
 - Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
 - Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see appendix 3)
 - Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this
 - Overseeing the safe use of technology, and devices like mobile phones and cameras in the setting. (Please also see our Mobile Phone policy)
 - Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met
 - Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person
 - Managers:
 - Ensure that staff Appointed on or after 4 January 2024 must hold a suitable level 2 qualification in maths, or must do so within 2 years of starting the position
 - Must hold at least a full and relevant level 3 qualification
 - Should have at least 2 years of experience of working in an early years setting, or have at least 2 years of other suitable experience
 - At least half of all other staff must hold at least an approved level 2 qualification

- Level 6 staff – to be included in the staff:child ratios – must hold 1 of the following:
 - Early Years Teacher Status (EYTS)
 - Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)
 - Early Years Professional Status (EYPS)
- At least 1 person who has a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate must always be on the premises and available when children are present, and must accompany children on outings
- All staff who gained a level 2 or level 3 qualification after 30 June 2016, or have completed the experience-based route, must gain a PFA qualification within 3 months of starting work – and renew it every 3 years – to be included in the relevant staff:child ratios
- Students and trainee staff must hold a valid and current PFA qualification to be included in staff:child ratios

2.3 Members of staff

- The welfare requirement of the EYFS requires providers *‘to take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well’* and accordingly, everyone involved in the care of young children has a role to play in their protection.
- Our staff play a particularly important role in safeguarding as they are in a position to observe any changes in a child’s behaviour or appearance, identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children’s welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.
- All members of staff have a responsibility to:
 - To provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
 - To be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect so that they can identify cases of children who may need help or protection.
 - Know what to do if a child tells them that they are being abused, neglected, or exploited and understand the impact abuse and neglect can have upon a child.
 - Know that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school/Nursery and online
 - Know that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children
 - To be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help and understand the community-based and targeted Early Help process and their role in it.
 - Know that a child and their family may be experiencing multiple needs at the same time
 - To be able to identify and act upon indicators that children are, or at risk of developing mental health issues.
 - Be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.
 - To understand the early help process and their role in it.
 - To understand the Academy safeguarding policies and systems.
 - Undertake regular and appropriate training which is regularly updated.
 - Be aware of the local process of making referrals to children’s social care and statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.

- Know how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality and sharing information in accordance with the KCSIE, DPA/UKGDPR for the purposes of keeping children safe.
 - Reassure children who report concerns that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
 - Act in line with Teachers' Standards 2012 which state that teachers (including Principals) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
- Staff at Leigh Academy Marden 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 being abusive or harmful. This should not prevent staff from having professional curiosity and speaking to a DSL if they have any concerns about a child.
 - Staff at Leigh Academy Marden will determine how best to build trusted relationships with children, young people and parents/carers which facilitate appropriate professional communication in line with existing and relevant policies, for example, our staff Code of Conduct and pupil/student behaviour policies.

2.4 Children

- Children have a right to:
 - Feel safe, be listened to, and have their wishes and feelings taken into account.
 - Confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.
 - Receive help from a trusted adult.
 - Learn how to keep themselves safe, including online.

2.5 Parents and carers

- Parents/carers have a responsibility to:
 - Understand and adhere to any relevant setting policies and procedures.
 - Talk to their children about safeguarding issues and support the setting in their safeguarding approaches.
 - Identify behaviours which could indicate that their child is at risk of harm including online.
 - Seek help and support from the setting or other agencies.

Training

All staff

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including on whistleblowing 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 is available to all staff via our training platform called Thrive. Thrive

provides a dashboard for the DSL to confirm who has completed training in all safeguarding areas. Thrive also holds attendance for events such as DSL training and Safer Recruitment training.

Staff Safeguarding 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. This training is also provided through our Thrive system.

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). There are small bite sized training sessions for staff briefings called Pupil Protect and these are also available through Thrive.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

The DSL and Deputies

DSLs 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).

Governors

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

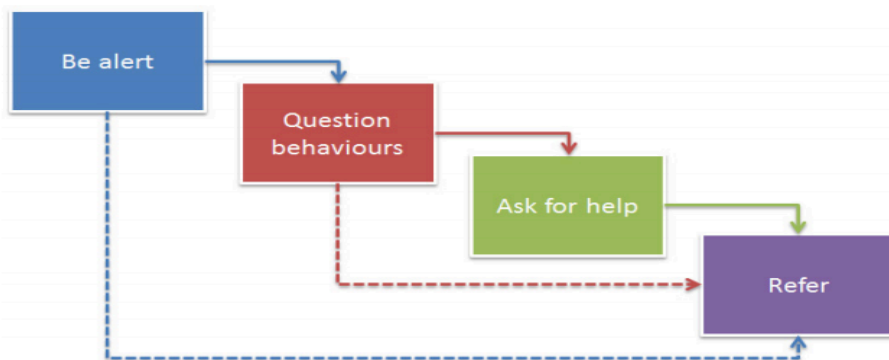
Have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge

Can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school 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 Principal, they receive training in managing allegations for this purpose.

2.6. Recognising indicators of abuse and neglect

- Staff will maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff will always act in the best interests of the child.
- All staff are made aware of the definitions and indicators of abuse and neglect as identified by ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’-2023 and ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’-2024.
- Leigh Academy Marden recognise that when assessing whether a child may be suffering actual or potential harm there are four categories of abuse (for more in-depth information, see appendix 1):
 - Physical abuse
 - Sexual abuse
 - Emotional abuse
 - Neglect
- By understanding the indicators of abuse and neglect, we can respond to problems as early as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family.
- All members of staff are expected to be aware of and follow the below approach if they are concerned about a child:



[‘What to do if you are worried a child is being abused’](#) 2015

- Leigh Academy Marden recognises that concerns may arise in many different contexts and can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness. The indicators of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Children develop and mature at different rates, so what appears to be worrying behaviour for a younger child might be normal for an older child. It is important to recognise that indicators of abuse and neglect do not automatically mean a child is being abused, however all concerns should be taken seriously and will be explored by the DSL on a case-by-case basis.
- Leigh Academy Marden recognises abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot always be covered by one definition or one label alone. In

many cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, therefore staff will always be vigilant and always raise concerns with a DSL.

- Parental behaviors can indicate child abuse or neglect, so staff will be alert to parent-child interactions or concerning parental behaviours; this could include parents who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or if there is a sudden change in their mental health.
- Children may report abuse happening to themselves, other children, or their family members. All reports made by children to staff will be taken seriously and will be responded to in line with this policy.
- Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors and risks outside the setting. Children can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families; extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, sexual abuse, serious youth violence and county lines.
- Leigh Academy Marden recognises that technology can be a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues; children are at risk of abuse online from people they know (including other children) and from people they do not know; in many cases, abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life.
- Leigh Academy Marden recognises that some children have additional or complex needs and may require access to intensive or specialist services to support them.
- In all cases, if staff are unsure of what action to take, they will always speak to the DSL (or deputy).

2.7. Responding to child protection concerns

- Where safeguarding concerns are identified, the child's lived experience, voice and views will remain central to our decision-making, assessment and planning.
- If staff are made aware of a child protection concern, they are expected to:
 - Listen carefully to the child, reflecting back the concern.
 - Use the child's language.
 - Be non-judgmental.
 - Avoid leading questions; only prompting the child where necessary with open questions to clarify information where necessary. For example, who, what, where, when or Tell, Explain, Describe (TED).
 - Do not promise confidentiality as concerns will have to be shared further, for example, with the DSL and potentially Integrated Children's Services.
 - To be clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed.
 - Record the concern using the facts as the child presents them, in line with Academy record keeping requirements.

- Inform the DSL (or deputy), as soon as practically possible.
- If staff have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they are expected to act on them immediately. If staff are unsure if something is a safeguarding issue, they will speak to the DSL (or deputy).
- The DSL or a deputy should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, a DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken by staff. Staff should speak to a member of the senior leadership team, take advice from the Education Safeguarding Service or a consultation with a social worker from the Front Door. In these circumstances, any action taken will be shared with a DSL as soon as possible.
- All staff are made aware that early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment, and allocation of appropriate service provision, whether this is when problems first emerge, or where a child is already known to other agencies. Staff will not assume a colleague, or another professional will act and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.
- In Kent, Targeted Early Help and Preventative Services and Children’s Social Work Services are part of [Integrated Children’s Services](#) (ICS) and are accessed via the ‘Front Door Service’/[Kent Children’s Services Portal](#). Community-based early help can be accessed [Kent Family Hubs](#), as well as being provided by schools/colleges themselves and other local support.
- Leigh Academy Marden will respond to safeguarding concerns in line with the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership procedures (KSCMP). The full KSCMP procedures and additional guidance relating to reporting concerns and specific safeguarding issues can be found on their website: <https://www.kscmp.org.uk/>.
- ‘Community-based early help’ is defined in ‘Working together to safeguard children’ as 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, including education providers, working together and taking collective responsibility to provide the right provision in their area. It is distinct from targeted Early Help delivered through more formal arrangements coordinated by local authorities, where a plan is in place and a lead practitioner appointed.
- Where it is identified a child may benefit from Early Help support, the DSL (or deputy) will generally lead as appropriate and make a request for support via the Front Door.
 - The DSL will keep all Early Help cases under constant review and consideration will be given to escalating concerns to the Front Door or seeking advice via Lessas if the situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.
- All staff are made aware of the process for making referrals to Integrated Children’s Services and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

- Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger (for example, under section 17 or 47 of the Children Act), a 'request for support' will be made immediately to Integrated Children's Services (Front Door) and/or the police in line with KSCMP procedures.
 - Leigh Academy Marden recognises that in situations where there are immediate child protection concerns for a child as identified in line with Support Level Guidance, it is NOT to investigate as a single agency, but to act in line with Local Children's Partnership guidance which may involve multi-agency decision making.
 - The DSL may seek advice or guidance from the Trust Safeguarding Advisor or Lessas in Kent before deciding next steps.
 - They may also seek advice or guidance from a social worker at the Front Door service who are the first point of contact for [Integrated Children's Services](#) (ICS).

- In the event of a request for support to the Front Door being necessary, parents/carers will be informed and consent to this will be sought by the DSL in line with guidance provided by KSCMP and ICS. Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents or carers. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.

Other staff will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL. If we believe that notifying the parents or carers would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so. In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. We will think carefully about what information we provide about the other child involved, and when. We will work with the police and/or local authority children's social care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.

The DSL will, along with any relevant agencies (this will be decided on a case-by-case basis):

- Meet with the victim's parents or carers, with the victim, to discuss what's being put in place to safeguard them, and understand their wishes in terms of what support they may need and how the report will be progressed
- Meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss support for them, and what's being put in place that will impact them, e.g. moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) behind any decision(s)
- If, after a request for support or any other planned external intervention, a child's situation does not appear to be improving, or concerns regarding receiving a decision or the decisions made, staff or the DSL will re-refer (if appropriate) and/or DSLs will follow the Local Children' Partnership Escalation Policy to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.
- DSLs and staff will be mindful of the need for the setting to ensure any activity or support implemented to support children and/or families is recorded. Support provided by the setting where families are struggling will be overseen and reviewed by the DSL on a regular basis to ensure activity does not obscure potential safeguarding concerns from the wider professional

network. Where the setting is unsure, advice will be sought from the Trust Safeguarding Advisor, Trust Safeguarding Lead or their local Education Safeguarding Service (Greenwich, Bexley and Medway). In Kent, advice can be sought from Lessas. Consultations can also be completed with local Social Work Teams.

3. Child Protection Procedures

- All staff are made aware of the definitions and indicators of abuse and neglect as identified by 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'-2023 and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education-2025'.
- If staff are made aware of a child protection concern, they are expected to:
 - Listen carefully to the concern and be non-judgmental;
 - Only use open questions to clarify information where necessary, e.g. who, what, where, when or Tell, Explain, Describe (TED);
 - Not promise confidentiality as concerns will have to be shared further, for example, with the DSL and potentially Integrated Children's Services;
 - Be clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed;
 - Record the concern in line with the academy record keeping requirements (see section 9);
 - Inform the DSL (or deputy), immediately by recording the concern on Bromcom or speaking to them in person.

Leigh Academy Marden adheres to the:

- Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership procedures (KSCMP). The full KSCMP procedures and additional guidance relating to reporting concerns and specific safeguarding issues can be found on their website: <https://www.kscmp.org.uk/>.
- Leigh Academy Marden is an [Operation Encompass School](#). This means we work in partnership with Kent Police to provide support to children experiencing domestic abuse.
- The academy recognises that in situations where there are immediate child protection concerns identified in line with Support Level Guidance, it is NOT to investigate as a single agency but to act in line with KSCMP guidance which may involve multi-agency decision making. The DSL may seek advice or guidance from their Area Education Safeguarding Advisor from the Education Safeguarding Service before deciding next steps. They may also seek advice or guidance from a social worker at the Front Doorservice who are the first point of contact for Integrated Children's Services.
- If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a request for support will be made immediately to Integrated Children's Services (Front Door) and/or the police in line with KSCMP Safeguarding Procedures.
- All staff are aware of the process for making requests for support referrals for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

- In most cases, a request for support will be made by the DSL or a deputy. However if the DSL or a deputy is not immediately available to discuss an urgent concern, staff will seek advice from another member of the academy leadership team or from the Education Safeguarding Service or via consultation with a social worker from the Front Door. <https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.ChildrensPortal.Web.Sites.Public/Default.aspx>
If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral to external services, they will inform the DSL as soon as possible.
- In the event of a request for support to the Front Door being necessary, parents/carers will be informed and consent to this will be sought by the DSL in line with guidance provided by KSCMP Parents/carers will be informed unless there is a valid reason not to do so, for example, if to do so would put a child at risk of harm or would undermine a criminal investigation.
- The DSL will keep all early help cases under constant review and consideration will be given to a request for support to the Front Door if the situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.
- If, after a request for support or any other planned external intervention, a child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL will consider following [KSCMP escalation procedures /RBG Escalation Policy /Resolving Professional Differences – Multi-agency Escalation policy](#) to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves. DSLs may request support with this via the Education Safeguarding Service.

3.1. Recording concerns

- All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions, and reasons for those decisions, will be recorded in writing on the setting safeguarding system (Bromcom) and passed without delay to the DSL. Our records will include a clear and comprehensive summary of any concerns, details of how concerns were followed up and resolved, a note of any action taken or not taken, how any decisions were reached and any outcomes.
- Records will be completed as soon as possible after the incident/event, using the child's words and will be signed and dated by the member of staff. Child protection records will record facts and not personal opinions. A body map will be completed if visible marks or injuries to a child have been observed.
- If there is an immediate safeguarding concern the member of staff will consult with a DSL before completing the form as reporting urgent concerns takes priority.
- If members of staff are in any doubt about recording requirements, they will discuss their concerns with the DSL.

- Child protection records will include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved and details regarding any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- Child protection records are kept confidential and stored securely. Child protection records will be kept for individual children and will be maintained separately from all other records relating to the child in the setting. Child protection records are kept in accordance with data protection legislation and are retained centrally and securely by the DSL.
- All child protection records will be transferred in accordance with data protection legislation to the child's subsequent setting or school, under confidential and separate cover as soon as possible. Child protection files will be transferred securely to the new DSL, separately to the child's main file, and a confirmation of receipt will be obtained.
- In addition to the child protection file, the DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the DSL at the new setting or school in advance of a child leaving, for example, information that would allow the new setting or school to continue to provide support.
- Where the setting receives child protection files from another setting, the DSL will ensure key staff such as the Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinators (SENCOs) will be made aware of relevant information as required.
- Where a child joins the setting and no child protection files are received, the DSL will proactively seek to confirm from the previous setting whether any child protections exist for the child, and if so, if the files have been sent.

3.2. Multi-agency working

- Leigh Academy Marden recognises the pivotal role we have to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and is committed to its responsibility to work within the [KSCMP](#) multi-agency safeguarding arrangements as identified within 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.
- The DSL will work to establish strong and co-operative local relationships with professionals in other agencies, including the safeguarding partners in line with local and national guidance.
- Leigh Academy Marden recognises the importance of multi-agency working and is committed to working alongside partner agencies to provide a coordinated response to promote children's welfare and protect them from harm. This includes contributing to LCP processes as required, such as, participation in relevant safeguarding multi-agency plans and meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Strategy Meetings, Child in Need meetings or other early help multi-agency meetings.

- The setting will allow access for Kent Children’s Social Work Service and, where appropriate, from a placing local authority, to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct, a section 17 or a section 47 assessment.
- Where a child is supported through Early Help/Family, child in need, child protection or care planning processes, the School will work with partner agencies to promote joined-up planning and avoid duplication, ensuring the child’s educational needs, safety and lived experience are reflected.

3.3. Confidentiality and information sharing

- Leigh Academy Marden recognises our duty and powers to hold, use and share relevant information with appropriate agencies in matters relating to child protection at the earliest opportunity as per statutory guidance outlined within EYFS 2023 and KCSIE 2024.
- Where reasonably possible, our setting will hold more than one emergency contact number for each child. There is an expectation that contact information will be held for both parents, unless doing so would put a child at risk of harm.
- Leigh Academy Marden has an appropriately trained Data Protection Officer (DPO) as required by the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) to ensure that our setting is compliant with all matters relating to confidentiality and information sharing requirements. The DPO is Miss Vikki Holness who can be contacted through the Office email: info@marden.latrust.org.uk
- Staff will have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share and withhold personal information. The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing 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.
- KCSIE 2025, the [Information Commissioner’s Office](#) (ICO) and the DfE “[Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#)” guidance provides further details regarding information sharing principles and expectations. Copies of these are saved on the staff virtual site.
- The DSL will disclose relevant safeguarding information about a pupil with staff on a ‘need to know’ basis. Staff will be provided with enough information to keep a child safe which may include complex safeguarding systems around the child for their wellbeing. Staff will be provided with appropriate updates to promote a culture of vigilance and professional challenge.
- All members of staff must be aware that whilst they have duties to keep information confidential, in line with our Data Protection/GDPR ([link](#)). Staff also have a professional responsibility to be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify,

assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children; this may include sharing information with the DSL and with other agencies as appropriate.

- In regard to confidentiality and information sharing staff will only involve those who need to be involved, such as the DSL (or a deputy) and Kent Integrated Children's Services. All staff are aware they cannot promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may not be in the best interests of the child.

3.4. Complaints

- All members of our community should feel able to raise or report any concerns about children's safety or potential failures in our safeguarding regime. The setting has a complaints procedure available to parents, members of staff and visitors who wish to report concerns or complaints. This can be found on the academy website.
- Whilst we encourage members of our community to report concerns and complaints directly to us, we recognise this may not always be possible. Children, young people, and adults who have experienced abuse in an education setting can contact the NSPCC 'Report Abuse in Education' helpline on 0800 136 663 or via email: help@nspcc.org.uk
- Staff can also access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally.
 - Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email help@nspcc.org.uk.
- The leadership team at Leigh Academy Marden will take all concerns reported seriously and all complaints will be considered and responded to in line with the relevant and appropriate process.
 - Anything that constitutes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with in line with section 8 of this policy.

4. Specific Safeguarding Issues

- Leigh Academy Marden is aware of a range of specific safeguarding issues and situations that can put children at greater risk of harm. Whilst some of these issues may be more likely to involve older children, early years children may still be at risk of harm, or concerns may be identified where there are risks for children's family members or siblings, and/or young staff members, including for example, children on work placements/experience.
- Where staff are unsure how to respond to specific safeguarding issues, they should follow the processes as identified in part 3 of this policy and speak with the DSL or a deputy.

4.1. Bruising in non-mobile children

- Bruising in babies, infants or children with complex needs that are not mobile (meaning a child who is unable to move independently through rolling, crawling, cruising, or bottom shuffling) is unusual and should always be explored.
- If our setting is concerned about actual or suspected bruising on a non-mobile child, we will respond in line with the:
 - [‘Kent and Medway Protocol for the Management of Actual or Suspected Bruising in Infants and Children who are not Independently Mobile’](#) procedures (2.2.8 of the KSCMP procedures). In summary, these procedures state that If a child appears seriously ill or injured, emergency treatment should be sought through an emergency department (ED) and the Kent ICS should be notified of the concern and the child’s location.
- In all other cases:
 - Staff must inform the DSL immediately and describe and document accurately on a body map the size, shape, colour, and position of the mark/s on the head and/or body.
 - Any explanation of the history of the injury or comments by the parents/carers will be documented accurately (verbatim) in the child’s record, along with the body map.
 - If there is a concern about parental response to the injury, no explanation, or an explanation that is inadequate, unlikely or does not rule out abuse or neglect, an immediate referral will be made to Kent ICS, who have responsibility for arranging further multi-agency assessments.
 - If there are concerns regarding the immediate safety of the child or staff, the police will be called.
 - If the setting is in any doubt as to how to respond to bruising on a non-mobile child, advice will be sought from the Education Safeguarding Service and/or the Front Door.

4.2. Child-on-child abuse

- All members of staff at Leigh Academy Marden recognise that children can abuse other children (referred to as child-on-child abuse, previously known as ‘peer-on-peer’ abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of the setting and online.
- Leigh Academy Marden recognises that child-on-child abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:
 - Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
 - Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children
 - Physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
 - Sexual violence and sexual harassment
 - Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as ‘sexting’ or youth produced sexual imagery)

- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
 - Upskirting (which is a criminal offence), which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
 - Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- Any allegations of child-on-child abuse will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with in line with this child protection policy.
 - Leigh Academy Marden adopts a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse. We believe that abuse is abuse and it will never be tolerated or dismissed as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys”; this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and can create an unsafe environment for children and a culture that normalises abuse, which can prevent children from coming forward to report it.
 - All staff have a role to play in challenging inappropriate behaviours between children. Staff recognise that some child-on-child abuse issues may be affected by gender, age, ability, and culture of those involved. For example, for gender-based abuse, girls are more likely to be victims and boys more likely to be perpetrators.
 - Leigh Academy Marden recognises that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse is still likely to be taking place and it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such, it is important that staff speak to the DSL (or deputy) about any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse.
 - In order to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, Leigh Academy Marden will:
 - Ensure there is a robust anti-bullying policy in place.
 - Provide an age appropriate PSHE/RSE curriculum.
 - Ensure children have a secure understanding of how and who they can report any concerns to.
 - Ensuring that all pupils are aware of our dedicated email address to log any safeguarding concerns: safeguarding@mardenprimaryacademy.org.uk
 - Pupils have access to worry boxes or worry forms if required.
 - Leigh Academy Marden wants children to feel able to confidently report abuse and know their concerns will be treated seriously. All allegations of child-on-child abuse will be reported to the DSL and will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with in line with associated

policies, including child protection, anti-bullying, and behaviour. Children who experience abuse will be offered appropriate support, regardless of where the abuse takes place.

- Concerns about children’s behaviour, including child-on-child abuse taking place offsite will be responded to as part of a partnership approach with children and parents/carers. Offsite behaviour concerns will be recorded and responded to in line with existing appropriate policies, for example anti-bullying, acceptable use, behaviour and child protection policies.
- Alleged victims, alleged perpetrators and any other child affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported by:
 - All reports being taken seriously and pupils being felt listened to.
 - Avoiding any victim blaming.
 - The Pastoral team who will ensure the necessary support is put in place.
 - Working with all parents/carers.
 - Following the procedures outlined in our Anti-bullying, Positive Conduct and Child Protection policies.
 - The Academy reviewing its educational approaches and adapting if appropriate.
 - If appropriate, informing the police.

4.3. Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment

- When responding to concerns relating to child-on-child sexual violence or harassment, Leigh Academy Marden will follow the principles of the guidance outlined in Part five of KCSIE.
- Leigh Academy Marden recognises that sexual violence and sexual abuse can happen anywhere, and all staff will maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here.’ Leigh Academy Marden recognises sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children and can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally). Sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable.
- **All** victims of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment, or ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Abuse that occurs online or outside of the Academy will not be dismissed or downplayed and will be treated equally seriously and in line with relevant policies/procedures, for example anti-bullying, behaviour, child protection and online safety.

- Leigh Academy Marden recognises that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and where appropriate, this will be explained in such a way to children that avoids alarming or distressing them.
- Leigh Academy Marden recognises that an initial disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported, rather than representative of a singular incident and that trauma can impact memory, so children may not be able to recall all details or timeline of abuse. All staff will be aware certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone, for example because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity, and/or sexual orientation.
- The DSL (or deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and will be the most appropriate person to advise on the initial response.
 - The DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment which will be considered on a case-by-case basis which explores how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator, and any other children involved/impacted, in line with part five of KCSIE and relevant local/national guidance and support.
 - The risk and needs assessment will be recorded and kept under review and will consider the victim (especially their protection and support), the alleged perpetrator, and all other children, and staff and any actions that are required to protect them.
 - Any concerns involving an online element will take place in accordance with relevant local/national guidance and advice.
- Reports will initially be managed internally by the setting and where necessary will be referred to [Integrated Children's Services](#) (Early Help and/or Children's Social Work Service) and/or the police. Important considerations which may influence this decision include:
 - The wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed.
 - The nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether Harmful Sexual Behavior (HSB) has been displayed.
 - The ages of the children involved.
 - The developmental stages of the children involved.
 - Any power imbalance between the children.
 - If the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse - sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature.
 - That sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between children.
 - Understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents.
 - Whether there are any ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students, or staff.
 - Any other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.

- The setting will in most instances engage with both the victim's and alleged perpetrator's parents/carers when there has been a report of sexual violence; this might not be necessary or proportionate in the case of sexual harassment and will depend on a case-by-case basis.
 - The exception to this is if there is a reason to believe informing a parent/carer will put a child at additional risk.
 - Any information shared with parents/carers will be in line with information sharing expectations, our confidentiality policy, and any data protection requirements, and where they are involved, will be subject to discussion with other agencies (for example Children's Social Work Service and/or the police) to ensure a consistent approach is taken.

4.4 Nude and/or semi-nude image sharing by children

- Leigh Academy Marden recognises that consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as youth produced/involved sexual imagery or "sexting") can be a safeguarding issue; all concerns will be reported to and dealt with by the DSL (or deputy).
- When made aware of any concerns involving the taking or sharing of consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos by children (under 18s), staff are advised:
 - To report any concerns to the DSL immediately.
 - Never to view, copy, print, share, forward, store or save the imagery, or ask a child to share or download it – this may be illegal. If staff have already inadvertently viewed Imagery, this will be immediately reported to the DSL.
 - Not to delete the imagery or ask the child to delete it.
 - To avoid saying or doing anything to blame or shame any children involved.
 - To reassure the child(ren) involved and explain that the DSL will be informed so they can receive appropriate support and help. Do not promise confidentiality, as other agencies may need to be informed and be involved.
 - Not to investigate or ask the child(ren) involved to disclose information regarding the imagery.
 - To not share information about the incident with other members of staff, children, or parents/carers, including the families and child(ren) involved in the incident; this is the responsibility of the DSL.
- DSLs will respond to concerns in line with the non-statutory UKCIS guidance: '[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)' and the local [KSCMP](#) guidance. When made aware of a concern involving consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos:
 - The DSL will hold an initial review meeting to explore the context and ensure appropriate and proportionate safeguarding action is taken in the best interests of any child involved. This may mean speaking with relevant staff and the children involved as appropriate.

- Parents/carers will be informed at an early stage and be involved in the process to best support children, unless there is good reason to believe that involving them would put a child at risk of harm.
- All decisions and action taken will be recorded in line with our child protection procedures.
- A referral will be made to ICS and/or the police immediately if:
 - The incident involves an adult (over 18).
 - There is reason to believe that a child has been coerced, blackmailed, or groomed, or there are concerns about their capacity to consent, for example, age of the child or they have special educational needs.
 - The image/videos involve sexual acts and a child under the age of thirteen, depict sexual acts which are unusual for the child's developmental stage, or are violent.
 - A child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.
- The DSL may choose to involve other agencies at any time if further information/concerns are disclosed at a later date.

4.5. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

- Leigh Academy Marden recognises that both Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. Children may also experience exploitation alongside other forms of harm or abuse.
- Leigh Academy Marden recognises that children can become trapped in CCE as perpetrators can threaten victims and their families with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. Children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves which can mean their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised (particularly older children) and they are not treated as victims, despite the harm they have experienced. The experience of girls who are criminally exploited can also be very different to that of boys. We also recognise that boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE).
- Leigh Academy Marden recognises that CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge, for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities and includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited, for example they may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

- If staff are concerned that a child within the setting or our wider community may be at risk of CSE or CCE, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

4.6. Serious violence

- All staff are aware of the indicators which may signal children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include unexplained gifts or new possessions, increased absence, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of CCE.
- Any concerns regarding serious violence will be reported and responded to in line with other child protection concerns by speaking with a DSL or deputy. The initial response to child victims is important and staff will take any allegations seriously and work in ways that support children and keep them safe.

4.7. So-called Honour Based Abuse (HBA)

- So-called ‘honour’-based abuse (HBA), including abuse linked to faith or belief, encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.
- All forms of HBA are abuse, regardless of the motivation, and concerns will be responded to in line with section 3 of this policy. Staff will report any concerns about HBA to the DSL (or a deputy). If there is an immediate threat, the police will be contacted.
- All staff will speak to the DSL (or deputy) if they have any concerns about forced marriage. Staff can also contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: 020 7008 0151 or fm@fcdo.gov.uk
- Whilst all staff will speak to the DSL (or deputy) if they have any concerns about FGM, there is a specific legal reporting duty on teachers.
 - 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 in England and Wales, to personally report to the police where they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl.
 - It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining children, however teachers who do not personally report such concerns may face disciplinary sanctions. Further information on when and how to make a report can be found at: [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#) and [FGM Mandatory reporting Duty Fact Sheet](#).

- Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they are expected to also discuss any FGM concerns with the DSL (or a deputy), and Kent Integrated Childrens Services should be informed as appropriate.

4.8. Preventing radicalisation

- Leigh Academy Marden is aware of our duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”, also known as the Prevent duty and the [specific obligations](#) placed upon us as an education provider regarding risk assessments, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.
- Leigh Academy Marden recognises that children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. All staff have received appropriate training to enable them to be alert to changes in children’s behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection from radicalisation.
- Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.
- Staff will report any concerns to the DSL (or a deputy), who is aware of the [local procedures](#) to follow. If there is an immediate threat, the police will be contacted via 999.

4.9. Cybercrime

- Leigh Academy Marden recognises that children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into ‘cyber-enabled’ (crimes that can happen offline but are enabled at scale and at speed online) or ‘cyber dependent’ (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer/internet enabled device) cybercrime.
- Whilst this may be unlikely to affect children attending our setting, it may impact others in the community. If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of becoming involved in cyber-dependent cybercrime, the DSL or a deputy will be informed.
- Where there are concerns about ‘cyber-enabled’ crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs online, child sexual abuse and exploitation, or other areas of concern such as online bullying or general online safety, they will be responded to in line with the child protection and other appropriate policies.

DSLs can seek advice from their local Police and/or advice from LESSAS.

4.10. Domestic abuse

- Leigh Academy Marden recognises that:
 - Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents.
 - Domestic abuse can include, but is not limited to, psychological (including coercive control), physical, sexual, economic, or emotional abuse.
 - Children can be victims of domestic abuse if they see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse).
 - Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.
 - Domestic abuse can take place within different types of relationships, including ex-partners and family members.
 - There is always a potential for domestic abuse to take place when parents/families separate, or for existing domestic abuse to persist or escalate post separation.
 - Domestic abuse can have a detrimental and long-term impact on children's health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.
 - Domestic abuse concerns will not be looked at in isolation and our response will be considered as part of a holistic approach which takes into account children's lived experiences.
 - It is important not to use victim blaming language and to adopt a trauma informed approach when responding to concerns relating to domestic abuse.

- If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of seeing, hearing, or experiencing the effects of domestic abuse, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

4.11. Mental health

- All staff 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.

- Staff are aware that children's experiences, for example where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.
 - is at risk of being radicalised

 - has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending

- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult

mental health issues and domestic abuse

- o is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- o has returned home to their family from care
- o is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- o is a privately fostered child.
- o is missing education, or persistently absent, or not in receipt of full-time education
 - Staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
 - If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

5. Supporting Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm

- Whilst **all** children should be protected, Leigh Academy Marden acknowledges that some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm. This can include the following groups: children with SEND and children who are LGBT.

5.1. Children who may benefit from Early Help

- Any child may benefit from early help. In line with Working Together to Safeguard Children, this may include support delivered through community-based approaches or via a joined-up multi-agency response.
- All staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:
 - o is unborn
 - o is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific medical/additional needs
 - o has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
 - o is suffering from mental ill health
 - o is a young carer
 - o is bereaved
 - o is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
 - o is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care

- o has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- o is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- Where it is identified a child may need early help, staff and DSLs will respond in line with section 3 of this policy.

5.1. Safeguarding children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)

- Leigh Academy Marden acknowledges that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and barriers for recognising abuse and neglect.
- Leigh Academy Marden recognises that children with SEND may face additional communication barriers and experience difficulties in managing or reporting abuse or challenges. Children with SEND will be supported to communicate and ensure that their voice is heard and acted upon.
- All members of staff are encouraged to appropriately explore potential indicators of abuse such as behaviour, mood changes or injuries and not to assume that they are related to the child's disability. Staff will be mindful that children with SEND or certain medical conditions, may be disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- Members of staff are encouraged to be aware that children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by safeguarding concerns, such as exploitation, peer group isolation or bullying including prejudice-based bullying.
- To address these additional challenges, our setting will always consider implementing extra pastoral support and attention for children with SEND. The DSL will work closely with the SENCO (Nicola Bryant) to plan support as required.
- Our setting has robust intimate/personal care policies ([link](#)) which ensure that the health, safety, independence, and welfare of children is promoted, and their dignity and privacy are respected. Arrangements for intimate and personal care are open and transparent and accompanied by robust recording systems. Further information can be found in our policies: <https://leighacademymarden.org.uk/about-us/policies/>

5.2. Children requiring mental health support

- Leigh Academy Marden has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our children. 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.
- Where there are concerns regarding possible mental health problems for children, staff should:
 - Report their concerns on Bromcom which will alert the Mental Health Lead (Deputy DSL).
 - The Mental Health lead will either signpost to support that can be accessed or if appropriate will make a school health referral.
 - A Boxall assessment will be completed to assess the areas of concern and to monitor progress once support is in place.
 - Arrange a meeting with the pupil's parents/carers to discuss concerns and identify if there are any concerns at home.
 - Monitor the pupil and inform the Mental Health Lead of any updates/concerns.
- Age/ability appropriate education will be provided to children to help promote positive health, wellbeing, and resilience.

5.3. Children who are absent from education

- Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines.
- A robust response to children who are absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions will support the identification of such abuse and may help prevent the risk of children going missing in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging and also where children are already known to Kent Integrated Children's Services and/or have a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.
- Where possible, the setting will hold more than one emergency contact number for each child, so we have additional options to make contact with a responsible adult if a child absent from the setting is also identified as being a welfare and/or safeguarding concern (see section 3.5).

5.4. Children who need a social worker (child in need and child protection plans)

- The DSL will hold details of social workers working with children in the academy so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes.
- Where children have a social worker, this will inform our decisions about their safety and promoting their welfare, for example, responding to absences and provision of pastoral and/or educational support.

5.5. Looked after children (including kinship care), previously looked after children and care Leavers

- Leigh Academy Marden recognises the common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect and a previously looked after child also potentially remains vulnerable.
- Where the setting believes a child is being cared for as part of a private fostering arrangement (occurs when a child under 16 or 18 if the child is disabled is cared for and lives with an adult who is not a relative for 28 days or more) there is a duty to recognise these arrangements and inform the Local Authority via the Front Door.
- Where safeguarding concerns arise for children who are looked after, previously looked after, in kinship care or leaving care, the school will ensure safeguarding action is considered alongside existing care planning and support arrangements.

5.6. Members of the community who are Lesbian, Gay, Bi, or Trans (LGBT)

- The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, Leigh Academy Marden recognises that children who are LGBT or are perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be targeted by other children or others within the wider community.
- Leigh Academy Marden recognises risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. LGBT is included within our Relationships Education/ Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum, and our staff will endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and provide a safe space for children to speak out or share any concerns.

5.7. Children who are privately fostered

- [Private fostering](#) occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 for children with a disability) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home. A child is not privately fostered if the person caring for and accommodating them has done so for less than 28 days and does not intend to do so for longer. Such arrangements may come to the attention of our staff through the normal course of their interaction, and promotion of learning activities, with children.
- When private fostering arrangements come to the attention of the academy, we must notify Kent Integrated Children's Services in line with the local [KSCMP arrangements](#) in order to allow the local authority to check if the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child.

5.8. Children who are Gender Questioning

The fact that a child is questioning their gender can be targeted by other children or others within the wider community.

When supporting a gender questioning pupil, we will take a cautious approach as there are still unknowns around the impact of social transition, and a pupil may have wider vulnerability, such as complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases, autism and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

We will also consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with their parents/carers (other than in rare circumstances where involving parents/carers would constitute a significant risk of harm to the pupil). We will also include any clinical advice that is available and consider how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying.

Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. We therefore aim to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where pupils can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

6. Online Safety

This section should be read in conjunction with the Trust's Online Safety Policy.

- It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate material or behaviours online. Leigh Academy Marden will adopt a whole Academy approach to online safety which will empower, protect, and educate our pupils and staff in their use of technology, and establish mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

- Leigh Academy Marden will ensure online safety is considered as a running and interrelated theme when devising and implementing our policies and procedures, and when planning our curriculum, staff training, the role and responsibilities of the DSL and parental engagement.
- Leigh Academy Marden identifies that the breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:
 - Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content. For example, pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
 - Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users. For example, peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
 - Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm. For example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (including consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying.
 - Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.
- Leigh Academy Marden recognises that technology and the risks and harms related to it evolve and change rapidly. The academy will carry out an annual review of our approaches to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment, which considers and reflects the current risks our children face online.
- The Principal will be informed of any online safety concerns by the DSL, as appropriate. The named governor for safeguarding will report on online safety practice and incidents, including outcomes, on a regular basis to the wider governing body.

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, while [children are present / during contact time]. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staffroom).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time for personal reasons. For instance (this list is non-exhaustive):

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family member
- The Principal will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, staff can use the setting office number [01622 831393] as a point of emergency contact.

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or pupils.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment.

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are setting property during the school day.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's at a public event (such as a school fair), or of their own child
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.

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.

Leigh Academy Marden recognises that AI has many uses, including enhancing teaching and learning, and in helping to protect and safeguard pupils. However, AI may also have the potential to facilitate abuse (e.g. bullying and grooming) and/or expose pupils to harmful content. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

Leigh Academy Marden will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully pupils in line with this policy and our [anti-bullying/behaviour/artificial intelligence] policy.

Staff should be aware of the risks of using AI tools while they are still being developed and should carry out risk assessments for any new AI tool being used by the school. Our academy's requirements for filtering and monitoring also apply to the use of AI, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education. Add any additional procedures you may have in place for dealing with safeguarding concerns related to AI – for example where indecent images have been shared that are AI-generated.

6.1. Policies and procedures

- The DSL has overall responsibility for online safety within the Setting but will liaise with other members of staff, for example the Trust's CIO, IT technicians and curriculum leads as necessary.
- The DSL will respond to online safety concerns in line with our child protection and other associated policies, including our Anti-bullying policy, Behaviour policy, Online Safety Policy and Staff Code of Conduct and behaviour policies.
- Internal sanctions and/or support will be implemented as appropriate.
- Where necessary, concerns will be escalated and reported to relevant partner agencies in line with local policies and procedures.
- Leigh Academy Marden recognises the specific risks that can be posed by mobile phones, cameras and all other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities that may be used in the setting. This includes any device with functionality or the ability to send or receive messages or notifications, connect to mobile networks, or record images, audio and/or video, for example, but not limited to, devices with built-in mobile connectivity, smart phones, smart watches, smart glasses, fitness trackers and other wearable technology.
- Leigh Academy Marden uses a wide range of technology. This includes: computers, laptops, iPads, ChromeBooks and other digital devices, the internet, our learning platform, and email systems.
 - All Academy owned devices and systems will be used in accordance with our acceptable use policies and with appropriate safety and security measures in place

6.2. Appropriate filtering and monitoring on school/college devices and networks

- Leigh Academy Marden will do all we reasonably can to limit children's exposure to online harms through Academy provided devices and networks and in line with the requirements of the Prevent Duty and KCSIE, we will ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place (Smoothwall and Sophos systems).
- When implementing appropriate filtering and monitoring, Leigh Academy Marden will ensure that "over blocking" does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding.
- Whilst filtering and monitoring is an important part of our online safety responsibilities, it is only one part of our approach to online safety and we recognise that we cannot rely on filtering and monitoring alone to safeguard our pupils; effective safeguarding practice, robust policies, appropriate classroom/behaviour management and regular education/training about safe and responsible use is essential and expected.

- Pupils will use appropriate search tools, apps and online resources as identified by staff, following an informed risk assessment. Amend to include any specific expectations for example, using a child friendly search engine, using child friendly tools.
- Internet use will be supervised by staff as appropriate to pupils age, ability and potential risk of harm:
 - Pupils in EYFS/KS1 will always be supervised closely by a member of staff to ensure they are accessing and using the tools, apps and online resources safely and in the appropriate way.
 - If a child has been identified as being at potentially greater risk of harm they will also be supervised closely by a member of staff and their access to tools, apps and online resources will be monitored.

Responsibilities

- The Trust Board alongside the Trust CIO has overall strategic responsibility for our filtering and monitoring approaches, including ensuring that our filtering and monitoring systems are regularly reviewed. The work in close conjunction with the Trust Safeguarding leads and Academy DSLs to ensure the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the appropriate filtering and monitoring provisions in place, manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.
- Hannah Penning, a member of the senior leadership team and Marie Rance, governor, are responsible for ensuring that our school/college has met the DfE [Filtering and monitoring standards](#) for schools and colleges.
- Our senior leadership team are responsible for:
 - Procuring filtering and monitoring systems.
 - Documenting decisions on what is blocked or allowed and why.
 - Reviewing the effectiveness of our provision.
 - Overseeing reports.
 - Ensuring that all staff understand their role, are appropriately trained, follow policies, processes and procedures and act on reports and concerns.
 - Ensuring the DSL and IT service providers/staff have sufficient time and support to manage their filtering and monitoring responsibilities.
- The DSL has lead responsibility for overseeing and acting on:
 - Any filtering and monitoring reports.
 - Any child protection or safeguarding concerns identified.
 - Checks the filtering and monitoring system.
- The IT service providers/staff have technical responsibility for:
 - Maintaining filtering and monitoring systems.
 - Providing filtering and monitoring reports.
 - Completing technical actions identified following any concerns or checks to systems.

- Working with the senior leadership team and DSL to procure systems, identify risks, carry out reviews and carry out checks.
- All members of staff are provided with an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring as part of our induction process, and in our child protection staff training.
- All staff, pupils and parents/carers have a responsibility to follow this policy to report and record any filtering or monitoring concerns.

Decision making and reviewing our filtering and monitoring provision

- When procuring and/or making decisions about our filtering and monitoring provision, our senior leadership team works closely with the DSL and the IT service providers/staff. Decisions have been recorded (IT helpdesk and web filter audit log) and informed by an approach which ensures our systems meet our Academy Specific needs and circumstances, including but not limited to our pupil risk profile and specific technology use.
- Any changes to the filtering and monitoring approaches will be assessed by staff with safeguarding, educational and technical experience and, where appropriate, with consent from the leadership team; all changes to the filtering policy are logged and recorded (IT helpdesk and web filter audit log).
- Our academy undertakes an at least annual review, in conjunction with relevant Trust leaders of our filtering and monitoring systems to ensure we understand the changing needs and potential risks posed to our community.
- In addition, on behalf of the academy the Trust IT team alongside DSLs undertake regular checks on our filtering and monitoring systems, which are logged and recorded, to ensure our approaches are effective and can provide assurance to the Community Board that we are meeting our safeguarding obligations.
- These checks are achieved by:
 - Termly checks which are undertaken by the DSL and another member of SLT/Safeguarding team.
 - Checks are completed in the Principal's office to ensure it is a secure and confidential space.
 - Check's are logged.
 - Any technical concerns are flagged to the IT staff and are actioned by the DSL in line with this policy.

Appropriate filtering

- Leigh Academy Marden's education broadband connectivity is provided through the UR central services team and Leigh Academy Marden uses Smoothwall and Sophos as a filtering and monitoring system.

- Our Internet provider is a member of [Internet Watch Foundation](#) (IWF).
- Smoothwall has signed up to Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit list (CTIRU).
- Smoothwall filter is blocking access to illegal content including child sexual abuse material (CSAM).
- Smoothwall filter blocks access to sites which could promote or include harmful and/or inappropriate behaviour or material. This includes content which promotes discrimination or extremism, drugs/substance misuse, malware/hacking, gambling, piracy and copyright theft, pro-self-harm, eating disorder and/or suicide content, pornographic content and violent material.
- We filter internet use on all Academy owned, or provided, internet enabled devices and networks. This is achieved by:
 - Smoothwall and Sophos filtering and monitoring which is installed on all devices.
 - Our filtering systems should allow us to identify device names or IDs, IP addresses, and where possible, individual users, the time and date of attempted access and the search term or content being blocked.
- Our filtering system is operational, up to date and is applied to all users, including guest accounts, all Academy owned devices and networks, and all devices using the Academy broadband connection.
- We work with our IT service providers/staff to ensure that our filtering policy is continually reviewed to reflect our needs and requirements.
- If there is failure in the software or abuse of the system, for example if pupils or staff accidentally or deliberately access, witness or suspect unsuitable material has been accessed, they are required to:
 - Turn off monitor/screen, use a screen cover widget, report the concern immediately to a member of staff, and report the URL of the site to technical staff/services (using helpdesk ticket system).
- Filtering breaches will be reported to the DSL and technical staff and will be recorded and escalated as appropriate and in line with relevant policies, including our child protection, acceptable use, allegations against staff and behaviour policies.
- Parents/carers will be informed of filtering breaches involving their child.
- Any access to material believed to indicate a risk of significant harm, or that could be illegal, will be reported as soon as it is identified to the appropriate agencies, including but not

limited to the [Internet Watch Foundation](#) (where there are concerns about child sexual abuse material), [Kent Police](#), [NCA-CEOP](#) or [Kent Integrated Children's Services](#).

- If staff are teaching topics which could create unusual activity on the filtering and monitoring logs, or if staff perceive there to be unreasonable restrictions affecting teaching, learning or administration, they will report this to the DSL and/or leadership team who will liaise with IT services.

Appropriate monitoring

- We will appropriately monitor internet use on all Academy provided devices and networks. This is achieved by our Smoothwall and Sophos filtering and monitoring systems (insert if you also use Impero Classroom).
- All users will be informed that use of our devices and networks can/will be monitored and that all monitoring is in line with data protection, human rights and privacy legislation.
- If a concern is identified via our monitoring approaches:
 - Where the concern relates to pupils, it will be reported to the DSL and will be recorded and responded to in line with relevant policies, such as child protection, acceptable use, and behaviour policies.
 - Where the concern relates to staff, it will be reported to the Principal (or chair of governors if the concern relates to the Principal), in line with our staff conduct/ allegations policy.
- Where our monitoring approaches detect any immediate risk of harm or illegal activity, this will be reported as soon as possible to the appropriate agencies; including but not limited to, the emergency services via 999, [Kent Police](#) via 101, [NCA-CEOP](#) , LADO or Children's Social Care.

6.3. Information security and access management

- Leigh Academy Marden is responsible for ensuring an appropriate level of security protection procedures are in place, in order to safeguard our systems as well as staff and pupils. Further information can be found in our acceptable use policies and online safety policy.
- Leigh Academy Marden will review the effectiveness of our procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies and retain running record checks.
- Leigh Academy Marden, a member of the senior leadership team and Marie Rance, governor, are responsible for ensuring that our Setting has met the DfE [cyber security standards](#) for schools and colleges.

6.4. Remote/Online learning

- Leigh Academy Marden will ensure any remote sharing of information, communication and use of online learning tools and systems will be in line with privacy and data protection requirements and any local/national guidance.
- All communication with pupils and parents/carers will take place using Academy provided or approved communication channels; for example, Academy provided email accounts and phone numbers or through agreed systems such as : Google Classroom.
 - Any pre-existing relationships or situations which mean this cannot be complied with will be discussed with the DSL.
- Staff and pupils will be encouraged to report issues experienced at home and concerns will be responded to in line with our child protection and other relevant policies.
- When delivering remote learning, staff will follow our Remote Learning Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

6.5. Online Safety Training for Staff

- Leigh Academy Marden will ensure that all staff receive online safety training, which, amongst other things, will include providing them with an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and their responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, as part of induction.
- Ongoing online safety training and updates for all staff will be integrated, aligned and considered as part of our overarching safeguarding approach. See section 7 for more information.

6.6. Educating pupils

- Leigh Academy Marden will ensure a comprehensive whole Academy curriculum response is in place to enable all pupils to learn about and manage online risks effectively as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. See section 9 for more information.

6.7. Working with parents/carers

- Leigh Academy Marden will build a partnership approach to online safety and will support parents/carers to become aware and alert of the potential benefits and risks and to reinforce the importance of children being safe online by:
 - Providing information on our Academy website:
<https://leighacademymarden.org.uk/safeguarding/internet-safety/>

- Sharing information in our newsletters.
- Offering online safety information sessions for parents/carers.
- Leigh Academy Marden will ensure parents and carers understand what systems are used to filter and monitor their children's online use at Academy, what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and who from the Academy (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online. This is achieved by:
 - Providing information on our Academy website.
 - Information given in our Acceptable use and Online safety policies.
 - Through updated information on our Newsletter or Google Classroom.
- Where the academy is made aware of any potentially harmful risks, challenges and/or hoaxes circulating online, national or locally, we will respond in line with the DfE '[Harmful online challenges and online hoaxes](#)' guidance to ensure we adopt a proportional and helpful response.

7. Staff Engagement and Expectations

7.1. Staff awareness, induction and training

- All members of staff have been provided with a copy of part one of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2025 which covers safeguarding information for staff. In addition:
 - Setting management staff, including the DSL will read KCSIE in its entirety.
 - All members of staff who work directly with children will read annex B.
 - All members of staff have signed to confirm that they have read and understood the KCSIE guidance shared with them. This information is recorded on the Academy single central record and on the Trust training platform Thrive.
- It is a requirement that all members of staff have access to this policy and sign to say they have read and understood its contents. All staff are expected to re-read this policy at least annually (and following any updates) to ensure they understand our expectations and requirements.
- All new staff and volunteers (including agency and third-party staff) receive safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety), including information to ensure they are aware of our internal safeguarding processes, as part of their induction. This training is regularly updated and is in line with advice from the safeguarding partners. This training will be provided as a blend of e-learning and face-to-face training by the DSL/Safeguarding team so as to ensure it is relevant to the Academy setting.
- All staff members (including agency and third-party staff) will receive appropriate child protection training (including online safety) to ensure they are aware of a range of safeguarding issues. This training will be updated at least annually. This training will be

delivered as part of the annual inset days at the start of each academic year which will be revisited during the year as part of professional development sessions.

- Online safety training for staff will be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole Academy safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning. Staff will complete specific training on the Trust training platform Thrive. Any updates will then be shared with staff as and when appropriate during the school year.
- In addition to specific child protection training, all staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. This will be achieved by:
 - Delivering a safeguarding refresher course at the start of the academic year.
 - Specific training on the Trust training platform Thrive.
 - Weekly reminders and sharing of case studies as part of staff meetings/briefing sessions.
- Leigh Academy Marden recognises the expertise staff build by undertaking safeguarding training and from managing safeguarding concerns on a daily basis and staff are encouraged to contribute to and shape our safeguarding arrangements and child protection policies. Staff are invited to contribute as part of staff meetings, phase meetings and weekly DSL meetings.
- The DSL will maintain an up-to-date record of who has been trained and will provide an annual report to the manager detailing safeguarding training undertaken.

7.2. Safer working practice

- Our setting takes steps as outlined in this and other relevant policies to ensure processes are in place for staff that promote continuous vigilance, maintain an environment that deters and prevents abuse and challenges inappropriate behaviour.
- All members of staff are required to work within our clear guidelines on safer working practice as outlined in our staff code of conduct.
- The DSL will ensure that all staff (including contractors) and volunteers are aware of the Academy expectations regarding safe and professional practice via the staff code of conduct and Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).
- Staff will be made aware of our behaviour management and physical intervention policies. Staff will manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment and will have a clear understanding of the needs of all children. Any physical interventions and/or use of reasonable force will be in line with our agreed policy and procedures, and national guidance.
- All staff will be made aware of the professional risks associated with the use of social media and electronic communication (such as email, mobile phones, texting, social networking). Staff will

adhere to relevant Academy policies including staff behaviour policy, mobile and smart technology, Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs), and social media.

7.3. Supervision and support

- The induction process will include familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and procedures to be followed if members of staff have any concerns about a child's safety or welfare.
- The setting will ensure that members of staff are provided with appropriate supervision in accordance with the statutory requirements of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2023.
- The registered person of Leigh Academy Marden recognises regular, planned, and accountable supervision, which is a two-way process, offers support and develops the knowledge, skills and values of an individual, group, or team. We see its purpose is to monitor the progress of professional practice and to help staff to improve the quality of the work they do, thus improving outcomes for children as well as achieving agreed objectives. Supervision also provides an opportunity to discuss sensitive issues including the safeguarding of children and any concerns raised about an individual or colleague's practice.
- The setting will ensure all members of staff and volunteers will receive regular and planned supervision sessions. Uninterrupted time will be set aside to ensure any supervision sessions effective for both practitioner and management to ensure that:
 - All staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
 - All staff are supported by the DSL in their safeguarding role.
 - All members of staff have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time.
- Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for children's welfare or safety can seek support from the DSL.
- The DSL will also put staff in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish. Staff can also approach organisations such as their Union, the Education Support Partnership or other similar organisations directly.
- The Academy will ensure that members of staff who are working as part of the Safeguarding team are provided with appropriate supervision in accordance with the statutory requirements of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.
- Members of staff who have engaged in a Safeguarding issue have the opportunity to additional support by the DSL, Principal or access Wellbeing services provided by the Trust.

8. Safer Recruitment and Allegations Against Staff

8.1. Safer recruitment and safeguarding checks

- Leigh Academy Marden is committed to ensure that we develop a safe culture and ensuring that steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with children and staff.
- Leigh Academy Marden will follow Part three, 'Safer recruitment' of Keeping Children Safe in Education and relevant guidance from The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- The Community Board, Trust Executive Leadership and Academy Leadership team are responsible for ensuring that the setting follows safe recruitment processes as outlined within guidance.
- The Community Board, Trust Executive Leadership and setting Leadership team will ensure that at least one of the persons who conducts an interview has completed safer recruitment training.
- The setting maintains an accurate Single Central Record (SCR) in line with statutory guidance.
- Leigh Academy Marden are committed to supporting the statutory guidance from the Department for Education on the application of the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 and related obligations under the Childcare Act 2006 in schools.
- We advise all staff to disclose any reason that may affect their suitability to work with children including convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands, and warnings.
- Where the school/college places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and will need to satisfy ourselves that the provider can meet the needs of the pupil.
- Leigh Academy Marden will 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 our school/college would otherwise perform in respect of our own staff.
- The setting will obtain an enhanced check by Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in respect of every person aged 16 and over (including for unsupervised volunteers, and supervised volunteers who provide personal care) who:
 - works directly with children
 - lives on the premises on which the childcare is provided and/or

- works on the premises on which the childcare is provided (unless they do not work on the part of the premises where the childcare takes place, or do not work there at times when children are present).
- An additional check by the DBS (or checks if more than one country) will also be made for anyone who has lived or worked abroad.
- The Principal of Leigh Academy Marden is responsible for ensuring that the setting adopts an application, vetting and recruitment process which places safeguarding at its center, regardless of employee or voluntary role.
- The Principal of Leigh Academy Marden is responsible for ensuring that the setting follows safe recruitment processes outlined within guidance. At least one member of the interview panel will have completed safer recruitment training.
- The Principal of Leigh Academy Marden is aware of the requirements to make appropriate checks regarding the disqualification status of all staff, including volunteers and temporary staff.
- We advise all staff to disclose any reason that may affect their suitability to work with children including convictions, cautions, court orders, and warnings.
- We will ensure that all staff and volunteers have read the staff behaviour policy/code of conduct and understand that their behaviour and practice must be in line with it.

8.2. Allegations/concerns raised in relation to staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors

- Any concerns or allegations about staff will be recorded and dealt with appropriately in line with Part four of KCSIE and the LCB arrangements. In depth information can be found within our 'Managing Allegations against Staff' and staff code of conduct policy. This can be found on our website.
- Any concerns or allegations about staff will be recorded and dealt with appropriately in line with Part four of KCSIE and local guidance. Ensuring concerns are dealt with effectively will protect those working in or on behalf of the Academy from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.
- Where Principals are unsure how to respond, for example if the Academy is unsure if a concern meets the harm 'thresholds', advice will be sought via the [Local Authority Designated Officer](#) (LADO) Enquiry Line and/or the [Education Safeguarding Service](#).
- In all cases where allegations are made against staff or low-level concerns are reported, once proceedings have been concluded, the principal (and if they have been involved the

LADO) will consider the facts and determine whether any lessons can be learned and if any improvements can be made.

- In the situation that the Academy receives an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using our premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities), we will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.

8.3. Staff Conduct

- As part of our approach to safeguarding, we will create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour as set out in our staff code of conduct are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, and any concerns are dealt with promptly and appropriately.
- Staff are encouraged and should feel confident to self-refer, if they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards. This includes where concerns may be felt to be deliberately invented or malicious; such allegations are extremely rare and as such all concerns should be reported and recorded.
- All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise any concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in our safeguarding regime. The management team at Leigh Academy Marden will take all concerns or allegations received seriously.
- All members of staff are made aware of the Academy Whistleblowing procedure. It is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk.
- Staff can access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email help@nspcc.org.uk.
- Leigh Academy Marden has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person.
- If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at our setting, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the [LADO](#) and/or LAT People.

- Leigh Academy Marden have a duty to inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). We will also notify Ofsted of the action taken in respect of the allegations. Notifications will be made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made and are aware that to not do so would be an offence.

8.4. Concerns that meet the ‘harm threshold’

- Leigh Academy Marden recognises that it is possible for any member of staff, including volunteers, governors, contractors, agency and third-party staff (including supply teachers) and visitors to behave in a way that indicates a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity with children in a school or college. This includes when someone has:
 - Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
 - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children
 - Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.
- Allegations against staff which meet this threshold will be responded to and managed in line with Part four of KCSIE. Allegations that meet the harm threshold will be referred immediately to the principal who will contact the [LADO](#) to agree further action to be taken in respect of the child and staff member. In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the principal, staff are advised that allegations should be reported to the Academies Director who will contact the LADO.

8.4.1. Concerns that do not meet the ‘harm threshold’

- Leigh Academy Marden may also need to take action in response to ‘low-level’ concerns about staff. Additional information regarding low-level concerns is contained with our staff code of conduct/low-levels concerns policy – this includes what a low-level concern is, the importance of sharing them and the confidential procedure to follow when sharing them.
- Leigh Academy Marden has an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the Academy are dealt with promptly and appropriately; this enables us to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early, minimise the risk of abuse and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the Academy are clear about and act within appropriate professional boundaries, and in accordance with our ethos and values.
- A ‘low-level’ concern does not mean that it is insignificant; a low-level concern is any concern that an adult working in or on behalf of the Academy may have acted in a way that is

inconsistent with our code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and does not meet the 'harm threshold' or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

- Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example, suspicion, complaints, or allegations made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation, or as a result of vetting checks.
- It is crucial that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly, recorded and dealt with appropriately to protect staff from becoming the subject of potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings.
- Low-level concerns should be shared confidentially in line with our Code of Conduct to the Principal.
- Where low-level concerns are reported to the Academy, the principal will be informed of all low-level concerns and is the ultimate decision maker in respect of the response to all low-level concerns.
- The principal will share concerns and liaise with the LADO enquiries officer via the [LADO Enquiry Line](#).
- Low-level concerns shared about supply staff and contractors will be shared with their employers so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.
- If the Academy is in any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, we will consult with the LADO.
- Low-level concerns will be recorded in writing and reviewed so potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.
- Records will be kept confidential and will be held securely and retained and in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and other relevant policies and procedures (for example data retention policies).
- Where a pattern is identified, the Academy will implement appropriate action, for example consulting with [the LADO enquiry line](#) and following our disciplinary procedures.

8.5. Staff Conduct

- As part of our approach to safeguarding, the Academy has created and embedded a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour as set out in our code of conduct are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff (including

supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) and where all concerns are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

- Staff are encouraged and should feel confident to self-refer, if they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards. This includes where concerns may be felt to be deliberately invented or malicious; such allegations are extremely rare and as such all concerns should be reported and recorded.
- All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise any concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the Academy safeguarding regime. The leadership team at Leigh Academy Marden will take all concerns or allegations received seriously.
- All members of staff are made aware of the Academy Whistleblowing procedure. It is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk.
- Staff can access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email help@nspcc.org.uk.
- Leigh Academy Marden has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person.
- If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at our Academy, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the [LADO](#).

9. Opportunities to Teach Safeguarding

- Leigh Academy Marden recognises that children learn best when they are healthy, safe, and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. Our setting will provide a welcoming, safe, and stimulating environment where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence.
- We recognise that early years settings play an essential role in helping children to understand and identify the parameters of what is appropriate child and adult behaviour; what is 'safe'; to recognise when they and others close to them are not safe; and how to seek advice and support when they are concerned.

- Leigh Academy Marden will provide age-appropriate educational opportunities to enable early years children to develop self-awareness, self-esteem, social and emotional understanding, assertiveness, and decision making so that they have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others, including online.
- Leigh Academy Marden 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 SEND children might be needed.
- Our systems support children to talk to a range of staff. All children will be listened to and heard, and their concerns will always be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate.

10. Physical Safety

10.1. Use of 'reasonable force'

- There may be circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force in order to safeguard children from harm. Further information regarding our approach and expectations can be found in our behaviour policy and is in line with the DFE ['Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools guidance', April 2026](#). Any uses of reasonable force are recorded.

10.2. The use of premises by other organisations

- Where our setting facilities or premises are rented/hired out 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.
- Where those services or activities are provided under the direct supervision or management of our staff, our existing arrangements for child protection, including this policy, will apply.
- Where services or activities are provided separately by another body using our facilities/premises, the Community Board will seek assurance that the provider concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements in place for the provider to liaise with the setting on these matters where appropriate. If this assurance is not achieved, an application to use premises will be refused.
- Safeguarding requirements will be included in any transfer of control agreement (such as a lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises. Failure to comply with this will lead to termination of the agreement.

10.3. Site security

- All members of staff have a responsibility for maintaining awareness of buildings and grounds security and for reporting concerns that may come to light.
- Appropriate checks will be undertaken in respect of visitors and volunteers coming into the setting as outlined within national guidance. Visitors will be expected to sign in and out via the office visitors' log and to display a visitor's badge whilst on site.
- Staff and visitors will be expected to adhere to any safety arrangements implemented in response to any Covid-19 restrictions.
- Any individual who is not known or identifiable on site should be challenged for clarification and reassurance. Pupils are aware of the systems in place and are expected to report any concerns to a member of staff.
- The setting will not accept the behaviour of any individual (parent or other) that threatens our safety or security or leads others (child or adult) to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the site.

11. Local Support

- Children's Specialist Services/Early Help
 - Kent: 03000 41 11 11 (Out of Hours- 03000 41 91 91)
 - Form/Portal: <https://kccchildrens.kent.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home>
- Police
 - 999 (urgent) 101 (non-urgent)
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Kent: 03000 41 08 88

(Referral) <https://www.kelsi.org.uk/child-protection-and-safeguarding/managing-staff-allegations>

- Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP)
 - www.kscmp.org.uk
 - 03000 421 126 or kscmp@kent.gov.uk
- Adult Safeguarding
 - Adult Social Care via 03000 41 61 61 (text relay 18001 03000 41 61 61) or email social.services@kent.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Categories of Abuse

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

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. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children. It should be noted that abuse can be carried out both on and offline and be perpetrated by men, women, and children.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Signs that MAY INDICATE Sexual Abuse

- Sudden changes in behaviour and performance
- Displays of affection which are sexual and age inappropriate
- Self-harm, self-mutilation or attempts at suicide
- Alluding to secrets which they cannot reveal
- Tendency to cling or need constant reassurance
- Regression to younger behaviour for example thumb sucking, playing with discarded toys, acting like a baby
- Distrust of familiar adults, for example, anxiety of being left with relatives, a childminder or lodger
- Unexplained gifts or money
- Depression and withdrawal
- Fear of undressing for PE
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Fire setting

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Signs that MAY INDICATE physical abuse

- Bruises and abrasions around the face

- Damage or injury around the mouth
- Bi-lateral injuries such as two bruised eyes
- Bruising to soft area of the face such as the cheeks
- Fingertip bruising to the front or back of torso
- Bite marks
- Burns or scalds (unusual patterns and spread of injuries)
- Deep contact burns such as cigarette burns
- Injuries suggesting beatings (strap marks, welts)
- Covering arms and legs even when hot
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts.
- Injuries need to be accounted for. Inadequate, inconsistent, or excessively plausible explanations or a delay in seeking treatment should signal concern.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Signs that MAY INDICATE emotional abuse

- Over reaction to mistakes
- Lack of self-confidence/esteem
- Sudden speech disorders
- Self-harming
- Eating Disorders
- Extremes of passivity and/or aggression
- Compulsive stealing
- Drug, alcohol, solvent abuse
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Unwillingness or inability to play
- Excessive need for approval, attention, and affection

Neglect: 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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate

medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Signs that MAY INDICATE neglect.

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Inadequate clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance
- Untreated medical problems
- Poor relationship with peers
- Compulsive stealing and scavenging
- Rocking, hair twisting and thumb sucking
- Running away
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- Low self esteem

Appendix 2: Support Organisations

KSCMP

- Worried about a child: www.kscmp.org.uk/guidance/worried-about-a-child

NSPCC 'Report Abuse in Education' Helpline

- [0800 136 663](tel:0800136663) or help@nspcc.org.uk

National Organisations

- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- Barnardo's: www.barnardos.org.uk
- Action for Children: www.actionforchildren.org.uk
- Children's Society: www.childrensociety.org.uk
- Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse: www.csacentre.org.uk

Support for Staff

- Education Support Partnership: www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk
- Professional Online Safety Helpline: www.saferinternet.org.uk/helpline
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour Support Service:
<https://swgfl.org.uk/harmful-sexual-behaviour-support-service>

Support for Children and Young People

- ChildLine: www.childline.org.uk
- Papyrus: www.papyrus-uk.org
- The Mix: www.themix.org.uk
- Shout: www.giveusashout.org
- Fearless: www.fearless.org
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk

Support for Adults

- KCC Adult Safeguarding:
www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/adult-social-care/adult-safeguarding
- Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board: <https://kmsab.org.uk/>
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Crime Stoppers: www.crimestoppers-uk.org
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- The Samaritans: www.samaritans.org
- NAPAC (National Association for People Abused in Childhood): www.napac.org.uk
- Action Fraud: www.actionfraud.police.uk
- Shout: www.giveusashout.org
- Advice now: www.advicenow.org.uk

Support for Learning Disabilities

- Respond: www.respond.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Council for Disabled Children: <https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk>

Contextual Safeguarding Network

- <https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/>

Kent Resilience Hub

- <https://kentresiliencehub.org.uk/>

Substance Misuse

- We are with you (formerly Addaction):
www.wearewithyou.org.uk/services/kent-for-young-people/
- Talk to Frank: www.talktofrank.com

Domestic Abuse

- Domestic abuse services: www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk
- Refuge: www.refuge.org.uk
- Women's Aid: www.womensaid.org.uk
- Men's Advice Line: www.mensadvice.org.uk
- Mankind: www.mankindcounselling.org.uk
- National Domestic Abuse Helpline: www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk
- Respect Phoneline: <https://respectphoneline.org.uk>

Criminal and Sexual Exploitation

- National Crime Agency: www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/who-we-are
- It's not okay: www.itsnotokay.co.uk
- NWG Network: www.nwgnetwork.org
- County Lines Toolkit for Professionals:
www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/professionals/resources/county-lines-toolkit

Honour Based Abuse

- Karma Nirvana: <https://karmanirvana.org.uk>
- Forced Marriage Unit: www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage
- FGM Factsheet:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/496415/6_1639_HO_SP_FGM_mandatory_reporting_Fact_sheet_Web.pdf
- Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information
- The right to choose - government guidance on forced marriage:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-right-to-choose-government-guidance-on-forced-marriage

Child-on-Child abuse, including bullying, sexual violence and harassment

- Rape Crisis: <https://rapecrisis.org.uk>
- Brook: www.brook.org.uk
- Disrespect Nobody: www.disrespectnobody.co.uk
- Upskirting – know your rights: www.gov.uk/government/news/upskirting-know-your-rights
- Lucy Faithfull Foundation: www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk
- Stop it Now! www.stopitnow.org.uk
- Parents Protect: www.parentsprotect.co.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Diana Award: www.antibullyingpro.com/
- Bullying UK: www.bullying.co.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk

Online Safety

- NCA-CEOP: www.ceop.police.uk and www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- Internet Watch Foundation (IWF): www.iwf.org.uk
- Childnet: www.childnet.com
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- Report Harmful Content: <https://reportharmfulcontent.com>
- Marie Collins Foundation: www.mariecollinsfoundation.org.uk
- Internet Matters: www.internetmatters.org
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety
- Get Safe Online: www.getsafeonline.org
- Parents Protect: www.parentsprotect.co.uk
- Cyber Choices:
<https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/what-we-do/crime-threats/cyber-crime/cyberchoices>
- National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC): www.ncsc.gov.uk

Mental Health

- KSCMP: www.kscmp.org.uk/guidance/children-and-young-peoples-mental-health
- Mind: www.mind.org.uk
- Moodspark: <https://moodspark.org.uk>
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- We are with you: www.wearewithyou.org.uk/services/kent-for-young-people/
- Anna Freud: www.annafreud.org/schools-and-colleges/

Radicalisation and hate

- Kent Prevent: www.kelsi.org.uk/child-protection-and-safeguarding/The-Prevent-Duty-In-Education
- Gov.UK: <https://kidsonlinesafety.campaign.gov.uk/>
- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com
- Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit: www.gov.uk/report-terrorism
- True Vision: www.report-it.org.uk

Children with Family Members in Prison

- National information Centre on Children of Offenders (NICCO): <https://www.nicco.org.uk/>
- Prisoners' Families Helpline - <https://www.prisonersfamilies.org/>