



CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
Safeguarding and Personal Development

Creative Education Trust Safeguarding Policy

2026/27

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1. Policy statement

Creative Education Trust believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and keep them safe. We are committed to acting in a way that protects them.

The purpose of this document is to provide an umbrella summary of the aspects of safeguarding and child protection that are common across the Trust.

Each academy within the Trust has an academy-specific Child Protection Policy published on their website.

This policy should be read alongside the following documents:

- Individual Academy Child Protection policies
- DfE, Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026).
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2026).
- Managing safeguarding concerns and allegations made about adults' policy.
- Local Authority arrangements for safeguarding

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004.
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- The Education Act 2002.
- Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984.
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
- Crime and Policing Act 2026

2. Definitions

Safeguarding is the overarching term for everything done to support children and young people, keep them safe, and promote their welfare. It encompasses the full spectrum of measures to prevent harm, promote wellbeing, and ensure children are able to achieve their best outcomes.

'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)' defines **safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children as:

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

Child protection, as defined in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)', refers to the activity undertaken to protect individual children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, **significant harm**. This includes timely assessment, intervention, and referral to statutory services where necessary.

Safeguarding extends beyond child protection and includes:

- promoting children's health and wellbeing, including mental health;
- preventing harm from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or radicalisation;
- ensuring online safety and protection from digital risks;
- early identification and support for children with additional needs (early help);
- addressing risks in the wider environment (contextual safeguarding); and
- listening to children's voices and involving them in decisions affecting their welfare.

Child protection is therefore one critical component of safeguarding, and this Trust-level policy, alongside individual academy child protection policies, emphasises prevention, early intervention, and prompt response. All staff are expected to act immediately on concerns, even when the issue is not fully defined, to protect children from harm and support their overall wellbeing.

3. The Law and National Framework

The requirements of the trust and each academy to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people are embedded in legislation, government, and Local Authority guidance. Therefore, the policy of the trust must be, and is, in line with this wider framework.

Creative Education Trust has a responsibility under Part 3: the Education (Independent Academy Standards) Regulations, 2014¹ to ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils in our academies; and that such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

3.1 Guidance issued by the Secretary of State

The government guidance, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2026) and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2026), are the essential national safeguarding documents and give practical guidance on implementing legal requirements.

Each academy should have at least one copy of each which should be accessible to staff.

All adults working within the trust must be issued with their own copy of Part One of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2026).

Time must be given for staff to read the document, and they must confirm by return that they have both read and understood the document.

3.2 Local

Local Safeguarding Partnerships (LSPs) are made up of senior managers from the three safeguarding partners.

A safeguarding partner in relation to a local authority area in England is defined under the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act, 2017) as:

- the local authority;
- an Integrated Care Board (previously Clinical Commissioning Group) for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area;
- the chief officer of police for an area, any part of which falls within the local authority area.

The three safeguarding partners oversee at a local level the working together arrangements for safeguarding.

Each partnership arrangement will have a unique offer that relates to the community they serve.

Each academy should have a copy of and show due regard to their local partnership arrangements.

It is also an expectation of the trust that DSLs will attend update events as required by their local partnership arrangements.

¹ [The Education \(Independent Academy Standards\) Regulations, 2014:
https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/schedule/made](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/schedule/made)

3.3 Organisational

Each academy has in place its own published Child Protection Policy, which mirrors and compliments all the above.

This academy child protection policy document must be published on the individual academy's website.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone has a role to play in ensuring the well-being and safety of children, young people, their families, and each other.

Below is a brief description of those core responsibilities.

4.1 All Staff

All staff will:

- make sure they have undertaken the appropriate training for their role;
- take responsibility to report any concerns, no matter what their role;
- ensure they have a copy of part one of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)' and that they have read and understood it;
- be aware of the need to minimise their own vulnerability in not being alone with children or in situations that could render them vulnerable to poor practice and/or allegations against them; and
- always be aware of the needs of young people and be vigilant for any possible signs of abuse.
- must remain vigilant for signs that a child may be at risk of harm, including exposure to inappropriate content, cyberbullying, online misinformation, or risks associated with generative AI. Staff must follow safeguarding reporting procedures for any concerns identified online.

All staff, including volunteers and governors, will receive safeguarding training on induction and at least annually thereafter. Training will cover emerging risks, online safety, child exploitation, sexual harassment, radicalisation, and mental health. Staff must read and confirm understanding of KCSIE 2026 Part One and engage with refresher or targeted training as required. The Trust ensures consistent training quality across all academies.

4.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is a member of the academy's Senior Leadership Team who is responsible for the strategic leadership of safeguarding.

The DSL is the person to whom staff should pass their concerns and who will ensure a practical and efficient way of dealing with those concerns.

The DSL will:

- ensure an open and efficient route for staff to bring concerns to them of any sort and to have their concerns taken seriously;
- ensure they are appropriately trained to carry out the role;
- support staff in ensuring they receive appropriate training;

- promote the procedural pathway within the academy, so staff are aware of the way to report concerns;
- ensure the academy procedures are followed and adhered to with regard to referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse;
- offer clear advice and support to staff bringing concerns or needing help;
- consider whether concerns referred to him/her need to be referred to Children's Services/Social Care;
- offer appropriate feedback as necessary as to the progress of the concern;
- maintain written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral and keep a record system to ensure consistency;
- discuss with the Headteacher/Principal any complex concerns;
- ensure that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records;
- ensure that an indication of further record-keeping is marked on the pupil record;
- ensure those particular complex cases are referred without delay, and especially where it involves a child or young person subject to a child protection plan
- follows the LSP's escalation policy where cases are not progressing in an acceptable manner; and
- gather, collate and analyse as appropriate all relevant information for purposes of quality assurance.
- ensure that when pupils attend alternative provision, safeguarding remains paramount by obtaining written confirmation that all staff at the provider are appropriately checked and trained (including enhanced DBS checks where applicable), monitoring pupils' welfare, attendance, and progress, and reviewing the suitability of placements at least half termly, with the academy's safeguarding procedures, including reporting concerns and referrals to children's social care, applied consistently.

4.3 Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)

Each academy within the trust will appoint at least one deputy designated safeguarding lead (DDSL) who will formally provide cover and additional capacity for the DSL. Each DDSL will be trained to the same level as the DSL.

In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the Headteacher/Principal will identify a DDSL to undertake the duties of the DSL, as listed above.

4.4 The Headteacher/Principal

The Headteacher/Principal in each academy is responsible for ensuring the Designated Safeguarding Lead is effective in their role of providing and accessing high-quality services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people accessing provision from their academy, including:

- offer day-to-day support and guidance to the DSL as necessary;
- oversee the promotion of safeguarding throughout the academy, ensuring all staff are; appropriately trained and aware of their responsibilities;
- ensure cover is provided where necessary in the absence of the DSL;
- offer supervision to the DSL in relation to their role and decisions made;
- ensure that a senior member of staff is designated as the person in charge of Looked After and previously Looked After Children and receives appropriate training;
- encourage pupils and parents to inform the academy of any concerns;
- work with the representative of the governing body to put mechanisms in place to ensure that pupils requiring safeguarding measures are monitored in relation to their situation and progress with their learning;
- ensure all recruitment procedures follow safeguarding best practice based on advice;

- contribute as appropriate to quality assurance processes; and
- ensure sufficient allocation of time given to DSLs to undertake the role.

4.5 The Academy Senior Leadership Team

The academy's Senior Leadership Team will support the Headteacher/Principal to discharge the duties to safeguard children and young people.

The academy's Senior Leadership Team will:

- promote the importance of safeguarding throughout the academy;
- oversee the effectiveness of safeguarding systems, especially procedures, and review and report any changes that are required;
- support the work of the DSL to ensure an effective process for dealing with concerns; and
- ensure that the academy fulfils its statutory duty to co-operate with other agencies and that the chain of accountability is clear from the front line to senior level.

4.6 The Multi Academy Trust

The Trust Safeguarding Lead will:

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

The Trust's Safeguarding Lead is Leah Miller, Director of Inclusion. The Trust Head of Safeguarding is Stacey Anderson. Both can be contacted via Safeguarding@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk.

Where required, the Trust Safeguarding Lead is deputised; that colleague carries the authority, and delegated powers of the Trust Safeguarding Lead when doing so.

4.7 The Executive

The Chief Executive, as Accounting Officer, through line management, will provide appropriate challenge and support to the Trust Safeguarding Lead to ensure the Trust and the academies it sponsors are taking all reasonable opportunities to safeguard and protect the children and young people that access their services.

5. Governance of Safeguarding

The Creative Education Trust has identified a Trustee to take leadership responsibility for the Trust's safeguarding arrangements.

The role of the Chair of the Safeguarding Sub-Committee is to provide appropriate challenge and support to the Executive and the Trust Safeguarding Lead to ensure that they are satisfied that the trust is fulfilling its safeguarding duties identified in the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)'.

Name	Contact Details
Diana Gerald Chair of the Safeguarding Sub-Committee	Safeguarding@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk

The Trust Board has a duty to:

- safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- have regard to any statutory guidance on safeguarding issued by the Secretary of State
- ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers, contractors, and proprietors.

When carrying out the Prevent duty as required under section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act, the trust's academies will follow the Home Office's 'Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales'² and the DfE's general advice 'Protecting children from radicalisation: the prevent duty'.

The day-to-day leadership of safeguarding is delegated to the Director of Inclusion, who will work with Headteachers and DSLs to ensure that all statutory duties are fulfilled.

The Director of Inclusion provides regular reports to the sub-committee with responsibility for safeguarding.

Trustees will receive appropriate annual safeguarding and child protection training.

Safeguarding will be captured within governing body and Trust board reports.

6. Quality Assurance

Safeguarding reviews are conducted on behalf of the Trust Board under Section 175, 3(a) Education Act 2002 to meet our legal responsibility to ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the Academy; and that such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Robust safeguarding practices and procedures are key to supporting and safeguarding the children and young people that access services from Creative Education Trust. Effective

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

quality assurance measures are essential in ensuring the practices and procedures are fit for purpose.

7. Escalation

Staff need to be aware of those times when concerns may look as though they are not progressing to an outcome or to some form of action. This may be indicated by:

- difficulty in getting hold of a DSL;
- staff not being satisfied with the decision of the DSL or principal/headteacher;
- staff become aware that a colleague has not passed on a concern;
- external agencies not accepting a referral from an academy when it is felt one is needed;
- staff are not aware of what has happened to their concern because of a lack of feedback.

Staff must not close a concern because they feel "stuck" or "they can't do any more".

If a member of staff becomes concerned about the progress or action taken in relation to a concern, they should escalate their concern to the Headteacher/Principal or if necessary³, to the Director of Inclusion or Head of Safeguarding.

If there are concerns about the work of an external agency, the academy will follow the escalation steps outlined in the locally agreed procedures documents.⁶

The important principle is not to allow a concern to be "closed down" without it having received the necessary attention, assessment, and resolution.

If the options above have been explored fully and the concern still is not being handled effectively, therefore placing the child or young person at risk, you must contact the chair of the Safeguarding sub-committee, Diana Gerald.

8. Allegations and Safeguarding concerns about staff or volunteers

The trust takes allegations against members of staff very seriously and acknowledges that if concerns are not addressed as early as possible, they can create unsafe working environments and leave staff and children increasingly vulnerable³.

The trust has a 'Managing safeguarding concerns and allegations Policy' which should be followed in all cases where concerns are identified in relation to an adult's conduct which affects/could affect pupil(s) welfare or that may result in a potential safeguarding issue.

Concerns about colleagues in the context of pupil welfare and safeguarding may arise in a number of ways, for example (but not limited to):

- poor attitude or practice that potentially impacts on the general well-being of children and that needs addressing;
- aspects of poor practice witnessed by others;

³ Such as a dissatisfaction with the response of the Headteacher, or if the concern relates to the Headteacher. In such a case, the Trust Safeguarding Lead will work with the Chair of the Academy Improvement Board to review the concern and may follow the steps outlined in the Trust managing allegations against adults policy to meet a resolution. This is not an exclusive definition, and staff are reminded they can report any practice concern to the Trust Safeguarding Lead without hesitation.

- staff speaking against the ethos of the academy;
- non-compliance with trust's policies and procedures relating to safeguarding.

More specifically, allegations may be made against an adult working within the trust by a child or colleague in relation to abuse. All of the above will be seen as reportable matters, and discussions must take place without delay with the principal/headteacher.

Certain allegations in relation to staff must be reported by the headteacher/principal to the Designated Officer (LADO), who is the statutory lead for dealing with and advising about such issues, specifically where a member of staff has:

1. behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
2. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
3. behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
4. behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children;

Internal decisions in such cases should not be finalised without the advice of the LADO.

As part of our MAT-wide approach to safeguarding, we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the trust (including supply teachers, trainee teachers, volunteers, and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to the academy policy;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- humiliating pupils.

Low-level concerns about a member of staff should be reported, without delay, to the headteacher/principal⁷.

In the case of allegations/concerns relating to a member of the Creative Education Trust Central Team, they should be directed to the Chief Executive Officer.

It would not be unusual for people to know and believe that practice is not acceptable but feel unable to respond because of the fear:

- they might not be right to have the concerns that they do;
- for their own job and prospects if they report another colleague;
- of isolation by other staff;
- about what might happen to the member of staff in the long term.

It is particularly difficult if staff members are also close friends and/or partners in a relationship. The reasons why staff may not wish to report their colleagues have to be understood.

It must be recognised that the child's welfare always remains paramount, and it can be very easy to lose sight of the impact on others of being on the receiving end of unacceptable and sometimes illegal behaviour.

Issues about attitude and poor practice may be dealt with internally and as part of the member of staff's professional development. However, if such concerns are persistent and any plan with that member of staff has not brought about the necessary improvement, advice should be sought, and appropriate people included in the decision-making process.

All allegations about adults that meet the harm threshold for a referral to LADO are reported to the Trust Safeguarding Lead.

9. Safer Recruitment

The trust recognises that it is vital to create a culture that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children. As part of this culture, we have in place robust recruitment procedures that deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment, or volunteering opportunities with the trust.

Short-listing of candidates will be against the Job Description and Person Specification for the post.

Employment opportunities with Creative Education Trust are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Shortlisted candidates will be required to declare any relevant convictions, adult cautions or other matters which may affect their suitability to work with children. As a result of amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (exceptions order 1975) in 2013 and 2020, some minor offences are now protected (filtered) and should not be disclosed to potential employers, and employers cannot take these offences into account. ⁴

Where possible, references will be taken up prior to interview; any concerns raised will then be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview.

The trust will always seek at least two references for each candidate.

Creative Education Trust will undertake reasonable online searches, as part of the due diligence on the shortlisted candidates, where we identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online; these will be discussed with the candidate at interview.

Information will be viewed and gathered by an HR officer, separate from the recruitment panel. Any information of concern will be shared with the panel for their consideration, who will review and decide how to proceed. If there is sufficient concern that there is an immediate unsuitability to work with children and/or as part of our organisation, the recruitment process will be terminated and relevant referrals considered, in line with the Creative Education Trust policy on managing allegations and safeguarding concerns about adults.

If the recruitment panel wish to make further enquiries with the candidate to explore their suitability, they will do so at interview. Documents for successful and unsuccessful candidates will be retained in line with our Record Retention Policy.

⁴ Candidates are reminded when applying for a role with the Trust, that if they are unsure whether they need to disclose criminal information, they should seek legal advice or contact Nacro or Unlock for impartial advice. There is more information on filtering and protected offences on the Ministry of Justice website.

The Trust will use a range of selection techniques to identify the most suitable person for the post. At least one interview panel member must have completed the statutory Safer Recruitment Training.

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the mandatory preemployment checks has taken place.

Pre-employment checks referred to in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2026) and the Regulations⁹, will be carried out, and successful candidates will be subject to an enhanced DBS check (with barred list information as appropriate) and other relevant checks with statutory bodies.

The Trust maintains a record of pre-appointment checks carried out in each academy within the MAT, referred to in the Regulations as the register and more commonly known as the 'single central record'. This also includes members and trustees of the academy trust.

10. External visitors

All visitors who are invited into our academies to talk to the children have been chosen for their valuable input to support their learning.

The headteacher/principal will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

11. Volunteers

Creative Education Trust views volunteering as enriching and a value-added resource which brings mutual benefits to pupils, staff, parents, volunteers and the local community.

The headteacher/principal has the authority not to accept the help of volunteers if they believe that this is not in the best interest of the children. All volunteer roles will be assessed before the individual begins work. The academy will determine whether the role amounts to regulated activity and what checks are required.

From 1st September 2026, a volunteer who teaches, trains, instructs or supervises children frequently, on more than three days in any 30-day period, or overnight, will be regarded as engaging in regulated activity, even where they are supervised. In these circumstances, the academy will obtain an enhanced DBS check with children's barred-list information before, or as soon as practicable after, the volunteer begins the role.

A volunteer will not undertake regulated activity until their children's barred-list status has been confirmed.

The academy will review the roles of existing volunteers to identify any individual who becomes engaged in regulated activity because of the changes introduced from 1 September 2026. Where this applies, the academy will check the individual's children's barred-list status and obtain the appropriate DBS check.

Where a volunteer meets the frequency requirement through volunteering across more than one school or setting, the academy will work with the other settings to determine which organisation will obtain the enhanced DBS check with children's barred-list information.

Where a volunteer is not engaged in regulated activity, the academy will undertake and record a written risk assessment to determine what checks, if any, are appropriate.

The assessment will take account of:

- the nature of the work with children;
- the level and frequency of contact with children;
- what is known about the volunteer, including information provided by staff, parents, referees or other volunteers;
- whether the individual undertakes other paid or voluntary work where a referee can comment on their suitability; and
- whether an enhanced DBS check without barred-list information, or another level of check, is appropriate.

Details of the risk assessment will be recorded locally by the academy.

⁹ Part 4 of the Schedule to the Education (Independent Academy Standards) Regulations 2014 ¹⁰
For a person to be considered supervised, the supervision **must** be:

- by a person who is in regulated activity relating to children
- regular and day to day, and
- reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children.

¹¹ [See Annex E – Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2026\)](#): Statutory guidance - Regulated activity (children) - Supervision of activity with children which is regulated activity when unsupervised.

including the level of supervision

- what the establishment knows about the volunteer, including formal or informal information offered by staff, parents and other volunteers
- whether the volunteer has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where referees can advise on their suitability, and
- whether the role is eligible for a DBS check, and if it is, the level of the check, for volunteer roles that are not in regulated activity.

Under no circumstances will a volunteer on whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or permitted to undertake regulated activity.

Where the statutory criteria are met, the academy will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service in relation to a volunteer who is removed from regulated activity, or who ceases volunteering before they can be removed.

Anyone wishing to work as a volunteer who will be based in an academy within the trust, on a regular basis or on a one-off occasion, must complete a Volunteer Application Form, available via each the academy office.