



Co-op Academy  
Stoke-on-Trent



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Academies Trust

# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Issue 1 | 02 September 2024

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This model policy was approved by the Trust Board on 4th July 2024  
Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent  
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## Guidelines & Key Information

This policy has been written for all staff and pupils/students at Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent including visitors, volunteers and third party contractors.

Copies of this policy may be obtained from:

- The academy website <https://stokeontrent.coopacademies.co.uk>
- It is available as a hard copy on request from the academy office

Participants and consultees in the formulation of this policy were:

- Members of the Coop Academies Trust Central team
- The Head Teacher/Principal
- Senior Leadership Team
- Staff
- Trustees

Edition, Review frequency and dates:

- Issue: 02.09.24
- Date written: 04.07.24
- Date of next review: 02.09.25
- This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures.

Relevant Trust policies, statutory guidance, circulars, legislation & other sources of information are:

- [Keeping children safe in education 2024](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children 2023](#)
- [The Children Act 1989 \(and 2004 amendment\)](#)
- [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused \(2015\)](#)
- [Serious Crime Act 2015,](#)
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#)
- [Guidance on the Prevent duty](#)
- [Children Missing Education – Statutory guidance for local authorities \(DfE September 2016\)](#)
- [Education and Training \(Welfare of Children\) Act 2021](#)
- [Childcare \(Disqualification\) Regulations 2018](#)

- [DfE guidance Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees.](#)
- [DfE Guidance on Information Sharing \(July 2024\)](#)
- [Statutory guidance PACE Code C 2019 – Appropriate adult.](#)
- [Keeping children safe in out of school settings](#)
- [Working together to improve school attendance](#)
- [Online Safety Policy](#)
- [Safer Recruitment Policy](#)
- [Colleague Code of Conduct](#)
- [Whistleblowing Policy](#)
- [Managing Safeguarding concerns and allegations against staff](#)

The Lead Member of staff is:

- Marianne Goodwin Deputy Headteacher

Definitions and key terms used in this policy:

- DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead)
- DDSL (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead)
- KCSIE (Keeping Children Safe in Education)

The rationale and purpose of this policy:

- 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.

Additional documents:

- Cause for concern form for visitors, supply staff, volunteers and third party contractors who do not have access to CPOMS.
- [West Midlands Prevent Referral Form](#)
- [Allegations of Abuse Guidance \(LADO\)](#)
- [Concerns around Child Exploitation: Risk Factor Matrix](#)
- [Staffs Police Child Exploitation Information Report](#): Sharing of names of suspects and intelligence when no actual evidence is available

Acknowledgement:

- This policy is based on the Child Protection policy at West Heath School and adapted for the Co-op Academies Trust.
- Should any organisations incorporate large sections of this policy without alteration please make similar appropriate acknowledgement of this.

Key Personnel:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is:

- Marianne Goodwin (Deputy Head)
- Email: [marianne.goodwin@coopacademies.co.uk](mailto:marianne.goodwin@coopacademies.co.uk)

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is:

- Julie Holdcroft (Izone Coordinator)
- Email: [julie.holdcroft@coopacademies.co.uk](mailto:julie.holdcroft@coopacademies.co.uk)

The Designated Teacher for Children Looked After and previously is:

- Di Drew (SENCO and Senior Leader)
- Email: [diane.drew@coopacademies.co.uk](mailto:diane.drew@coopacademies.co.uk)

Other safeguarding officers are:

- Lauren Ruscoe (Safeguarding Officer)
- Email: [lauren.ruscoe@coopacademies.co.uk](mailto:lauren.ruscoe@coopacademies.co.uk)
- Maria Price (Online Safety Officer)
- Email: [maria.price@coopacademies.co.uk](mailto:maria.price@coopacademies.co.uk)
- Christine Foster (Lead Mentor)
- Email: [christine.foster@coopacademies.co.uk](mailto:christine.foster@coopacademies.co.uk)

The Regional Director with responsibility for Safeguarding is:

- Karine Hendley
- Email: [karine.hendley@coopacademies.co.uk](mailto:karine.hendley@coopacademies.co.uk)

The Regional Safeguarding and Child Protection Lead is:

- Nick Finch
- Email: [nick.finch@coopacademies.co.uk](mailto:nick.finch@coopacademies.co.uk)

The Nominated Safeguarding Trustee is:

- Ruth Welford

Key External Contacts:

- Children's Serviced (ChAd): 01782 235100
- Out of hours Children's Services 01782 234234
- Local Authority Shahzad Tahir Prevent Lead: 07826535641 / [Shahzad.Tahir@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:Shahzad.Tahir@stoke.gov.uk)
- Co-op Stoke on Trent Safeguarding Governor: Nkita Weldon

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## What to do if you have a Safeguarding Concern

[KCSIE Flowchart](#)

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## Process for responding to sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour

For the purposes of this guidance, we, in places, use the term 'victim'. It is a widely recognised and understood term. It is important that we recognise that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way. We should be conscious of this when managing any incident and be prepared to use any term with which the individual child is most comfortable.

For the purpose of this advice, we, in places, use the term 'alleged perpetrator(s)' and where appropriate 'perpetrator(s)'. These are widely used and recognised terms and the most appropriate to aid effective drafting of guidance. However, we must think very carefully

about terminology, especially when speaking in front of children, not least because in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well. As above, the use of appropriate terminology will be for us to determine, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis.

[Figure 1: Assessment and actions](#)

[Figure 2: Support for the victim](#)

[Figure 3: Support for the perpetrator/alleged perpetrator](#)

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## Introduction and Ethos

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent is committed to safeguarding every student. We acknowledge that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and ensure all of our staff are trained to be vigilant and aware of the signs and indicators of abuse and understand and follow safe working practices.

The viewpoints and voice of children is of paramount importance to our academy and we will always listen to their wishes, thoughts and feelings, as well as identifying and supporting their needs. We will have due regard to the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Duty in order to ensure that the needs of our pupils are met. We will work alongside students to develop trusting, consistent and professional relationships and show we care by advocating the Early Help process where possible. We will identify any difficulties or concerns early in order to act preventatively. We will always provide support and advice for families and parents/carers, whilst acting in the best interests of the child at all times and doing what matters most. Safeguarding also includes ensuring we work in an open and honest way, enabling our children to feel safe by providing a secure learning environment, where they are equally protected regardless of any barriers they may face and are able to grow and develop in the same way as their peers. Supporting families in this manner can improve a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse.

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent safeguards children through recognising that some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face by:

- Maintaining a secure site and ensuring that all visitors to the academy are recorded, monitored and clear about how to raise a safeguarding concern should one arise.
- Ensuring that safer recruitment practices are followed to prevent those who pose a risk to children gaining access to them.
- Ensuring that all staff employed by the academy have received all necessary pre-employment checks, which are recorded in the single central record (SCR).
- Filtering and monitoring all internet traffic into the academy to ensure that children cannot be exposed to harmful material and communication.
- Providing regular training and briefings for all staff, and volunteers, in child protection and ensuring that all staff, volunteers and visitors know who our designated safeguarding officers and designated senior lead are.
- Ensuring that admission and attendance procedures are robust to protect children, ensure that they are safe and prevent children from going missing from education.
- Empowering young people to identify risks both within the academy and in their community; ensuring that they have the skills and confidence to help and protect themselves and others.
- Making sure that all children understand the importance of reporting concerns about themselves and their peers and giving them the confidence to discuss sensitive issues.
- Providing pastoral and inclusion support to ensure that all children have access to guidance and advice, and when needed referrals for additional agency support to meet their needs.
- Sharing information when appropriate with other agencies and services to ensure that children and their families have support to meet their needs and prevent students from harm or further harm
- Taking immediate action and contacting the appropriate agencies when we believe that a child is in danger or is at risk of harm.
- Endeavouring wherever possible to obtain at least two emergency contacts for every child in the school in case of an emergency, and in case there are welfare concerns at the home.

This policy is implemented in accordance with our compliance with the statutory guidance from the Department for Education, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2024 (KCSIE) which requires individual schools and colleges to have an effective child protection policy and the Department for Education, 'Safeguarding and protection people for charities and trustees' Oct 19.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff (including Trustees, temporary or third-party staff and volunteers) and are consistent with those outlined within KCSIE 2024.

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## Policy Context

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and related guidance.

This includes:

- DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (KCSIE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (WTSC)
- Ofsted: Education Inspection Framework' 2024
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families 2000)
- Through the procedures set out by the local [Stoke on Trent Safeguarding Children's Partnership](#), the statutory safeguarding partners are Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care System (ICS) and Staffordshire Police ([escalation](#), [LADO process](#), [responding to sexting](#), [threshold](#) framework and the [Stoke on Trent Children Partnerships published arrangements](#) put in place by the safeguarding partners);
- Early Years and Foundation Stage Framework 2024 (EYFS)
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- The Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires Trust Boards in a Multi-Academy Trust context 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.

As a result of the Covid pandemic, we acknowledge that some children will continue to suffer adverse effects having been exposed to a range of adversity and trauma including bereavement, anxiety and in some cases increased welfare and safeguarding risks. We will work with local services (such as health and the local authority) to ensure necessary services and support are in place to support children.

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## Definition of Safeguarding

In line with KCSIE 2024 (as detailed in Part One and Annex A), 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; and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

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

The academy acknowledges that safeguarding includes a wide range of specific issues including (but not limited to):

- Child abduction and community safety incidents
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
  - County Lines
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Children and the court system
- Unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education
- Children missing from education(CME), home or care
- Child has a parent or carer in custody (previously it was in 'prison'), or is affected by parental offending
- Cybercrime
- Domestic abuse
- Homelessness
- Mental health
- Modern slavery
- Preventing radicalisation
  - Prevent duty
  - Channel
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges
- Child has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit
- Serious Violence
- So-called ‘honour’-based abuse
  - Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
  - Forced marriage

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

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## Related Safeguarding Policies

This policy is one of a series in our Trust's and academy's safeguarding portfolio and should be read and actioned in conjunction with the policies as listed below:

- Anti-Bullying policy
- Attendance policy
- Colleague handbook
- Looked after and recently look after child policy
- First Aid policy
- Positive Behaviour policy
- PSHE policy
- Supporting pupils with Medical Needs
- Mental Health Policy/Guidance
- Children with health needs who can't attend school
- Intimate Care policy
- Trust Online Safety Policy
- Trust Social Media Policy
- School trips
- Trust Induction & Probationary Policy
- Trust Managing safeguarding concerns and allegations against staff policy
- Trust Health and Safety Policy
- Trust Positive Handling Policy
- Trust Exclusion policy
- Trust Colleague Code of Conduct
- Trust Whistleblowing policy
- Trust Safer Recruitment policy
- Trust Complaints Policy
- Trust Data Protection policies and associated appendices

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## Policy Compliance, Monitoring and Review

All academies within Co-op Academies Trust are expected to adopt this policy and to adapt it to reflect their individual academy, making reference to the locally agreed multi-agency safeguarding arrangements put in place by the safeguarding partners .

Our Trust and Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent will review this policy at least annually. The policy will be revised following any national or local policy updates as safeguarding issues emerge and evolve, including lessons learnt.

All staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) will be provided with a copy of this policy and Part one or Annex A of KCSIE 24. Staff who work with children will also be provided with a copy of Annex B.

All parties should notify the DSL if they are concerned that the policy does not reflect practice in the academy and follow escalation procedures if concerns are not promptly acted upon.

Parents/carers can obtain a copy of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and other related policies on request. Additionally, our policies can be viewed via the school website: <https://stokeontrent.coopacademies.co.uk>

The policy forms part of our academy development plan and will be reviewed annually (or more frequently if required) by the Trust.

The Regional Director with responsibility for Safeguarding will report to the Trustees. The Trustees will not receive details of individual children's situations or identifying features of families as part of their oversight responsibility.

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## Key Responsibilities

The Trustees, Head Teacher/Principal, Executive Leadership Team, Senior Leadership Team and Regional Safeguarding Leads have read and will follow KCSIE 2024.

The Head Teacher/Principal, Senior Leadership Team and Regional Safeguarding Leads will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead is supported in their role.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The academy has appointed a member of the leadership team, (Marianne Goodwin), as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Additionally, the academy have appointed Deputy DSLs (Julie Holdcroft) who will have delegated responsibilities and act in the DSL's absence.

The DSL has overall responsibility for the day to day oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems in the academy. 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 DSL will undergo appropriate and specific training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role.
- Deputy DSLs are trained to the same standard as the DSL. The DSL and any deputy DSLs' training will be updated formally every two years, but their knowledge and skills will be updated through a variety of methods at regular intervals and at least annually.
- The Head Teacher/Principal will be kept informed of any significant issues by the DSL.
- The DSL will act as the central contact point for all staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- The DSL will be given the time, training, resources and support to:
  - Maintain a confidential recording system for safeguarding and child protection concerns
  - Coordinate safeguarding action for individual children

- When supporting children with a social worker or children who are looked after 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)
- Liaise with other agencies and professionals in line with KCSIE 2024 and WTSC 2023
- Ensure that locally established procedures as put in place by [Stoke on Trent Safeguarding Children's Partnership](#)), including referrals, are followed, as necessary
- Represent, or ensure the school is appropriately represented at multi-agency safeguarding meetings (including Child Protection conferences and core group meetings)
- Manage and monitor the school role in any multi-agency plan for a child
- During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site and can not be contacted by phone or online video, for example working from home, a senior leader will assume responsibility for coordinating safeguarding on site
- Help 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 academy leadership staff
- Be responsible for responding to domestic abuse notifications from the local authority and providing support to children and their families as appropriate
- Ensure adequate and appropriate DSL cover arrangements in response to any closures and out of hours and/or out of term activities
- Ensure all staff access appropriate safeguarding training and relevant updates in line with the recommendations within KCSIE 2024
- Carry out the DSL responsibilities outlined in the Trust's Online Safety Policy

The full responsibilities of the DSL are set out in Annex C of KCSIE 2024 – Role of the designated safeguarding lead. All designated safeguarding leads and deputy safeguarding leads must read and comply with this.

#### Members of Staff

All members of staff have a responsibility to:

- Provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- Be prepared to identify children who may benefit from Early Help and may warrant Early Help intervention,
- Understand the Early Help process and their role in it by reporting emerging problems that may warrant Early Help intervention to Julie Holdcroft
- Understand their academy safeguarding policies and systems
- Undertake regular and appropriate training which is regularly updated
- Know what to do if a child tells them that he or she is being abused, neglected or exploited and understand the impact abuse, neglect and exploitation can have upon a child

- Understand that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful
- Understand the academy's procedures for recording cause for concerns and passing information on to DSLs in accordance with the academy's recording systems
- Be able to identify and act upon indicators that children are, or at risk of developing mental health issues
- Know how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality
- Be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation so that they can identify cases of children who may need help or protection
- Understand the process for making referrals to local authority children's social work service (CSWS) and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
- Carry out relevant staff responsibilities outlined in the Trust's Online Safety Policy

#### The Head Teacher/Principal

The Head Teacher/Principal is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary and supply staff), volunteers and third party contractors are informed of this policy as part of their induction
- Communicating this policy to parents when their child joins the academy and via the academy website
- Ensuring that the roles and responsibilities of the DSL/DDSL as referenced in Annex C of KCSiE (2024) are reflected in their job description
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
- Ensuring all staff undertake regular safeguarding and child protection training, as detailed in the Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Handbook 2024-25
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff (including supply staff) or volunteer where appropriate
- Ensuring that all recommendations made by our Trust in relation to strengthening the school's safeguarding arrangements are actioned in line with agreed deadlines
- Carrying out the Head Teacher/Principal responsibilities outlined in the Trust's Online Safety Policy

#### Our Trustees

The full responsibilities of our Trust Board are set out in Part two of KCSiE (2024) – The management of safeguarding. In addition to the responsibilities set out in KCSiE 24, The Co-op Academies Trust has charitable status and therefore implements the DfE guidance on Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees.

All Trustees will have a clear oversight of how safeguarding and protecting people from harm is managed within our Trust.

Our Trustees will take all reasonable steps to protect from harm people who come into contact with our Trust. This includes:

- children
- staff
- volunteers
- other people who come into contact with our Trust

Our Trustees are responsible for ensuring our Trust:

- has appropriate policies and procedures in place, which are followed by all Trustees, staff, volunteers, supply staff and third party contractors, and monitors the effectiveness of these policies.
- checks that people are suitable to act in their roles
- knows how to spot and handle concerns in a full and open manner
- has a clear system of referring or reporting to relevant organisations as soon as concerns are suspected or identified
- has appropriate IT filtering and monitoring systems in place
- obtains written assurances from any relevant academy lettings and alternative/off site providers and provisions that their safeguarding arrangements are secure
- sets out risks and how they will be managed in a risk register which is regularly reviewed
- follows statutory guidance, good practice guidance and legislation
- is quick to respond to concerns and carry out appropriate investigations
- does not ignore harm or downplay failures
- has a balanced Trustee board and does not let one Trustee dominate its work – Trustees should work together
- makes sure protecting people from harm is central to its culture
- has enough resources, including trained staff/volunteers/Trustees for safeguarding and protecting people
- conducts periodic reviews of safeguarding policies, procedures and practice

Our senior managers (on behalf of trustees) will ensure that a Serious Incident Notification is made to the Department for Education where required. A serious incident is an adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in or risks significant:

- harm to our pupils, staff, volunteers or others who come into contact with through its work
- loss of our money or assets
- damage to our property
- harm to our work or reputation.

Our Regional Director with responsibility for Safeguarding (Karine Hendley) will meet with the Named Trustee termly and provide an annual report to assist the Trustees with understanding common themes, identify risks and gaps and to consider how these are to be addressed.

The Named Trustee for safeguarding is Ruth Welford. For information on how to contact our Trust board please email [headofgovernance@coopacademies.co.uk](mailto:headofgovernance@coopacademies.co.uk)

All Trustees must sign the Trust's Code of Conduct for Trustees and must not behave in any way that puts the safety or well being of children and young people at risk. All Trustees must attend our Trust's safeguarding and child protection training to develop their understanding of their strategic roles and responsibilities including online safety on appointment and then at least once every four years. Any breach of the Code of Conduct may lead to their removal from the Board.

### Children and Young People

Children and young people (students/pupils) have a right to:

- Feel safe, be listened to, and have their wishes and feelings taken into account.
- Contribute to the development of academy safeguarding policies.
- Receive help from a trusted adult.
- Learn how to keep themselves safe, including online.

### Parents and Carers

Parents/carers have a responsibility to:

- Understand and adhere to the relevant school policies and procedures.
- Talk to their children about safeguarding issues with their children and support the school in their safeguarding approaches.
- Identify behaviours which could indicate that their child is at risk of harm including online and seek help and support from the academy or other agencies.
- Carry out parental responsibilities outlined in the Trust's Online Safety Policy.
- Provide at least two emergency contacts for students and update the academy of any change.
  - Where reasonably possible, the academy should hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil or student. It is good practice to give the academy additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a child missing education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

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## Recognising Indicators of Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

All staff within the academy are made aware of the definitions and indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation as identified by Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent recognises that when assessing whether a child may be suffering actual or potential harm there are four categories of abuse:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

All members of staff are expected to be aware of and follow this ['What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' \(2015\)](#) approach if they are concerned about a child:

- BE ALERT
- QUESTION BEHAVIOURS
- ASK FOR HELP
- REFER

Members of staff are aware that concerns may arise in many different contexts and can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness. The indicators of child abuse, neglect and exploitation 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, neglect and exploitation do not automatically mean a child is being abused however, all concerns should be taken seriously and explored by the DSL on a case by case basis.

Parental behaviours may also indicate child abuse or neglect, so staff should also 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.

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children offsite. Children can be/are 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, and serious youth violence.

By understanding the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, we can respond to problems as early as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family.

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## Child Protection Procedures

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent recognises that some children have additional or complex needs and may require access to intensive or specialist services to support them.

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent adheres to our Trust safeguarding expectations and local Safeguarding Children multi-agency safeguarding arrangements known as [Stoke on Trent Safeguarding Children's Partnership](#). The Stoke on Trent Safeguarding Children's Partnership procedures and additional guidance relating to specific safeguarding issues can be found on



their

website: <https://safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/safeguardingnew/homepage/13/home>

All staff are aware of the process for making request for support referrals for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent is an Operation Encompass School. This means we work in partnership with Staffordshire police to provide support to children experiencing domestic abuse:

- DSLs within the academy should consider any appropriate accommodations within the education day to lessen the impact and to support the child if they need it
- Consideration should be given to making contact with the parent (identified victim) to offer support or sign post to other services

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent recognises that in situations where there are immediate child protection concerns identified it is NOT to investigate as a single agency but to act in line with the guidance set out by our local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements which may involve multi-agency decision making.

If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a request for support should be made immediately to CHAD 01782 235100 front door/or the police 999 in line with locally agreed procedures.

The DSL may seek advice or guidance from our Regional Safeguarding and Child Protection Lead or advice (without identifying the family) can be provided by CHAD front door before deciding next steps who are the first point of contact for Integrated Children's Services (ICS).

In the event of a request for support to CHAD being necessary, parents/carers will be informed and consent to this will be sought by the DSL in line with guidance provided by Stoke on Trent Safeguarding Children's Partnership.

- 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.

If the DSL is not immediately available to discuss an urgent concern, staff can seek advice from the Deputy DSL. They may also seek advice from the Regional Safeguarding Lead within our Trust or from the Education Safeguarding Service or via consultation with a social worker from the CHAD Front Door. If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral to external services, they will inform the DSL as soon as possible.

The DSL will keep all Early Help cases under constant review and consideration will be given to a request for support to the CHAD 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 [escalation procedures](#) as published by Stoke on Trent Safeguarding Children's Partnership to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves. DSLs may request support with this via their Regional Safeguarding and Child Protection Lead.

Any teacher who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18 must immediately (in consultation with the DSL) report this to the police, personally. This is a statutory duty, and teachers will face investigation under the Trust's Disciplinary Procedure for failing to do so.

Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18 must speak to the DSL and follow the local safeguarding procedures.

Any member of staff who suspects a pupil is at risk of FGM must speak to the DSL and follow the local safeguarding procedures.

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## Record Keeping

All safeguarding concerns, discussions and decisions, and reasons for those decisions, will be recorded on CPOMS without delay which will alert the DSL and the DDSL as required by our Trust. Colleagues are individually responsible for recording any safeguarding concern of which they are aware, and must not rely on others to make a recording.

Visitors to the academy who do not have access to CPOMS will be asked to complete a cause for concern form and pass this on to the DSL without delay. Blank cause for concern forms can be located at the main reception desk.

The cause for concern form, and/or any other notes relating to a concern about a child, will be scanned onto CPOMS, referenced and actioned, and the originals stored in a secure cabinet which is only accessed by the HT/Principal, DSL and DDSLs.

Staff will record information about any injuries observed using the body map tool on CPOMS, along with a detailed description of the mark or injury. Staff are not permitted to take photographs for this purpose. If members of staff are in any doubt about recording requirements, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL.

The concern will be added to CPOMS as soon as possible after the incident/event, recording the child's words verbatim. If there is an immediate concern the member of staff should consult with a DSL before adding the concern to CPOMS. Reporting urgent concerns takes priority.

Safeguarding records are kept for individual children and are maintained using CPOMS and any paper files must be stored securely and separately from all other records relating to the

child in the school. Safeguarding records are kept in accordance with data protection legislation and are retained securely by the DSL. Safeguarding records are shared with staff on a 'need to know' basis only. Any access to these records by other people (e.g. class teacher, Ofsted inspector, auditor) should be recorded on the chronology with an explanation of why this was justified / appropriate.

Other safeguarding information that will be recorded on CPOMS:

- Any child protection information received from the child's previous educational establishment, records of discussions, telephone calls and meetings with colleagues and other agencies or services
- Any relevant discussions with parents/carers or extended family members
- Professional consultations
- Letters and emails sent and received relating to child protection matters
- Referral forms sent to Children's Services, other external agencies or education-based services
- Requests for information received from (and information shared with) external agencies e.g. Police
- Minutes or notes of meetings, e.g. child protection conferences, core group meetings, etc., copied to the file of each child in the family, as appropriate
- Formal plans for, or linked to, the child e.g. child protection plans, Early Help (previously known as CAF's), risk assessments etc

When the child leaves the academy or college (including in-year transfers, and permanent exclusions) the designated safeguarding lead will ensure their paper child protection file and/ or their CPOMS record is transferred/authorised to the new setting as soon as possible, within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. Paper records will be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and 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 school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue to provide support.

If a child is supported via a managed move, or by a placement at an alternative provision, safeguarding information will be shared with the receiving setting where relevant, to keep the child safe.

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## Multi-Agency Working

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent recognises, and is committed to, its responsibility to work within the Stoke on Trent Safeguarding Children's Partnership multi-agency safeguarding

arrangements. The leadership team and DSL will work to establish strong and cooperative local relationships with professionals in other agencies in line with statutory guidance.

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent 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 Stoke on Trent Safeguarding Children's Partnership multi-agency safeguarding arrangement processes as required e.g. 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.

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## Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Our Trust recognises our duty to share relevant information with appropriate agencies in matters relating to child protection at the earliest opportunity as per statutory guidance outlined within KCSIE 2024.

All staff must be aware that they can not promise confidentiality in situations which might compromise a child's safety or wellbeing.

The Head Teacher/Principal or DSL will disclose information about a pupil/student to other professionals on a 'need to know' basis, and in line with Trust policy and data protection legislation.

All members of staff must be aware that whilst they have duties to keep any information confidential, they also have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children. If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they must speak to the designated staff, or the head teacher/principal.

Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety of children.

Our Trust has appointed an appropriately trained Data Protection Officer (DPO) as required by the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) to ensure that our school is compliant with all matters relating to confidentiality and information sharing requirements.

The Data Protection Officer for The Co-op Academies Trust is Tammy Pyszky.

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent has appointed a GDPR Ambassador who will liaise with the DPO as and when required. Whenever there is a GDPR request received by the academy, the DSL and the DPO will liaise closely to ensure that information is shared correctly.

The GDPR Ambassador is Paul Faulkner.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and the 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 2024).

[DfE Guidance on Information Sharing \(July 2024\)](#) provides further detail which can be found on the shared area on the staff network/intranet.

Under Data Protection legislation (The UK General Data Protection Regulation & Data Protection Act 2018) a pupil or their nominated representative have a number of legal rights in respect of information relating to them. These rights include the right to access and the right to rectification of inaccurate data. Therefore all information will be accurately recorded, objective in nature and expressed in a professional manner.

Any child who has a child protection file has a right to request access to it. However, neither the child nor the parent has an automatic right to see all the information held in child protection records. Information can be withheld if disclosure:

- could cause serious harm or is likely to cause serious harm to the physical or mental health or condition of the child or another person; or
- could reveal that the child or another person has been a subject of or may be at risk of child abuse, and the disclosure is not in the best interests of the child; or
- is likely to prejudice an on-going criminal investigation; or
- of information about the child also relates to another person who could be identified from it or the information has been given by another person who could be identified as the source, unless the person has consented to the disclosure or, in some circumstances, where the person providing the information is an employee of the Trust or the Local Authority

It is best practice to make reports available to the child or their parents, however advice should always be sought from the academy GDPR Ambassador in the first instance, prior to releasing any part of a child protection file.

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## Complaints

The academy has a Complaints policy available to parents, pupils and visitors who wish to report concerns. This can be found on our Trust's website [here](#).

All reported concerns will be taken seriously and considered within the relevant and appropriate process. Anything that constitutes a low level concern, or an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer, will be dealt with under the specific procedures set out on our Trust's Managing Safeguarding Concerns and Allegations against Staff Policy.

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## Staff Induction, Awareness and Training

All members of staff have been provided with a copy of Part one of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2024) which covers safeguarding information for all staff.

- School leaders, including the DSL, will read the entire document.
- School leaders and all members of staff who work directly with children will access annex B within Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.
- All members of staff have signed to confirm that they have read and understood KCSIE 2024.

All academy staff members sign to confirm that they have read and understood KCSIE 2024 as documented in the CPOMS library and reviewed by the DSL. Staff tick the box to acknowledge that they have read and understood the content of the policy and opportunities are provided for further dialogue for those staff requiring additional support. This ensures that all staff know how to access CPOMS.

Suggestions on ways to improve safeguarding procedures and influence policy at the academy are also asked at this point. A google quiz is complete after the staff annual safeguarding inset thereby capturing the level of understanding and the subsequent training needs.

The DSL will ensure that all new staff receive child protection training to ensure they are aware of the academy's internal safeguarding processes as part of their induction. Assurances will be sought from providers of agency and third party staff that they have received appropriate safeguarding training and will be provided with academy safeguarding procedures and expected Codes of Conduct upon arrival.

All staff members will receive appropriate child protection training to ensure they are aware of a range of safeguarding issues. This training will include online safety and will take place at least annually.

In addition to specific child protection training, all staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, via email, bulletins and staff meetings at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

All staff members will be made aware of the academy's expectations regarding safe and professional practice via the Colleague Code of Conduct and the Guidance for Safer Working Practices (February 2022) for those working with children and young people in education settings.

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## Safer Working Practice

All members of staff are required to work within our clear guidelines on safer working practice as outlined in our Trust's Colleague Code of Conduct. Regional Safeguarding Leads can also be engaged to provide Guidance on Safer Working Practice training for staff.

Staff will be made aware of the academy's Behaviour Policy and our Trust's Positive Handling Policy. Any physical interventions/use of reasonable force must be in line with agreed policy and procedures, the child's positive handling plan 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 the Trust's Online Safety Policy, Social Media Policy and Acceptable Use Policy.

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## Staff Supervision and Support

Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for children's welfare or safety can seek support from the DSL.

The workplace 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 academy will provide appropriate supervision and support for all members of staff 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.
- All staff should be familiar with the Employee Assistance service provided by Health Assured which can be contacted 24/7 on 0800 028 0199.

Our Trust recognises the stressful and traumatic nature of child protection work. Support is available for any member of staff from the DSL. The DSL can put staff in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish. Staff can also approach organisations such as their Union or other similar organisations directly. The DSL can access support that they require via the Regional Safeguarding and Child Protection Lead.

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## Safer Recruitment

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent is committed to ensure and develop a safe culture and that all steps are taken to recruit staff who are safe to work with our pupils/students and staff.

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent will follow relevant guidance in our Trust's Safer Recruitment Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (Part three 'Safer Recruitment') and from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Our Trustees and leadership team are responsible for ensuring that the academy follows safe recruitment processes outlined within our Trust's policy and guidance.

The academy maintains an accurate Single Central Record (SCR) in line with our Trust expectations and statutory guidance.

Our Trustees and leadership team will ensure that those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate Safer Recruitment training, the substance of which should at a minimum cover the content of KCSIE 24 (Part three). Our Trust expectation is that there must be at least one interview panel member who has completed Safer Recruitment training within the last 5 years. Head Teachers should be aware of this requirement and should be able to provide proof of relevant staff members' training if requested.

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent is 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 and will ask all staff and regular volunteers that fall within the scope of this guidance to complete our Trust Disqualification form.

We expect all staff to disclose any reason that may affect their suitability to work with children including convictions, cautions, court orders, or refused or cancelled registration of childcare of children's homes or been disqualified from private fostering.

All members of staff will be reminded of our Trust's Colleague Code of Conduct and understand that their behaviour and practice must be in line with it.

Staff will sign to confirm that they have read and understood our Trust's Colleague Code of Conduct.

Staff will sign to confirm that they have read and understood our Trust's colleague Code of Conduct. This google document is reviewed and retained by the Headteacher's PA. Staff are invited to meet with the Headteacher if they need further clarification on any part of the Code of Conduct. All new staff during induction will sign the code of conduct. Regular reminders will be delivered throughout the academic year.



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## Concerns/Allegations in Relation to Members of Staff and Volunteers, Supply and Contractors

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent is required to follow the Department for Education's statutory guidance for schools on Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024). Part Four of the guidance deals with managing concerns or allegations that might indicate a person may pose a risk of harm if they continue working in regular or close contact with children.

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent recognises that it is possible for any colleague, academy and central staff, Trustees, contractors, agency and third-party staff (including supply teachers) and visitors to behave in a way that gives rise to concern.

All staff should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school safeguarding regime. The leadership team at Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent will take all concerns or allegations received seriously.

The DfE statutory guidance identifies two levels of allegations/concerns:

1. Allegations that may meet the harm threshold:
  - indicates they have harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
  - means they have 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; or
  - behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (*this includes any behaviour that may have happened outside of school that might make the individual unsuitable to work with children. This is known as transferable risk.*)
2. Allegations/concerns that do not meet the harm threshold – referred to for the purposes of this guidance as 'low level concerns':
  - are inconsistent with the Colleague Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work;
  - does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Concerns and/or allegations should be referred immediately to the Head Teacher/Principal who should conduct basic enquiries following our Trust's Managing Safeguarding Concerns and Allegations against Staff Policy and in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the concern/allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any potential future police investigation.

All parties should be aware of the requirement to maintain confidentiality and avoid unwanted publicity about any allegations made against teachers in schools whilst investigations are in progress as set out in section 141F of the Education Act 2002.

The information collected will help to determine what further action may need to be taken. As part of this assessment, the Head Teacher/Principal may contact their Regional HR manager, the Regional Safeguarding and Child Protection Lead and/or their Regional Director for support and advice.

If the Head Teacher/Principal decides an allegation may meet the harm threshold, and if not done so already, they must alert their Regional Safeguarding and Child Protection Lead, relevant Regional Director (who will notify the Regional HR Manager) if possible before making their referral to their Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), although the referral should not be unnecessarily delayed.

The Head Teacher/Principal will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) John Hanlon in line with Stoke on Trent Safeguarding Children's Partnership locally agreed procedures 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/Head Teacher, staff are advised that allegations should be reported to the Regional Director. They will inform the LADO.

All staff should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and such concerns will always be taken seriously by the leadership team.

All members of staff are made aware of our Trust's Whistleblowing Policy.

Not reporting concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk will be investigated under our Trust's Disciplinary Procedure.

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](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent 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. They are also required to report Teachers or those in Teaching work to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).

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 and/or Regional HR Manager and the Regional Safeguarding and Child Protection lead. In exceptional circumstances, on the LADO's recommendation, a referral may be made prior to the resignation or removal of a colleague.

### WHEN IN DOUBT – CONSULT!

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## Children potentially at great risk

Whilst all children should be protected, everybody at Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent recognises some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm both online and offline.

Children who need a social worker (Child in Need / Child Protection)

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. The academy recognises that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour, and mental health.

Where children have been identified as having a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

Information may be shared with the staff within the academy so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes.

The name and contact number of the social worker should be added to CPOMS.

Children who are absent from education

We recognise that a child being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect.

Our Academy response to persistently absent pupils and children missing from education helps us to identify such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future.

Our response includes identifying when problems are first emerging but also acting where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need 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), and being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

We will follow the 'Working together to improve school attendance' guidance and work with local authority children's services where absence indicates safeguarding concerns.

Where a child is reported to be missing education we will comply with our statutory duty to inform the local authority of any pupil who falls within the reporting notification requirements outlined in Children Missing Education – Statutory guidance for local authorities (DfE September 2016) and follow the Stoke on Trent locally agreed procedures contacting Zoe Marston on T:01782 236220/235355 M: 07557 849528 E: [zoe.marston@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:zoe.marston@stoke.gov.uk) or [cme-offroll@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:cme-offroll@stoke.gov.uk)

Children who are absent, abscond or go missing during the school day are vulnerable and at potential risk of abuse, neglect, CSE or CCE including involvement in county lines. Academy staff members must follow the academy's procedures for dealing with children who are absent/go missing, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods, to help identify the risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future as referenced in the academy Attendance Policy

#### Elective Home Education

The academy will inform their LA of all deletions from their admission register when a child is taken off roll to be home educated.

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from the academy with a view to educating at home, the academy will work with the Local Authority and other key professionals to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible. Ideally, this will be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child. This is particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker. This can mean that some children are not receiving a suitable education.

#### Children requiring mental health support

All staff will be made aware 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 of how children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and 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, they should refer to the academy guidance when responding to this or seek advice from the senior mental health lead

Christine Timony. If the mental health concern also relates to a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy and recording on CPOMS.

Children Looked After, Previously Children Looked After and Care Leavers

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent understands the most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect.

Staff will be provided information to understand what this means for children in this circumstance so that they have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep Children Looked After safe.

The member of staff responsible for Children Looked After and Previously Children Looked After is Diane Drew (SENDco). They will hold information and where required will share the legal status with those staff that need to know which will also include the child's contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.

The staff member responsible for Children Looked After and Previously Children Looked After will also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The designated safeguarding lead should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child. This information should be held on CPOMS.

Designated safeguarding leads will add the details of the local authority Personal Advisor appointed to guide and support any care leaver on CPOMS and should liaise with them as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

Safeguarding Children with Special Educational Needs, Disabilities, or Health Needs

Diane Drew acknowledges that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges as they may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. The DSL will work closely with the SENDCo to plan support as required.

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent will ensure that children with SEN and disabilities, specifically those with communication difficulties will be supported to ensure that their voice is heard and acted upon.

Members of staff are encouraged to be aware that children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by safeguarding concerns, such as bullying and exploitation.

All members of staff will be encouraged to appropriately explore possible indicators of abuse such as behaviour/mood change or injuries and not to assume that they are related to the child's disability and be aware that children with SEN and disabilities may not always

outwardly display indicators of abuse. To address these additional challenges, our school will always consider extra pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities.

Children who attend Alternative Provision

The academy recognises that children in Alternative Provision often have complex needs and may be at additional risk of harm and appropriate risk assessments/support plans must be in place where pupils access provision offsite.

When the academy places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the academy will continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil.

The academy will take steps to satisfy themselves that the provider meets the needs of the pupil.

The academy will complete our Trust's alternative provision approval form which requires appropriate safeguarding checks to be carried out on the establishments and individuals working at the establishment i.e. those checks that the academy would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff.

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent use the following alternative or off-site providers and have written evidence of safeguarding arrangements:

- Created Academy
- Merit
- Stoke on Trent College
- Peak Education

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## Safeguarding issues

Preventing radicalisation

All members of the staff recognise children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation and is part of the academy's safeguarding approach.

The academy will ensure that, as far as possible, all front line staff will undertake Prevent awareness training (e.g. Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent [WRAP] or Prevent e-learning) to support them to identify children who may be susceptible to an extremist ideology or radicalisation. Prevent training will also help staff to notice changes in pupils' behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

The academy's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) is aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral. Shahzad Tahir is the local Prevent Lead: 07826535641 / [Shahzad.Tahir@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:Shahzad.Tahir@stoke.gov.uk)

Our Academy has a Prevent risk assessment in place to help us to identify risks in relation to young people being radicalised and how the identified risks can be mitigated.

Child on child abuse including our response to sexual violence and sexual harassment

All members of staff at Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and that it can happen both inside and outside of the setting and online.

All staff will be given training to help them recognise the indicators and signs of child on child abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment, and know how to identify it and respond to reports. All staff should understand that, even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges, it does not mean it is not happening. It may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such, it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child on child abuse, they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent recognises it is essential that all victims are 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. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school or college should not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. It is important to explain that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under the academy's behaviour policy but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- could put pupils in the academy at risk
- is violent
- involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual violence and/or harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting, or consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos

All staff are expected to challenge inappropriate behaviours between children, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and, in worst case scenarios, a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it. The starting

point regarding any report will always be that there is a zero tolerance approach to child on child abuse and it is never acceptable and it will not be tolerated.

We will ensure children know they can talk and report abuse by talking to any member of staff of the academy they feel comfortable with and via the report button on the academy website knowing their concerns will be treated seriously. The website will also have a range of local and national organisations that can provide support should they need it. This is shared through assemblies and PSHE lessons. There is also support information displayed in all areas of the academy and also on the back of toilet doors. Sources of support are regularly posted onto student classrooms and on social media. Children are encouraged to speak to their form tutor or their favourite teacher - anyone they feel comfortable talking to. Children are also encouraged to use the anonymous Whisper reporting system found on the website if they do not feel comfortable talking to a staff member.

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent recognises that child on child abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- 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
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- upskirting, 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 (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

Staff and leadership are mindful that some child on child abuse issues may be affected by gender, age, ability and culture of those involved. This includes recognition that:

- it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators, but that all child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously;
- children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or gender questioning can be targeted by their peers. In some cases, a child who is perceived by their peers to be lesbian, gay, bi, or gender questioning can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as lesbian, gay, bi, or gender questioning;



- children with SEND being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying and harassment, without outwardly showing any signs.

All allegations of child on child abuse will be recorded on CPOMS, investigated, and dealt with in line with this and all other associated academy policies, anti-bullying, online safety, exclusions and behaviour.

Alleged victims, perpetrators and any other child affected by child on child abuse will be supported by the school appropriately (e.g. providing therapeutic/pastoral support, working with parents/carers, and in cases of sexual assault, informing the Police and/or Front Door/Children's Services known locally as CHAD).

Whilst a zero tolerance approach will be taken towards this kind of behaviour, the academy also recognises that perpetrators can also be victims of abuse and will consider this in their response.

We will minimise the risk of child on child abuse by:

- challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour, including requesting or sending sexual images
- ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent has implemented the guidance/advice outlined in Part five of KCSIE 2024.

We recognise sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into colleges. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.

Staff will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and will always address inappropriate behaviour even if it appears to be relatively innocuous, recognising that this is an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

Staff understand that a child harming another child could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy.

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil, the academy staff will follow the procedures set out in 'Process for responding to sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour' (above).

The DSL is responsible for responding to such concerns in keeping with KCSIE 2024 and our Trust's expectations. The DSL must also consider any locally agreed procedures as set out by the Multi-agency safeguarding arrangements Stoke on Trent Safeguarding Children's

Partnership. The DSL is responsible for coordinating support to any victims, and the perpetrators.

Where incidents of child-on-child abuse involve children attending another school setting we will liaise with the relevant DSL/DO at the setting to ensure appropriate information is shared.

Where a pupil(s) has exhibited inappropriate/harmful sexualised behaviour and/or exhibited inappropriate/harmful sexualised behaviours towards others, an AIM (Assessment, Intervention, Moving On) checklist must be completed and saved in CPOMS. If appropriate, contact should be made with CHAD Front Door.. Advice and support can also be obtained from the Regional Safeguarding and Child Protection Leads.

The Regional Safeguarding and Child Protection Lead must be alerted to all incidents of sexual violence and sexual harassment that require a risk assessment management plan (RAMP).

Whilst any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously, staff should be aware it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment, and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys.

The staff at Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent will reassure all victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. We recognise children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment, wherever it happens, will likely find the experience stressful and distressing and may adversely affect their educational attainment. A safeguarding and support plan will be implemented to protect and support the pupil to ensure their education is not disrupted. We will never give a victim the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor will they ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent also has a duty to manage any identified risks and provide the alleged perpetrator(s) with an education, safeguarding support as appropriate and implement any disciplinary sanctions. The academy will take disciplinary action and provide appropriate support. These are not mutually exclusive actions. They can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary.

In cases where allegations of sexual violence and/or harassment are found to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider whether the child or person who has made the allegation is in need of support or may have been abused by someone else. In cases where the report is found to be deliberately invented or malicious the school will consider whether it is appropriate to take any disciplinary action in keeping with the school's behaviour management policy.

#### Gangs, County Lines, Serious Violence, Crime and Exploitation

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent recognises the impact of gangs, county lines, serious violence, crime and exploitation. It is recognised that the initial response to child victims is

important and that staff will take any allegation seriously and work in ways that support children and keep them safe.

All staff have been trained and recognise the need to be vigilant for the signs that may include, but not exclusively:

- Unexplained gifts/new possessions – these can indicate children have been approached by/involved with individuals associated with criminal networks/gangs
  - Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
  - Children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education
  - Change in friendships/relationships with others/groups
  - Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
  - Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
  - Significant decline in performance
  - Signs of self-harm/significant change in wellbeing
  - Signs of assault/unexplained injuries
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## Online Safety

It is recognised by Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent that the use of technology presents challenges and risks to children and adults both inside and outside of school. Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent will empower, protect and educate the community in their use of technology and establish mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate.

The DSL has overall responsibility for online safeguarding within the school but will liaise, as necessary, with other members of staff. The DSL will respond to online safety concerns in line with our trust Online Safety policy, this Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and other associated policies such as anti-bullying and positive behaviour.

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent 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 material, for example
  - Pornography
  - fake news
  - racist or radical and extremist views
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults;
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying;
- commerce - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. (If staff feel pupils, students or staff are at risk, they should report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>))

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent recognises the specific risks that can be posed by mobile technology, including mobile phones and cameras. In accordance with KCSIE 2024 the academy has appropriate policies in place that are shared and understood by all members of the community.

- Further information regarding the specific approaches relating to this can be found in our Online Safety Policy, Acceptable Use policy and our Trust Code of Conduct

Where children are remote learning, and the DSL has identified a child to be vulnerable, on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person. The communication plan can include remote contact, phone contact, and door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded. Details of this plan must be recorded, as should a record of contact made.

Online safety is an integral part of safeguarding and requires a whole school, cross-curricular approach and collaboration between key academy leads. Our Trust Online Safety Policy is written in line with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2024, 'Teaching Online Safety in Schools' 2019, and statutory RSHE guidance 2019. It is designed to sit alongside this Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and academies' Behaviour policies, our Trust's Colleague Code of Conduct and our Trust's GDPR Policy. Any issues and concerns with online safety must follow an academy's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

This Policy applies to all members of the Co-op Academies Trust community (including teaching and support staff, supply teachers and tutors engaged under the DfE National Tutoring Programme, volunteers, contractors, students/pupils, parents/carers, visitors and community users) who have access to our digital technology, networks and systems, whether on-site or remotely, and at any time, or who use technology in their Trust role.

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent will do all that is reasonably possible to limit children's exposure to online risks through our school IT systems and will ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place as per our Trust Online Safety policy and in line with KCSIE 24.

#### Filtering

Our Trust provides our academy with a dedicated and secure, schoolsafe connection that is protected with firewalls and multiple layers of security, including a web filtering system called WebScreen, which is made specifically to protect children in schools.

The DSL will liaise with Central IT colleagues if an appropriate website is inadvertently blocked and there is an educational need for its use. Similarly, the DSL will liaise with Central IT colleagues if it becomes apparent that an unsuitable website has been accessed on a pupil or adult device. As well as taking steps to remedy this problem, the DSL will ensure appropriate support is provided to the individual who may have tried to access inappropriate content. (Please note that in some cases, class teachers may be able to liaise with Central IT directly for this purpose, and will keep the DSL informed for oversight purposes).

It is vital to note that there must not be a 100% reliance on web filtering to ensure that inappropriate websites and content are not accessed. All staff must be made aware and reminded, via regular online safety updates and training, that they all have a responsibility to physically monitor pupils' internet use and to report concerns to the DSL if they arise.

Our filtering systems will be regularly tested and reviewed at least annually.

### Monitoring

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent is protected by Netsweeper OnGuard to provide effective monitoring of all Trust devices used by pupils. All monitoring alerts in term time will be reviewed by DSLs (and or other members of the safeguarding team with the DSL's oversight), and appropriate action and support will be taken as required.

Outside of term time Regional safeguarding leads will maintain an oversight of the OnGuard system.

There is an expectation that parents and carers must take responsibility for their children's online safety when they are outside of the school environment, even if they are using a Trust device.

It is vital to note that there must not be a 100% reliance on OnGuard to monitor pupils' device use. All staff must be made aware and reminded, via regular online safety updates and training, that they all have a responsibility to physically monitor pupils' device use and to report concerns to the DSL if they arise.

Our monitoring systems will be regularly tested and reviewed at least annually.

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## Curriculum and Staying Safe

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent will ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety as per the Online Safety policy, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

We recognise that the academy plays an essential role in preventing abuse and 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.

Our curriculum provides opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, social and emotional understanding, assertiveness and decision making so that children have a range of age-appropriate contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and that of others. As well as this, they will be taught about power, relationship and sex education, online safety, online bullying, sexting, child exploitation (CSE/CCE), youth generated images, female

genital mutilation (FGM), preventing radicalisation, child on child abuse, consent, online safety, anti-bullying, unhealthy and abusive family relationships in an age appropriate way.

Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent is aware of the most recent communication from the DfE on the mandatory implementation of Relationships and Sex and Health Education and will ensure that this is embedded into the curriculum.

Our school systems support children to talk to a range of staff. Children will be listened to and heard, and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate.

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## The Use of Premises by Other Organisations

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body using the school premises, the Head Teacher/Principal will seek written assurance that the organisation concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place with regard to safeguarding children and child protection and that relevant safeguarding checks have been made by the provider in respect of staff and volunteers and inspect these as needed.

The safeguarding requirement should be included in the lease/hire agreement as a condition of use and occupation of the premises.

If this assurance is not achieved, an application to use premises will be refused.

The academy has due regard to the guidance 'Keeping children safe in out of school settings' when making arrangements with providers.

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## 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 (including volunteers and contractors) coming into school as outlined within 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.

Head Teachers and principals should use their professional judgement about the need to escort or supervise such visitors.

Any individual who is not known or identifiable on site should be challenged for clarification and reassurance.

The academy will not accept the behaviour of any individual (parent or other) that threatens school 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 academy site.

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## Local Support

All members of staff in Co-op Academy Stoke on Trent are made aware of local support available:

- LA Education safeguarding team
  - Samantha Plews
  - Tel: 07514731760
  - E: [samantha.plews@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:samantha.plews@stoke.gov.uk)
  
- Contact details for the LADO
  - John Hanlon 01782 882300
  - Direct Line 01782 233342
  - E: [john.hanlon@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:john.hanlon@stoke.gov.uk)
- Children's Social Work Services
  - Front door: 01782 235100
  - Out of Hours Number: 01782 234234
- Police
  - 101 (or 999 if there is an immediate risk of harm)

Local Multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

- <https://safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/>
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## National Support

Support for staff

- [Education Support Partnership:](#)
- [Professional Online Safety Helpline:](#)

Support for Pupils/Students

- [NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)
- [ChildLine: www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- [Papyrus: www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)

- [Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)
- [The Mix: www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk)

#### Support for adults

- [Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)
- [Crime Stoppers: www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)
- [Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)
- [Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)
- [The Samaritans: www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)
- [Mind: www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)
- [NAPAC \(National Association for People Abused in Childhood\): napac.org.uk](http://napac.org.uk)
- <https://westand.org.uk/>
- [Action Fraud: www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)

#### Support for Learning Disabilities

- [Respond: www.respond.org.uk](http://www.respond.org.uk)
- [Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

#### Domestic Abuse

- [Refuge: www.refuge.org.uk](http://www.refuge.org.uk)
- [Women's Aid: www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)
- [Men's Advice Line: www.mensadvice.org.uk](http://www.mensadvice.org.uk)
- [Mankind: www.mankindcounselling.org.uk](http://www.mankindcounselling.org.uk)

#### Honour Based Violence

- [Karma Nirvana](#)
- [Forced Marriage Unit](#)

#### Sexual Abuse and CSE

- [Lucy Faithfull Foundation: www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk](http://www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk)
- [Stop it Now!: www.stopitnow.org.uk](http://www.stopitnow.org.uk)
- [Parents Protect: www.parentsprotect.co.uk](http://www.parentsprotect.co.uk)
- [CEOP: www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)
- [Internet Watch Foundation \(IWF\): www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk)

#### Online Safety

- [Childnet International: www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)
- [UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)
- [Parents Info: www.parentinfo.org](http://www.parentinfo.org)
- [Internet Matters: www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org)
- [Net Aware: www.net-aware.org.uk](http://www.net-aware.org.uk)
- [Get safe Online: www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org)



## Radicalisation and Hate

- [Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com](http://www.educateagainsthate.com)
- Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit: [www.gov.uk/reportterrorism](http://www.gov.uk/reportterrorism)
- True Vision: [www.report-it.org.uk](http://www.report-it.org.uk)
- [ACT](#)